

*Class Material for*  
The Buddha's Teachings  
on Social and Communal Harmony

An Anthology of Discourses from the Pāli Canon  
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## Prologue

by Hozan Alan Senauke

Gotama Buddha came of age in a land of kingdoms, tribes, and *varna*, meaning social class or caste. It was a time and place both distinct from and similar to our own, in which a person's life was strongly determined by their social status, family occupation, cultural identity, and gender. Before the Buddha's awakening, identity was definitive. If one was born into a warrior caste or that of a merchant or a farmer or an outcast, one lived that life completely and almost always married someone from the same class or caste. One's children did the same. There was no sense of individual rights or personal destiny, no way to manifest one's human abilities apart from a societal role assigned at birth. So the Buddha's teaching can be seen as a radical assertion of individual potentiality. Only by one's effort was enlightenment possible, beyond the constraints of caste, position at birth, or conventional reality. In verse 396 of the Dhammapada, the Buddha says:

I do not call one a brahmin only because of birth, because he is born of a  
(brahmin) mother. If he has attachments, he is to be called only "self-important."  
One who is without attachments, without clinging — him do I call a brahmin.

At the same time, the Buddha and his disciples lived in the midst of society. They didn't set up their monasteries on isolated mountaintops but on the outskirts of large cities such as Sāvattihī, Rājagaha, Vesālī, and Kosambī. They depended on laywomen and men, *upāsikā* and *upāsaka*, for the requisites of life. Even today monks and nuns in the Theravada tradition of Burma (or Myanmar), Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, and Laos go on morning alms rounds for their food. Although they keep a strict monastic discipline, it is mistaken to imagine that Southeast Asian monasteries are cloistered and apart from their brothers and sisters in the secular world. Monasteries and secular communities are mutually dependent, in a tradition that is sweet and fully alive.

In the autumn of 2007 people around the world were inspired by Burma's determined yet peaceful "Saffron Revolution"—led by a nonviolent protest of Burmese monks against the military government's repression. The protests were triggered by sudden and radical increases in fuel prices that drastically affected people's ability to get to work or to afford fuel for cooking or even basic foods. The intimate connection between monks, nuns, and laypeople has historically meant that when one sector is suffering, the other responds. Burmese monks have a long history of speaking out against injustice. They have been bold in opposition to British colonialism, dictatorship, and two decades of a military junta.

In Burma, Buddhist monks have been agents of change in a society that stands on the brink of real transformation. While this change is inevitable, the military junta had previously

resisted it with grim determination. A confluence of circumstances created an opening: the election of a new civilian government (however one might question the electoral process), the release of political prisoners (including Nobel laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi after many years of house arrest), nonviolent movements around the world encouraged by 2011's "Arab Spring," and a new dialogue between Burma's leaders and representatives from Europe, the United States, and other economic powers. There was a feeling of possibility and hope in the air.

This anthology underscores living within the Dhamma in a free and harmonious society, using the Buddha's time-tested words. Returning from Burma in November of 2011, I had been thinking about the need there and elsewhere for this kind of collection from the Pali suttas. In 2012 communal violence erupted in Burma's Rakhine State and elsewhere in that country. A need to look deeply into the Buddha's teachings on social harmony has become urgent. Not being a scholar or a translator, I contacted several learned friends. It turns out that several years back Bhikkhu Bodhi, one of our most respected and prolific interpreters of Early Buddhism, had assembled such a collection as an addendum to a training curriculum for social harmony in Sri Lanka, organized by the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University.

Here is the Buddha's advice about how to live harmoniously in societies that are not oppressing those of different religions or ethnic backgrounds, not savaging and exploiting themselves or others. While circumstances in Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India or the United States vary, the Buddha's social teachings offer a kind of wisdom that transcends the particularities of time and place. His teachings provide a ground of liberation upon which each nation and people can build according to their own needs.

I am most grateful to Bhikkhu Bodhi for his wisdom and generosity. People of all faiths and beliefs in every land yearn for happiness and liberation. I honor those who move towards freedom, and hope that the Buddha's words on social harmony may lead us fearlessly along our path.

Berkeley, CA

## General Introduction by Bhikkhu Bodhi

### The Origins of Buddha's Teaching on Social Harmony

Conflict and violence have plagued humankind from time immemorial, leaving the annals of history stained with blood. While the human heart has always stirred with the yearning for peace, harmony, and loving fellowship, the means of satisfying this yearning have ever proved elusive. In international relations, wars succeed one another like scenes in a film, with only brief pauses during which the hostile powers set about forging new alliances and making surreptitious grabs for territory. Social systems are constantly torn by class struggles, in which the elite class seeks to amass more privileges and the subordinate class to achieve greater rights and more security. Whether it is the conflict between masters and slaves, between feudal lords and serfs, between the aristocrats and the common people, between capital and labor, it seems that only the faces change while the underlying dynamics of the power struggle remain the same. Communities as well are constantly threatened by internal strife. Rival bids for power, differences of opinion, and competing interests among their members can tear them apart, giving birth to new cycles of enmity. When each new war, division, or dispute has peaked, the hope rises that reconciliation will follow, that peace and unity will eventually prevail. Yet, again and again, these hopes are quickly disappointed.

A moving passage in the scriptures of Early Buddhism testifies to this disparity between our aspirations for peace and the stark reality of perpetual conflict. On one occasion, it is said, Sakka, the ruler of the gods, visited the Buddha and asked the anguished question: "Why is it, that when people wish to live in peace, without hatred or enmity, they are everywhere embroiled in hatred and enmity?" (see **Text VIII,1**). The same question rings down the ages, and could be asked with equal urgency about many troublespots in today's world: Iraq and Syria, the Gaza Strip, the Central African Republic and South Sudan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, Charleston and Baltimore.

This problem must also have weighed on the Buddha's heart as he traveled the Ganges plain on his teaching tours. The society of his time was divided into separate castes distinguished by the prerogatives of the elite and the servile status of those at the bottom. Those outside the caste system, the outcastes, were treated even worse, subjected to the most degrading indignities. The political landscape, too, was changing, as monarchies led by ambitious kings rose from the ashes of the older tribal states and embarked on military campaigns intended to expand their domains. Within the courts personal rivalries among those hungry for power were bitter. Even the spiritual communities of the time were not immune to conflict. Philosophers and ascetics proud of their theories sparred with each other in passionate debates, each seeking to defeat their rivals and swell the ranks of their followers.

In a deeply moving poem in the Suttanipāta (vv. 935–37) the Buddha gives voice to the feeling of vertigo such violence had produced in him, perhaps soon after he left Kapilavatthu and witnessed first hand the world outside his native land:

"Fear has arisen from one who has taken up violence:  
behold the people engaged in strife.  
I will tell you of my sense of urgency,  
how I was stirred by a sense of urgency.

“Having seen people trembling  
like fish in a brook with little water,  
when I saw them hostile to one another,  
fear came upon me.

“The world was insubstantial all around;  
all the directions were in turmoil.  
Desiring an abode for myself,  
I did not see any place unoccupied.”

Once he began teaching, the Buddha’s primary mission was to make known the path that culminates in inner peace, in the supreme security of *nibbāna*, release from the cycle of birth, old age, and death. But the Buddha did not turn his back on the human condition in favor of a purely ascetic, introspective quest for liberation. From his position as a renunciant who stood outside the conventional social order, he looked with deep concern on struggling humanity, enmeshed in conflict while aspiring for peace, and out of compassion he sought to bring harmony into the troubled arena of human relations, to promote a way of life based on tolerance, concord, and kindness.

But he did even more. He founded an intentional community devoted to fostering inner and outer peace. This task was thrust upon him almost from the start; for the Buddha was not a solitary wanderer, teaching those who came to him for guidance and then leaving them to their own devices. He was the founder of a new spiritual movement that from the outset was inevitably communal. Immediately after he concluded his first sermon, the five ascetics who heard it asked to become his disciples. As time went on, his teaching attracted increasing numbers of men and women who chose to follow him into the life of homelessness and take on the full burden of his training. Thus a *Sangha*—a community of monks and nuns who lived in groups, traveled in groups, and trained in groups—gradually developed around him.

Changing from their lay garments into ocher robes, however, was not an immediate passport to holiness. While their way of life had altered, the monks and nuns who entered the Buddha’s order still brought along with them the ingrained human tendencies toward anger, pride, ambition, envy, self-righteousness, and opinionatedness. It was thus inevitable that tensions within the monastic community would arise, develop at times into outright antagonism, and spawn factionalism, strife, and even bitter conflict. For the *Sangha* to flourish, the Buddha had indeed to become an “organization man.” While he could proclaim high spiritual ideals toward which his disciples could strive, this was not sufficient to ensure harmony in the *Sangha*. He also had to establish a detailed code of regulations for the uniform performance of communal functions and to promulgate rules that would restrain if not totally obliterate divisive tendencies. These became the *Vinaya*, the body of monastic discipline.

The Buddha also taught and guided people who chose to follow his teachings at home, as lay disciples, living in the midst of their families and working at their regular occupations. He was thus faced with the additional task of laying down guidelines for society as a whole. In addition to a basic code of lay precepts, he had to offer principles to ensure that parents and children, husbands and wives, employers and employees, and people from very different backgrounds and social classes would be able to live together amicably. In the face of these challenges the scope of the Dhamma expanded. From its original character as a path to spiritual

liberation, centered around contemplative practices and philosophical insights, it gave rise to a broad ethic that applied not only to individual conduct but to the relations between people living under diverse conditions, whether in monasteries or at home, whether pursuing their livelihoods in the marketplace or workshop or in the service of the state. Under all these circumstances, the chief ethical requirement was the avoidance of harm: harm through aggression, harm by trampling on the claims of others, harm through conflict and violence. The ideal was to promote good will and harmony in action, speech, and thought.

## The Structure of This Book

The present anthology is intended to bring to light the Buddha's teachings on social and communal harmony. It is based on a selection of texts I compiled in 2011 at the request of the Program on Peace-building and Rights of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights at Columbia University, intended for use among Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the country's long ethnic conflict that ended in 2009. This expanded version includes new texts and changes in the arrangement.

The texts are all taken from the Pāli Canon, the body of scriptures regarded as authoritative "Word of the Buddha" (*buddhavacana*) by followers of Theravāda Buddhism, the school of Buddhism that prevails in the countries of southern Asia—primarily Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. The passages I have drawn upon come exclusively from the Sutta Piṭaka, the Discourse Collection, which contains the discourses of the Buddha and his eminent disciples. I did not include texts from the other two collections, the Vinaya Piṭaka, the Collection on Monastic Discipline, and the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, the Collection of Doctrinal Treatises. While parts of the Vinaya Piṭaka may have been relevant to this project, the bulk of material in that corpus is concerned with monastic rules and regulations and thus would be more relevant to a specialized readership. Further, those passages of the Vinaya broadly concerned with communal harmony have parallels in the Sutta Piṭaka that have been included here.

Although the Pāli Canon is the authorized scriptural collection of Theravāda Buddhism, the texts of this anthology need not be regarded as narrowly tied to any particular school of Buddhism, for they come from the oldest stratum of Buddhist literature, from collections of discourses that stand at the fountainhead of Buddhism. Nor are these teachings necessarily bound up with any creed or system of religious belief. In their clarity, cogency, and deep understanding of human nature, they should be able to speak to anyone regardless of religious affiliation. The texts have a universal message that makes them applicable to all endeavors to promote amiable relations between people. They provide perceptive diagnoses of the underlying roots of conflict, simply and clearly expressed, and offer practical strategies for resolving disputes, promoting reconciliation, and establishing social harmony.

I have arranged the selections according to a structure that deliberately mirrors, in certain respects, patterns that the Buddha himself adopted in expounding his teaching. In the rest of this general introduction I will explain the logic underlying my arrangement. Each part begins with its own introduction, which is intended to tie together the texts in that chapter and make explicit their connection to the chapter's theme.

Part I consists of texts on right view or right understanding. The Buddha made right view the first factor of the noble eightfold path and elsewhere stressed the role of right view as a guide to the moral and spiritual life. Since the objective of the present anthology is to provide a

Buddhist perspective on communal harmony rather than to show the path to final liberation, the texts I have included here highlight the type of right understanding that fosters ethical conduct. This is sometimes called “mundane right view,” in contrast to “world-transcending right view,” the penetrative insight into the empty and essenceless nature of all conditioned things that severs the roots of bondage to the cycle of rebirths.

Right understanding of the principle of kamma has a decisive impact on one’s conduct. When we realize that our own deeds eventually rebound on ourselves and determine our destiny in future lives, we will be motivated to abandon defiled mental qualities and abstain from bad conduct. Instead, we will be inspired to engage in good conduct and develop wholesome qualities. This pattern is reflected in the structure of the noble eightfold path itself, where right view leads to right intentions, which are in turn manifested in right speech, right action, and right livelihood.

In Part II, I treat the impact of right understanding on the individual under the heading of “personal training.” Early Buddhism sees personal transformation as the key to the transformation of society. A peaceful and harmonious society cannot be imposed from the outside by the decrees of a powerful authority but can only emerge when people rectify their minds and adopt worthy standards of conduct. Thus the task of promoting communal harmony must begin with personal transformation. Personal transformation occurs through a process of training that involves both outward displays of good conduct and inner purification. Following the traditional Buddhist scheme, I subsume this course of personal transformation under the three headings of generosity, ethical self-discipline, and cultivation of the mind.

The chief obstacle to social harmony is anger or resentment. Anger is the seed from which enmity grows, and thus, in the process of personal training, the Buddha gave special attention to controlling and removing anger. I have therefore devoted Part III to “Dealing with Anger.” The texts included reveal the grounds from which anger arises; the drawbacks and dangers in yielding to anger; and the practical antidotes that can be used to remove anger. The main remedy for anger is patience, which the Buddha enjoins even under the most trying circumstances. Thus the last two sections in the chapter are comprised of texts dealing with patience, both as injunctions and through stories about those who best exemplify patience.

Part IV is devoted to speech. Speech is an aspect of human conduct whose role in relation to social harmony is so vital that the Buddha made right speech a distinct factor in the noble eightfold path. I have followed the Buddha’s example by devoting an extensive selection of texts to the subject of speech. These deal not only with right speech as usually understood, but also with the proper way to participate in debates, when to praise and criticize others, and how to correct a wrongdoer when the need arises.

With Part V we move more explicitly from the sphere of personal cultivation to interpersonal relations. These relations begin with good friendship, a quality the Buddha stressed as the basis for the good life. In the texts I selected, we see the Buddha explain to both his monastic disciples and lay followers the value of associating with good friends, delineate the qualities of a true friend, and describe how friends should treat one another. He relates good friendship to both success in the household life and the spiritual development of the monk.

Part VI expands the scope of the inquiry from personal friendship to wider spheres of influence. In this chapter I include a selection of texts in which the Buddha highlights the social implications of personal conduct. The chapter begins with passages that contrast the foolish person and the wise person, the bad person and the good person. The chapter then goes on to compare those practitioners who are devoted solely to their own good with those who are also

devoted to the good of others. The texts consider this dichotomy from the perspectives of both monastic and lay practitioners. What emerges is a clear confirmation that the best course of practice is one dedicated to the twofold good: one's own and that of others.

Part VII brings us to the establishment of an intentional community. Since the Buddha was the founder of a monastic order, not a secular ruler, the guidelines he proposes for establishing community naturally pertain primarily to monastic life. But on occasion he was requested by civil leaders to provide advice on maintaining harmony in society at large, and the principles he laid down have been preserved in the discourses. Other selections in this chapter are concerned with cooperation between the two branches of the Buddhist community, the monastics and the laity.

Nevertheless, even when they act with the best intentions, people bring along with them tendencies that lead to factionalism and disputes. Disputes form the subject of Part VIII. The texts included here deal with internal disputes among both monastics and laity, which in some respects have similar origins but in other respects spring from different causes. This part leads naturally into Part IX, which is devoted to the means of resolving disputes. Here we see the Buddha in his role as a monastic legislator, laying down guidelines for settling conflicts and proposing modes of training to prevent disputes from erupting in the future.

Part X, the last in this anthology, moves from the intentional community, as represented by the monastic order, to the larger social domain. Its theme is the establishment of an equitable society. I here include passages from the discourses that explore the interwoven and overlapping relationships that constitute the fabric of society. The texts include the Buddha's teachings on family life, on the relations between parents and children and husbands and wives, and the maintenance of a beneficent home life. The last part of this chapter deals with the Buddha's political ideals, which are represented by the figure of the "wheel-turning monarch," the *rājā cakkavattī*, the righteous ruler who administers his realm in harmony with the moral law. Although principles of governance laid down for a monarch might seem obsolete in our present age with its professed commitment to democracy, in their emphasis on justice, benevolence, and righteousness as the basis for political authority, these ancient Buddhist texts still have contemporary relevance.

## Introduction to Right View (Edited from Bodhi)

The Buddha taught that right understanding, or “right view,” is the forerunner on the path to liberation. He assigned right view to the position of first factor of the noble eightfold path, the way to the end of suffering, and held that all the other factors of the path must be guided by right view toward the goal of his teaching, the cessation of suffering. For the Buddha, however, right view plays a critical role not only on the path to liberation but also to the attainment of well-being and happiness within the cycle of rebirths. It does this by underscoring the need for ethical conduct. The type of right view integral to the moral life is sometimes called “mundane right view” (*lokiya-sammādiṭṭhi*) or “the right view of one’s personal responsibility for one’s deeds” (*kammassakatā sammādiṭṭhi*). This kind of right view is based on the premise that there is an objective, transcendent basis for morality that is not dependent on human judgments and opinions. Through his enlightenment, the Buddha discovered this moral law and derived from it the specific ethical injunctions of his teaching.

On the basis of this discovery, the Buddha holds that the validity of moral distinctions is built into the fabric of the cosmos. Moral judgments can be distinguished as true and false, actions determined as good and bad, with reference to a moral law that is just as efficacious, just as universal in its operation, as the laws of physics and chemistry. As moral agents, therefore, we cannot justify our actions simply by appeal to personal preferences, nor can we expect following our preferences to secure our well-being. Rather, to achieve true well-being, we must act in conformity with the moral law, which is the Dhamma itself, the fundamental principle of truth and goodness that abides whether or not buddhas discover it and reveal it.

Right view affirms that our morally significant actions have consequences that can bring us either happiness or misery. Our deeds create *kamma*, a force with the potential to produce results that correspond to the ethical quality of the original action.

Harmony in any community, whether a small group or a whole society, depends on a shared commitment to ethical conduct. In the present age, however, when the critical method of science has given rise to skepticism about conscious survival of death, it would be presumptuous to insist that a full acceptance of right view as taught by the Buddha is necessary as a foundation for social harmony. It seems, however, that social harmony requires at minimum that the members of any group share the conviction that there are objective standards for distinguishing between good and bad conduct and that there are benefits, for the group and its individual members, in avoiding the types of behavior generally considered bad and in living according to standards generally considered good.

In Part I, I have assembled a number of suttas that describe the nature of right view. The texts I have chosen emphasize the view of one’s personal responsibility for one’s actions rather than the right view that leads to liberation. **Text I,1** draws a pair of distinctions that run through the Buddha’s teachings. The passage begins by highlighting the role of right view as the forerunner of the path, whose first task is to distinguish between wrong view and right view. Thus right view not only understands the actual nature of things, but it also distinguishes between wrong and right opinions about the nature of things. In this passage, the Buddha describes wrong view with the stock formula for the view of moral nihilism. In defining right view, he draws a second distinction, that between right view that is still “subject to the influxes,” which is the view of one’s ownership of one’s actions, and the “world-transcending” right view

that pertains to the noble eightfold path. Right view subject to the influxes, also called mundane right view, distinguishes between the unwholesome and the wholesome. It lays bare the underlying roots of good and bad conduct and affirms the principles behind the operation of kamma, the law of moral causation which ensures that good and bad deeds eventually produce their appropriate fruits. Although this kind of right view, on its own, does not lead to liberation, it is essential for progress within the cycle of rebirths and serves as the foundation for the world-transcending right view, which eradicates ignorance and the associated defilements.

Mundane right view is the understanding of the efficacy of kamma. Through mundane right view, one understands that unwholesome kamma, deeds arisen from impure motives, eventually redound upon oneself and bring suffering, a bad rebirth, and spiritual deterioration. Conversely, one understands that wholesome kamma, deeds arisen from virtuous motives, leads to happiness, a fortunate rebirth, and spiritual progress. In **Text I,2**, the Venerable Sāriputta enumerates the courses of unwholesome kamma and their underlying roots, as well as the courses of wholesome kamma and their roots. Unwholesome kamma is explicated by way of the “ten courses of unwholesome action.” The roots of unwholesome kamma, the motives from which it originates, are greed, hatred, and delusion. In contrast, wholesome kamma is explicated by way of the ten courses of wholesome action, which include the right view of kamma and its fruits. The wholesome roots are said to be non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, which may be expressed more positively as generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom.

In the Kālāma Sutta, cited in part here as **Text I,5**, the Buddha asks the Kālāmas of Kesaputta, who were uncertain whether there is an afterlife, to suspend judgments about such matters and to recognize directly for themselves, by self-reflection, that acting on the basis of greed, hatred, and delusion leads to harm and suffering for oneself and others; while, in contrast, freeing the mind of greed, hatred, and delusion and acting in beneficent ways brings well-being and happiness to both oneself and others. In another sutta, again partly cited here at **Text I,6**, the Buddha grounds the basic types of right action, such as abstaining from killing and stealing, on a course of moral reflection by which one places oneself in the position of others and decides how to act after considering how one would feel if others were to treat oneself in such ways. Although the Buddha is here responding to a question about the means to a heavenly rebirth, he does not expressly ground moral injunctions on the law of kamma or survival of death but on the principle of reciprocity. This principle, explained in detail here, is succinctly expressed by a verse in the Dhammapada : “All beings tremble at violence, all fear death. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill or cause another to kill” (v. 129).

## 1. Right View Comes First

“Monks, right view comes first. And how does right view come first? One understands wrong view as wrong view and right view as right view: this is one’s right view.

“And what is wrong view? ‘There is nothing given, nothing sacrificed, nothing offered; there is no fruit or result of good and bad actions; there is no this world, no other world; there is no mother, no father; there are no beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world no ascetics and brahmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge, make them known to others.’ This is wrong view.

“And what is right view? Right view, I say, is twofold: there is right view that is affected by influxes, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions; and there is right view that is noble, free of influxes, supramundane, a factor of the path.<sup>1</sup>

“And what is right view that is subject to the influxes, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions? ‘There is what is given, sacrificed, and offered; there is fruit and result of good and bad actions; there is this world and the other world; there is mother and father; there are beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world ascetics and brahmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge, make them known to others.’ This is right view that is subject to the influxes, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions.

“And what is right view that is noble, free of influxes, supramundane, a factor of the path? The wisdom, the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, the investigation-of-states enlightenment factor, the path factor of right view in one whose mind is noble, whose mind is without influxes, who possesses the noble path and is developing the noble path: this is right view that is noble, free of influxes, supramundane, a factor of the path.

“One makes an effort to abandon wrong view and to enter upon right view: this is one’s right effort. Mindfully one abandons wrong view, mindfully one enters upon and abides in right view: this is one’s right mindfulness. Thus these three states run and circle around right view, that is, right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.”

(from MN 117, MLDB 934–35)

## 2. Understanding the Unwholesome and the Wholesome

[The Venerable Sāriputta said:] “When, friends, a noble disciple understands the unwholesome and the root of the unwholesome, the wholesome and the root of the wholesome, in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has perfect confidence in the Dhamma and has arrived at this true Dhamma.

“And what, friends, is the unwholesome, what is the root of the unwholesome, what is the wholesome, what is the root of the wholesome? The destruction of life is unwholesome;

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<sup>1</sup> The three influxes (*āsava*) are sensual desire, desire for continued existence, and ignorance. The acquisitions (*upadhi*) are the five aggregates of clinging that constitute individual identity. Right view affected by influxes is a constituent of the mundane path conducive to a fortunate rebirth within *samsāra*, the continuum of birth and death. Right view free of influxes is the world-transcending wisdom that disrupts the continuum of birth and death.

taking what is not given is unwholesome; sexual misconduct is unwholesome; false speech is unwholesome; divisive speech is unwholesome; harsh speech is unwholesome; idle chatter is unwholesome; covetousness is unwholesome; ill will is unwholesome; wrong view is unwholesome. This is called the unwholesome. And what is the root of the unwholesome? Greed is a root of the unwholesome; hatred is a root of the unwholesome; delusion is a root of the unwholesome. This is called the root of the unwholesome.

“And what is the wholesome? Abstention from the destruction of life is wholesome; abstention from taking what is not given is wholesome; abstention from sexual misconduct is wholesome; abstention from false speech is wholesome; abstention from divisive speech is wholesome; abstention from harsh speech is wholesome; abstention from idle chatter is wholesome; non-covetousness is wholesome; benevolence is wholesome; right view is wholesome. This is called the wholesome. And what is the root of the wholesome? Non-greed is a root of the wholesome; non-hatred is a root of the wholesome; non-delusion is a root of the wholesome. This is called the root of the wholesome.”

(from MN 9, MLDB 132–33)

## 5. When You Know for Yourselves

The Kālāmas of Kesaputta approached the Blessed One and said to him: “Bhante, there are some ascetics and brahmins who come to Kesaputta. They explain and elucidate their own doctrines, but disparage, denigrate, deride, and denounce the doctrines of others. But then some other ascetics and brahmins come to Kesaputta, and they too explain and elucidate their own doctrines, but disparage, denigrate, deride, and denounce the doctrines of others. We are perplexed and in doubt, Bhante, as to which of these good ascetics speak truth and which speak falsehood.”

“It is fitting for you to be perplexed, Kālāmas, it is fitting for you to be in doubt. Doubt has arisen in you about a perplexing matter. Come, Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition, by lineage of teaching, by hearsay, by a collection of scriptures, by logical reasoning, by inferential reasoning, by reasoned cogitation, by the acceptance of a view after pondering it, by the seeming competence [of a speaker], or because you think: ‘The ascetic is our guru.’ But when, Kālāmas, you know for yourselves: ‘These things are unwholesome; these things are blameworthy; these things are censured by the wise; these things, if accepted and undertaken, lead to harm and suffering,’ then you should abandon them.

“What do you think, Kālāmas? When greed, hatred, and delusion arise in a person, is it for his welfare or for his harm?” – “For his harm, Bhante.” – “Kālāmas, one overcome by greed, hatred, and delusion, with mind obsessed by them, destroys life, takes what is not given, transgresses with another’s wife, and speaks falsehood; and he encourages others to do likewise. Will that lead to his harm and suffering for a long time?” – “Yes, Bhante.”

“What do you think? Are these things wholesome or unwholesome?” – “Unwholesome, Bhante.” – “Blameworthy or blameless?” – “Blameworthy, Bhante.” – “Censured or praised by the wise?” – “Censured by the wise, Bhante.” – “Accepted and undertaken, do they lead to harm and suffering or not, or how do you take it?” – “Accepted and undertaken, these things lead to harm and suffering. So we take it.”

“Thus, Kālāmas, when we said: ‘Come, Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition ... But when you know for yourselves: “These things are unwholesome; these things are blameworthy; these

things are censured by the wise; these things, if undertaken and practiced, lead to harm and suffering,” then you should abandon them,’ it is because of this that this was said.

“Come, Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition ... or because you think: ‘The ascetic is our guru.’ But when you know for yourselves: ‘These things are wholesome; these things are blameless; these things are praised by the wise; these things, if accepted and undertaken, lead to welfare and happiness,’ then you should live in accordance with them.

“What do you think, Kālāmas? When a person is without greed, hatred, and delusion, is it for his welfare or for his harm?” – “For his welfare, Bhante.” – “Kālāmas, a person not overcome by greed, hatred, and delusion, whose mind is not obsessed by them, does not destroy life, take what is not given, transgress with another’s wife, or speak falsehood; nor does he encourage others to do likewise. Will that lead to his welfare and happiness for a long time?” – “Yes, Bhante.”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things wholesome or unwholesome?” – “Wholesome, Bhante.” – “Blameworthy or blameless?” – “Blameless, Bhante.” – “Censured or praised by the wise?” – “Praised by the wise, Bhante.” – “Accepted and undertaken, do they lead to welfare and happiness or not, or how do you take it?” – “Accepted and undertaken, these things lead to welfare and happiness. So we take it.”

“Thus, Kālāmas, when we said: ‘Come, Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition ... But when you know for yourselves: ‘These things are wholesome; these things are blameless; these things are praised by the wise; these things, if accepted and undertaken, lead to welfare and happiness,’ then you should live in accordance with them,’ it is because of this that this was said.”

(from AN 3:65, NDB 280–82)

## **Class 2 — Good Friendship and Proper Speech**

### **The Qualities of a True Friend**

#### **Seven Factors** (AN 7:36)

"Monks, one should associate with a friend who possesses seven factors. What seven? (1) He gives what is hard to give. (2) He does what is hard to do. (3) He patiently endures what is hard to endure. (4) He reveals his secrets to you. (5) He preserves your secrets. (6) He does not forsake you when you are in trouble. (7) He does not roughly despise you. One should associate with a friend who possesses these seven factors."

A friend gives what is hard to give,  
and he does what is hard to do.  
He forgives you your harsh words  
and endures what is hard to endure.

He tells you his secrets,  
yet he preserves your secrets.  
He does not forsake you in difficulties,  
nor does he roughly despise you.

The person here in whom  
these qualities are found is a friend.  
One desiring a friend  
should resort to such a person.

#### **Seven Factors** (AN 7:37)

"Monks, one should associate with a monk friend who possesses seven qualities; one should resort to him and attend on him even if he dismisses you. What seven? (1) He is pleasing and agreeable; (2) he is respected and (3) esteemed; (4) he is a speaker; (5) he patiently endures being spoken to; (6) he gives deep talks; and (7) he does not enjoin one to do what is wrong."

He is dear, respected, and esteemed,  
a speaker and one who endures speech;  
he gives deep talks and does not enjoin one  
to do what is wrong.

The person here in whom  
these qualities are found is a friend,  
benevolent and compassionate.  
Even if one is dismissed by him,  
one desiring a friend  
should resort to such a person.

## **2. Good Friendship in the Household Life** (from AN 8:54)

"What is good friendship? Here, in whatever village or town a clansman lives, he associates with householders or their sons—whether young but of mature virtue, or old and of mature virtue—who are accomplished in faith, virtuous behavior, generosity, and wisdom; he converses with them and engages in discussions with them. In so far as they are accomplished in faith, he emulates them with respect to their accomplishment in faith; in so far as they are accomplished in virtuous behavior, he emulates them with respect to their accomplishment in virtuous behavior; in so far as they are accomplished in generosity, he emulates them with respect to their accomplishment in generosity; in so far as they are accomplished in wisdom, he emulates them with respect to their accomplishment in wisdom. This is called good friendship."

## **3. How Friends Treat One Another** (from DN 31)

"There are five ways, householder, in which you should serve your friends and companions: by gifts, by kindly words, by looking after their welfare, by treating them like yourself, and by keeping your word. And there are five ways in which friends and companions, thus served by you, will reciprocate: by looking after you when you are inattentive, by looking after your property when you are inattentive, by being a refuge when you are afraid, by not deserting you when he is in trouble, and by showing concern for your children."

## **Proper Speech**

### **1. Well-Spoken Speech** (AN 5:198)

"Monks, possessing five factors, speech is well spoken, not badly spoken; it is blameless and beyond reproach by the wise. What five? It is spoken at the proper time; what is said is true; it is spoken gently; what is said is beneficial; it is spoken with a mind of loving-kindness. Possessing these five factors, speech is well spoken, not badly spoken; it is blameless and beyond reproach by the wise."

### **2. Don't Create Arguments** (AN 5:212)

"Monks, when a monk is a maker of arguments, quarrels, disputes, contentious talk, and disciplinary issues in the Saṅgha, five dangers can be expected for him. What five? (1) He does not achieve what he has not yet achieved; (2) he falls away from what he has achieved; (3) a bad report circulates about him; (4) he dies confused; and (5) with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. When a monk is a maker of arguments, quarrels, disputes, contentious talk, and disciplinary issues in the Saṅgha, these five dangers can be expected for him."

### **3. Assigning Praise and Blame** (AN 5:236)

"Monks, possessing five qualities, a resident monk is deposited in hell as if brought there. What five? (1) Without investigating and scrutinizing, he speaks praise of one who deserves dispraise.

(2) Without investigating and scrutinizing, he speaks dispraise of one who deserves praise. (3) Without investigating and scrutinizing, he believes a matter that merits suspicion. (4) Without investigating and scrutinizing, he is suspicious about a matter that merits belief. (5) He squanders what has been given out of faith. Possessing these five qualities, a resident monk is deposited in hell as if brought there.

"Monks, possessing five qualities, a resident monk is deposited in heaven as if brought there. What five? (1) Having investigated and scrutinized, he speaks dispraise of one who deserves dispraise. (2) Having investigated and scrutinized, he speaks praise of one who deserves praise. (3) Having investigated and scrutinized, he is suspicious about a matter that merits suspicion. (4) Having investigated and scrutinized, he believes a matter that merits belief. (5) He does not squander what has been given out of faith. Possessing these five qualities, a resident monk is deposited in heaven as if brought there."

#### **4. Praise When Praise is Due (AN 4:100)**

Then the wanderer Potaliya approached the Blessed One and exchanged greetings with him. The Blessed One said to him:

"Potaliya, there are these four kinds of persons found existing in the world. What four? (1) Here, some person speaks dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, and the dispraise is accurate, truthful, and timely; but he does not speak praise of someone who deserves praise, though the praise would be accurate, truthful, and timely. (2) Some other person speaks praise of someone who deserves praise, and the praise is accurate, truthful, and timely; but he does not speak dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, though the dispraise would be accurate, truthful, and timely. (3) Still another person does not speak dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, though the dispraise would be accurate, truthful, and timely; and he does not speak praise of someone who deserves praise, though the praise would be accurate, truthful, and timely. (4) And still another person speaks dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, and the dispraise is accurate, truthful, and timely; and he also speaks praise of someone who deserves praise, and the praise is accurate, truthful, and timely. These are the four kinds of persons found existing in the world. Now, Potaliya, which among these four kinds of persons seems to you the most excellent and sublime?"

"There are, Master Gotama, of those four, the one that seems to me the most excellent and sublime is the one who does not speak dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, though the dispraise would be accurate, truthful, and timely; and who does not speak praise of someone who deserves praise, though the praise would be accurate, truthful, and timely. For what reason? Because what excels, Master Gotama, is equanimity."

"There are, Potaliya, those four kinds of persons found existing in the world. Of those four, the one that is the most excellent and sublime is the one who speaks dispraise of someone who deserves dispraise, and the dispraise is accurate, truthful, and timely; and who also speaks praise of someone who deserves praise, and the praise is accurate, truthful, and timely. For what reason? Because what excels, Potaliya, is knowledge of the proper time to speak in any particular case."

## **5. Knowing What To Say and How to Say It (from MN 139)**

“‘One should not utter covert speech, and one should not utter overt sharp speech.’ So it was said. And with reference to what was this said?

“Here, monks, when one knows covert speech to be untrue, incorrect, and unbeneficial, one should on no account utter it. When one knows covert speech to be true, correct, and unbeneficial, one should try not to utter it. But when one knows covert speech to be true, correct, and beneficial, one may utter it, knowing the time to do so.

“Here, monks, when one knows overt sharp speech to be untrue, incorrect, and unbeneficial, one should on no account utter it. When one knows overt sharp speech to be true, correct, and unbeneficial, one should try not to utter it. But when one knows overt sharp speech to be true, correct, and beneficial, one may utter it, knowing the time to do so.

“So it was with reference to this that it was said: ‘One should not utter covert speech, and one should not utter overt sharp speech.’”

## **6. Reproving Others (AN 5:167)**

Venerable Sāriputta addressed the monks thus:

"Friends, a monk who wishes to reprove another should first establish five things in himself.

What five? (1) [He should consider:] 'I will speak at a proper time, not at an improper time; (2) I will speak truthfully, not falsely; (3) I will speak gently, not harshly; (4) I will speak in a beneficial way, not in a harmful way; (5) I will speak with a mind of loving-kindness, not while harboring hatred.' A monk who wishes to reprove another should first establish these five things in himself....

"Friends, a person who is reprovved should be established in two things: in truth and non-anger. If others should reprove me—whether at a proper time or at an improper time; whether about what is true or about what is false; whether gently or harshly; whether in a beneficial way or in a harmful way; whether with a mind of loving-kindness or while harboring hatred—I should still be established in two things: in truth and non-anger.

"If I know: 'There is such a quality in me,' I tell him: 'It exists. This quality is found in me.' If I know: 'There is no such quality in me,' I tell him: 'It doesn't exist. This quality isn't found in me.'

## **Class 3 — Dealing with Anger**

### **2. Three Kinds of Persons (AN 3:132)**

"Monks, there are these three kinds of persons found existing in the world. What three? The person who is like a line etched in stone; the person who is like a line etched in the ground; and the person who is like a line etched in water.

(1) "And what kind of person is like a line etched in stone? Here, some person often gets angry, and his anger persists for a long time. Just as a line etched in stone is not quickly erased by the wind and water but persists for a long time, so too, some person often gets angry, and his anger persists for a long time. This is called the person who is like a line etched in stone.

(2) "And what kind of person is like a line etched in the ground? Here, some person often gets angry, but his anger does not persist for a long time. Just as a line etched in the ground is quickly erased by the wind and water and does not persist for a long time, so too, some person often gets angry, but his anger does not persist for a long time. This is called the person who is like a line etched in the ground.

(3) "And what kind of person is like a line etched in water? Here, some person, even when spoken to roughly and harshly, in disagreeable ways, remains on friendly terms [with his antagonist], mingles [with him], and greets [him]. Just as a line etched in water quickly disappears and does not persist for a long time, so too, some person, even when spoken to roughly and harshly, in disagreeable ways, remains on friendly terms [with his antagonist], mingles [with him], and greets [him]. This is called the person who is like a line etched in water.

"These, monks, are the three kinds of persons found existing in the world."

### **3. Persons Like Vipers (AN 4:110)**

"Monks, there are these four kinds of vipers. What four? The one whose venom is quick to come up but not virulent; the one whose venom is virulent but not quick to come up; the one whose venom is both quick to come up and virulent; and the one whose venom is neither quick to come up nor virulent. These are the four kinds of vipers. So too, there are these four kinds of persons similar to vipers found existing in the world. What four? The one whose venom is quick to come up but not virulent; the one whose venom is virulent but not quick to come up; the one whose venom is both quick to come up and virulent; and the one whose venom is neither quick to come up nor virulent.

(1) "And how, monks, is a person one whose venom is quick to come up but not virulent? Here, someone often becomes angry, but his anger does not linger for a long time. It is in this way that a person is one whose venom is quick to come up but not virulent. So, I say, this person is just like a viper whose venom is quick to come up but not virulent.

(2) "And how is a person one whose venom is virulent but not quick to come up? Here, someone does not often become angry, but his anger lingers for a long time. It is in this way that a person is one whose venom is virulent but not quick to come up. So, I say, this person is just like a viper whose venom is virulent but not quick to come up.

(3) "And how is a person one whose venom is both quick to come up and virulent? Here, someone often becomes angry, and his anger lingers for a long time. It is in this way that a person is one whose venom is both quick to come up and virulent. So, I say, this person is just like a viper whose venom is both quick to come up and virulent.

(4) "And how is a person one whose venom is neither quick to come up nor virulent? Here, someone does not often become angry, and his anger does not linger for a long time. It is in this way that a person is one whose venom is neither quick to come up nor virulent. So, I say, this person is just like a viper whose venom is neither quick to come up nor virulent.

"These, monks, are the four kinds of persons similar to vipers found existing in the world."

#### **4. The Grounds for Anger and Resentment (AN 10:79)**

"Monks, there are these ten grounds for resentment. What ten? (1) [Thinking:] 'They acted for my harm,' one harbors resentment. (2) [Thinking:] 'They are acting for my harm,' one harbors resentment. (3) [Thinking:] 'They will act for my harm,' one harbors resentment. (4) [Thinking:] 'They acted for the harm of one who is pleasing and agreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (5) [Thinking:] 'They are acting for the harm of one who is pleasing and agreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (6) [Thinking:] 'They will act for the harm of one who is pleasing and agreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (7) [Thinking:] 'They acted for the benefit of one who is displeasing and disagreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (8) [Thinking:] 'They are acting for the benefit of one who is displeasing and disagreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (9) [Thinking:] 'They will act for the benefit of one who is displeasing and disagreeable to me,' one harbors resentment. (10) And one becomes angry without a reason. These, monks, are the ten bases of resentment."

#### **5. Dangers in Anger and Benefits in Patience**

##### **Five Dangers (AN 5:215)**

"Monks, there are these five dangers in impatience. What five? One is displeasing and disagreeable to many people; one has an abundance of enmity; one has an abundance of faults; one dies confused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in the plane of misery, in a bad destination, in the lower world, in hell. These are the five dangers in impatience.

"Monks, there are these five benefits in patience. What five? One is pleasing and agreeable to many people; one does not have an abundance of enmity; one does not have an abundance of faults; one dies unconfused; with the breakup of the body, after death, one is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world. These are the five benefits in patience."

#### **(4) Being Spurned By Others**

(from AN 3:27)

“What kind of person is to be looked upon with equanimity, not to be associated with, followed, and served? Here, some person is prone to anger and easily exasperated. Even if he is criticized slightly he loses his temper and becomes irritated, hostile, and stubborn; he displays irritation, hatred, and bitterness. Just as a festering sore, if struck by a stick or a shard, will discharge even more matter, so too ... Just as a firebrand of the *tinduka* tree, if struck by a stick or shard, will sizzle and crackle even more, so too ... Just as a pit of feces, if struck by a stick or a shard, becomes even more foul-smelling, so too some person here is prone to anger and ... displays irritation, hatred, and bitterness. Such a person is to be looked upon with equanimity, not to be associated with, followed, and served. For what reason? [With the thought:] 'He might insult me, revile me, and do me harm.' Therefore such a person is to be looked upon with equanimity, not to be associated with, followed, and served.”

#### **6. Removing Anger**

**Ten Ways to Eliminate Resentment (AN 10: 80)**

"Monks, there are these ten ways of removing resentment. What ten? (1) [Thinking:] 'They acted for my harm, but what can be done about it?' one removes resentment. (2) [Thinking:] 'They are acting for my harm, but what can be done about it?' one removes resentment. (3) [Thinking:] 'They will act for my harm, but what can be done about it?' one removes resentment. (4) [Thinking:] 'They acted ... ' (5) ... 'They are acting ... ' (6) ... 'They will act for the harm of one who is pleasing and agreeable to me, but what can be done about it?' one removes resentment (7) [Thinking:] 'They acted ... ' (8) ... 'They are acting ... ' (9) ... 'They will act for the benefit of one who is displeasing and disagreeable to me, but what can be done about it?' one removes resentment. (10) And one does not become angry without a reason. These, monks, are the ten ways of removing resentment."

#### **7. Patience Under Provocation**

**Being Patient When Criticized (MN 21)**

10. “Some monk is extremely gentle, meek, and peaceful, so long as disagreeable courses of speech do not touch him. But it is when disagreeable courses of speech touch him that it can be understood whether that monk is really kind, gentle, and peaceful. I do not call a monk easy to correct who is easy to correct and makes himself easy to correct only for the sake of getting robes, almsfood, a resting place, and medicinal requisites. Why is that? Because that monk is not easy to correct nor makes himself easy to correct when he gets no robes, almsfood, resting place, and medicinal requisites. But when a monk is easy to correct and makes himself easy to correct because he honours, respects, and reveres the Dhamma, him I call easy to correct. Therefore, monks, you should train thus: ‘We shall be easy to correct and make ourselves easy to correct because we honour, respect, and revere the Dhamma.’ That is how you should train, monks.

11. “Monks, there are these five courses of speech that others may use when they address you: their speech may be timely or untimely, true or untrue, gentle or harsh, connected with good or with harm, spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. When others address you, their speech may be timely or untimely; when others address you, their speech may be true

or untrue; when others address you, their speech may be gentle or harsh; when others address you, their speech may be connected with good or with harm; when others address you, their speech may be spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading that person with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

12. “Monks, suppose a man came with a hoe and a basket and said: ‘I shall make this great earth to be without earth.’ He would dig here and there, strew the soil here and there, spit here and there, and urinate here and there, saying: ‘Be without earth, be without earth!’ What do you think, monks? Could that man make this great earth to be without earth?”—“No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because this great earth is deep and immense; it is not easy to make it be without earth. Eventually the man would reap only weariness and disappointment.”

13. “So too, monks, there are these five courses of speech ... (*as in §11*) ... Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected ... and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind similar to the earth, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

14. “Monks, suppose a man came with crimson, turmeric, indigo, or carmine and said: ‘I shall draw pictures and make pictures appear on empty space.’ What do you think, monks? Could that man draw pictures and make pictures appear on empty space?”—“No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because empty space is formless and non-manifestive; it is not easy to draw pictures there or make pictures appear there. Eventually the man would reap only weariness and disappointment.”

15. “So too, monks, there are these five courses of speech ... Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected ... and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind similar to empty space, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

16. “Monks, suppose a man came with a blazing grass-torch and said: ‘I shall heat up and burn away the river Ganges with this blazing grass-torch.’ What do you think, monks? Could that man heat up and burn away the river Ganges with that blazing grass-torch?”—“No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because the river Ganges is deep and immense; it is not easy to heat it up or burn it away with a blazing grass-torch. Eventually the man would reap only weariness and disappointment.”

17. “So too, monks, there are these five courses of speech ... Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected ... and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind similar to the river Ganges, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

18. “Monks, suppose there were a catskin bag that was rubbed, well rubbed, thoroughly well rubbed, soft, silky, rid of rustling, rid of crackling, and a man came with a stick or a potsherd and said: ‘There is this catskin bag that is rubbed ... rid of rustling, rid of crackling. I shall make it rustle and crackle.’ What do you think, monks? Could that man make it rustle or crackle with the stick or the potsherd?”—“No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because that catskin bag being rubbed ... rid of rustling, rid of crackling, it is not easy to make it rustle or crackle with the stick or the potsherd. Eventually the man would reap only weariness and disappointment.”

19. “So too, monks, there are these five courses of speech that others may use when they address you: their speech may be timely or untimely, true or untrue, gentle or harsh, connected with good or with harm, spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. When others address you, their speech may be timely or untimely; when others address you, their speech may be true or untrue; when others address you, their speech may be gentle or harsh; when others address you, their speech may be connected with good or with harm; when others address you, their speech may be spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate. Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading that person with a mind imbued with loving-kindness; and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind similar to a catskin bag, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

20. “Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handled saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching. Herein, monks, you should train thus: ‘Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading them with a mind imbued with loving-kindness; and starting with them, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.’ That is how you should train, monks.

21. “Monks, if you keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind, do you see any course of speech, trivial or gross, that you could not endure?”—“No, venerable sir.”—“Therefore, monks, you should keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind. That will lead to your welfare and happiness for a long time.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

### **Non-Retaliatio** (from MN 28)

8. [The Venerable Sāriputta told the monks:] “So then, if others abuse, revile, scold, and harass a monk [who has seen this element as it actually is], he understands thus: ‘This painful feeling born of ear-contact has arisen in me. That is dependent, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on contact.’ Then he sees that contact is impermanent, that feeling is impermanent, that perception is impermanent, that formations are impermanent, and that

consciousness is impermanent. And his mind, having made an element its objective support, enters into [that new objective support] and acquires confidence, steadiness, and resolution.<sup>334</sup>

9. “Now, if others attack that monk in ways that are unwished for, undesired, and disagreeable, by contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, he understands thus: ‘This body is of such a nature that contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail it. But this has been said by the Blessed One in his “advice on the simile of the saw”: “Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching.” So tireless energy shall be aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness established, my body shall be tranquil and untroubled, my mind concentrated and unified. And now let contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail this body; for this is just how the Buddha’s teaching is practiced.’

10. “When that monk thus recollects the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he arouses a sense of urgency thus: ‘It is a loss for me, it is no gain for me, it is bad for me, it is no good for me, that when I thus recollect the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in me.’ Just as when a daughter-in-law sees her father-in-law, she arouses a sense of urgency [to please him], so too, when that monk thus recollects the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he arouses a sense of urgency. But if, when he recollects the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome becomes established in him, then he is satisfied with it. At that point, friends, much has been done by that monk.”

## Class 4 — Disputes and Settling Disputes

### Disputes

#### 1. Roots of Disputes (AN 6:36)

"Monks, there are these six roots of disputes. What six?"

(1) "Here, a monk is angry and hostile. When a monk is angry and hostile, he dwells without respect and deference toward the Teacher, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha, and he does not fulfill the training. Such a monk creates a dispute in the Saṅgha that leads to the harm of many people, to the unhappiness of many people, to the ruin, harm, and suffering of devas and humans. If, monks, you perceive any such root of dispute either in yourselves or in others, you should strive to abandon this evil root of dispute. And if you do not perceive any such root of dispute either in yourselves or in others, you should practice so that this evil root of dispute does not emerge in the future [335]. In such a way this evil root of dispute is abandoned and does not emerge in the future.

(2) "Again, a monk is a denigrator and insolent ... (3) ... envious and miserly ... (4) ... crafty and hypocritical ... (5) ... one who has evil desires and wrong view ... (6) ... one who adheres to his own views, holds to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty. When a monk adheres to his own views, holds to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty, he dwells without respect and deference toward the Teacher, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha, and he does not fulfill the training. Such a monk creates a dispute in the Saṅgha that leads to the harm of many people, to the unhappiness of many people, to the ruin, harm, and suffering of devas and humans. If, monks, you perceive any such root of dispute either in yourselves or in others, you should strive to abandon this evil root of dispute. And if you do not perceive any such root of dispute either in yourselves or others, you should practice so that this evil root of dispute does not emerge in the future. In such a way this evil root of dispute is abandoned and does not emerge in the future.

"These, monks, are the six roots of dispute."

#### 3. Conflicts Due to Sensual Pleasures (from MN 13)

11. "Again, with sensual pleasures as the cause, sensual pleasures as the source, sensual pleasures as the basis, the cause being simply sensual pleasures, kings quarrel with kings, nobles with nobles, brahmins with brahmins, householders with householders; mother quarrels with son, son with mother, father with son, son with father; brother quarrels with brother, brother with sister, sister with brother, friend with friend. And here in their quarrels, brawls, and disputes they attack each other with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, whereby they incur death or deadly suffering. Now this too is a danger in the case of sensual pleasures, a mass of suffering here and now ... the cause being simply sensual pleasures.

12. "Again, with sensual pleasures as the cause ... men take swords and shields and buckle on bows and quivers, and they charge into battle massed in double array with arrows and spears flying and swords flashing; and there they are wounded by arrows and spears, and their heads are cut off by swords, whereby they incur death or deadly suffering. Now this too is a danger in the case of sensual pleasures, a mass of suffering here and now ... the cause being simply sensual pleasures.

13. "Again, with sensual pleasures as the cause ... men take swords and shields and buckle on bows and quivers, and they charge slippery bastions, with arrows and spears flying and swords flashing; and there they are wounded by arrows and spears and splashed with boiling liquids and crushed under heavy weights, and their heads are cut off by swords, whereby they incur death or deadly suffering. Now this too is a danger in the case of sensual pleasures, a mass of suffering here and now ... the cause being simply sensual pleasures.

#### **4. Rooted in Craving (AN 9:23)**

"I will teach you, bhikkhus, nine things rooted in craving. Listen and attend closely. I will speak."

"Yes, bhante," those bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this:

"And what are the nine things rooted in craving? (1) In dependence on craving there is seeking. (2) In dependence on seeking there is gain. (3) In dependence on gain there is judgment. (4) In dependence on judgment there is desire and lust. (5) In dependence on desire and lust there is attachment. (6) In dependence on attachment there is possessiveness. (7) In dependence on possessiveness there is miserliness. (8) In dependence on miserliness there is safeguarding. (9) With safeguarding as the foundation originate the taking up of rods [401] and weapons, quarrels, contentions, and disputes, accusations, divisive speech, and false speech, and many [other] bad unwholesome things. These are the nine things rooted in craving."<sup>2</sup>

### **Settling Disputes**

#### **1. Confession and Forgiveness (SN 11:24)**

Once two monks had a quarrel and one monk had transgressed against the other. Then the former monk confessed his transgression to the other monk, but the latter would not pardon him.

Then a number of monks approached the Blessed One and reported what had happened. [The Blessed One said:]

"Monks, there are two kinds of fools: one who does not see a transgression as a transgression; and one who, when another is confessing a transgression, does not pardon him. These are the two kinds of fools.

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<sup>2</sup> The nine terms rooted in craving, with explanations from the Commentary in parenthesis, are: (1) *pariyesanā* (the seeking of objects such as forms); (2) *lābha* (the obtaining of objects such as forms); (3) *vinicchaya* (when one has gained an object of desire, one distinguishes what is desirable and what is undesirable, what is beautiful and what is ordinary, how much one will keep and how much give to others, how much one will use and how much one will save, and so forth); (4) *chandarāga* (weak lust and strong lust, respectively, which arise towards the object thought about with unwholesome thoughts); (5) *ajjhosāna* (the strong conviction in "I" and "mine"); (6) *pariggaha* (taking possession by way of craving and views); (7) *macchhariya* (unwillingness to share with others); (8) *ārakkha* (guarding carefully by closing doors and storing in boxes); (9) *daṇḍādāna*, etc. (the taking up of weapons for the purpose of warding off others).

“There are, monks, two kinds of wise people: one who sees a transgression as a transgression; and one who, when another is confessing a transgression, pardons him. These are the two kinds of wise people.

“Once in the past, monks, Sakka, lord of the devas, instructing the Tāvātimsa devas in the Sudhamma assembly hall, on that occasion recited this verse:

““Bring anger under your control;  
Do not let your friendships decay.  
Do not blame one who is blameless;  
Do not utter divisive speech.  
Like a mountain avalanche  
Anger crushes evil people.””

## **2. Resolving Differences in Opinion (from MN 103)**

4. “While you are training in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, two monks might make different assertions about the higher Dhamma.

5. “Now if you should think thus: ‘These venerable ones differ about both the meaning and the phrasing,’ then whichever monk you think is the more reasonable should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones differ about both the meaning and the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is difference about the meaning and difference about the phrasing; let them not fall into a dispute.’ Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the opposite part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones differ about the meaning and the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is difference about the meaning and difference about the phrasing; let them not fall into a dispute.’ So what has been wrongly grasped should be borne in mind as wrongly grasped. Bearing in mind what has been wrongly grasped as wrongly grasped, what is Dhamma and what is Discipline should be expounded.

6. “Now if you should think thus: ‘These venerable ones differ about the meaning but agree about the phrasing,’ then whichever monk you think is the more reasonable should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones differ about the meaning but agree about the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is difference about the meaning but agreement about the phrasing; let them not fall into a dispute.’ Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the opposite part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones differ about the meaning but agree about the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is difference about the meaning but agreement about the phrasing; let them not fall into a dispute.’ So what has been wrongly grasped should be borne in mind as wrongly grasped and what has been rightly grasped should be borne in mind as rightly grasped. Bearing in mind what has been wrongly grasped as wrongly grasped, and bearing in mind what has been rightly grasped as rightly grasped, what is Dhamma and what is Discipline should be expounded.

7. “Now if you think thus: ‘These venerable ones agree about the meaning but differ about the phrasing,’ then whichever monk you think is the more reasonable should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones agree about the meaning but differ about the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is agreement about the meaning but difference about the phrasing. But the phrasing is a mere trifle. Let the venerable ones not fall into

a dispute over a mere trifle.’ Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the opposite part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones agree about the meaning but differ about the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is agreement about the meaning but difference about the phrasing. But the phrasing is a mere trifle. Let the venerable ones not fall into a dispute over a mere trifle.’ So what has been rightly grasped should be borne in mind as rightly grasped and what has been wrongly grasped should be borne in mind as wrongly grasped. Bearing in mind what has been rightly grasped as rightly grasped, and bearing in mind what has been wrongly grasped as wrongly grasped, what is Dhamma and what is Discipline should be expounded.

8. “Now if you should think thus: ‘These venerable ones agree about both the meaning and the phrasing,’ then whichever monk you think is the more reasonable should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones agree about both the meaning and the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is agreement about both the meaning and the phrasing; let the venerable ones not fall into a dispute.’ Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the opposite part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘The venerable ones agree about both the meaning and the phrasing. The venerable ones should know that it is for this reason that there is agreement about both the meaning and the phrasing; let the venerable ones not fall into a dispute.’ So what has been rightly grasped should be borne in mind as rightly grasped. Bearing in mind what has been rightly grasped as rightly grasped, what is Dhamma and what is Discipline should be expounded.

9. “While you are training in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, some monk might commit an offence or a transgression.

10. “Now, monks, you should not hurry to reprove him; rather, the person should be examined thus: ‘I shall not be troubled and the other person will not be hurt; for the other person is not given to anger and resentment, he is not firmly attached to his view and he relinquishes easily, and I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome.’ If such occurs to you, monks, it is proper to speak.

11. “Then it may occur to you, monks: ‘I shall not be troubled, but the other person will be hurt, for the other person is given to anger and resentment. However, he is not firmly attached to his view and he relinquishes easily, and I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome. It is a mere trifle that the other person will be hurt, but it is a much greater thing that I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome.’ If such occurs to you, monks, it is proper to speak.

12. “Then it may occur to you, monks: ‘I shall be troubled, but the other person will not be hurt; for the other person is not given to anger and resentment, though he is firmly attached to his view and he relinquishes with difficulty; yet I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome. It is a mere trifle that I shall be troubled, but it is a much greater thing that I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome.’ If such occurs to you, monks, it is proper to speak.

13. “Then it may occur to you, monks: ‘I shall be troubled and the other person will be hurt; for the other person is given to anger and resentment, and he is firmly attached to his view and he relinquishes with difficulty; yet I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome. It is a mere trifle that I shall be troubled and the other person hurt, but it is a much greater thing that I can make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome.’ If such occurs to you, monks, it is proper to speak.

14. “Then it may occur to you, monks: ‘I shall be troubled and the other person will be hurt; for the other person is given to anger and resentment, and he is firmly attached to his view and he relinquishes with difficulty; and I cannot make that person emerge from the unwholesome and establish him in the wholesome.’ One should not underrate equanimity towards such a person.

15. “While you are training in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, there might arise mutual verbal friction, insolence in views, mental annoyance, bitterness, and dejection. Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the one part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘While we were training in concord, friend, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, there arose mutual verbal friction, insolence in views, mental annoyance, bitterness, and dejection. If the Master knew, would he censure that?’ Answering rightly, the monk would answer thus: ‘While we were training ... If the Master knew, he would censure that.’

“‘But, friend, without abandoning that thing, can one realise Nibbāna?’ Answering rightly, the monk would answer thus: ‘Friend, without abandoning that thing, one cannot realise Nibbāna.’

16. “Then whichever monk you think is the most reasonable of those who side together on the opposite part should be approached and addressed thus: ‘While we were training in concord, friend, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, there arose mutual verbal friction, insolence in views, mental annoyance, bitterness, and dejection. If the Master knew, would he censure that?’ Answering rightly, the monk would answer thus: ‘While we were training ... If the Master knew, he would censure that.’

“‘But, friend, without abandoning that thing, can one realise Nibbāna?’ Answering rightly, the monk would answer thus: ‘Friend, without abandoning that thing, one cannot realise Nibbāna.’

17. “If others should ask that monk thus: ‘Was it the venerable one who made those monks emerge from the unwholesome and established them in the wholesome?’ answering rightly, the monk would answer thus: ‘Here, friends, I went to the Blessed One. The Blessed One taught me the Dhamma. Having heard that Dhamma, I spoke to those monks. The monks heard that Dhamma, and they emerged from the unwholesome and became established in the wholesome.’ Answering thus, the monk neither exalts himself nor disparages others; he answers in accordance with the Dhamma in such a way that nothing which provides a ground for censure can be legitimately deduced from his assertion.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

#### **4. Disputes Over Discipline**

##### **(1) The Need for Self-Reflection (AN 2:15)**

"Monks, if, in regard to a particular disciplinary issue,<sup>3</sup> the monk who has committed an offense and the monk who reproves him do not each thoroughly reflect upon themselves, it can be

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<sup>3</sup> Mp mentions the four kinds of disciplinary issues: involving a dispute (*vivādādhikaraṇa*); involving an accusation (*anuvādādhikaraṇa*); involving an offense (*āpattādhikaraṇa*); and involving procedure (*kiccādhikaraṇa*). These are dealt with in detail at Vin II 88–92. Briefly, an issue involving a dispute arises when monks or nuns dispute about the Dhamma and the Vinaya; an issue involving an accusation arises when they accuse another member of committing a transgression; an issue involving an offense arises when a monk or nun who has committed a transgression seeks rehabilitation; and an issue involving procedure deals with the collective procedures of the Saṅgha. Methods for settling disciplinary issues (*adhikaraṇasamatha*) are explained at MN 104.12–20, II 247–50.

expected that this disciplinary issue will lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time and the monks will not dwell at ease. But if the monk who has committed an offense and the monk who reproves him each thoroughly reflect upon themselves, it can be expected that this disciplinary issue will not lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time and the monks will dwell at ease.

"And how does the monk who has committed an offense thoroughly reflect upon himself? Here, the monk who has committed an offense reflects thus: 'I have committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body. That monk saw me doing so. If I had not committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, he would not have seen me doing so. But because I committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, he saw me doing so. When he saw me committing a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, he became displeased. Being displeased, he expressed his displeasure to me. Because he expressed his displeasure to me, I became displeased. Being displeased, I informed others. Thus in this case I was the one who incurred a transgression, just as a traveler does when he evades the customs duty on his goods.' It is in this way that the monk who has committed an offense thoroughly reflects upon himself.

"And how does the reproving monk thoroughly reflect upon himself? Here, the reproving monk reflects thus: 'This monk has committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body. I saw him doing so. If this monk had not committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, I would not have seen him doing so. [55] But because he committed a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, I saw him doing so. When I saw him committing a particular unwholesome misdeed with the body, I became displeased. Being displeased, I expressed my displeasure to him. Because I expressed my displeasure to him, he became displeased. Being displeased, he informed others. Thus in this case I was the one who incurred a transgression, just as a traveler does when he evades the customs duty on his goods.' It is in this way that the reproving monk thoroughly reflects upon himself.

"If, monks, in regard to a particular disciplinary issue, the monk who has committed an offense and the monk who reproves him do not each thoroughly reflect upon themselves, it can be expected that this disciplinary issue will lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time and the monks will not dwell at ease. But if the monk who has committed an offense and the monk who reproves him each thoroughly reflect upon themselves, it can be expected that this disciplinary issue will not lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time and the monks will dwell at ease."

## **(2) Avoiding Acrimony (AN 2:63)**

"Monks, when, in regard to a disciplinary issue, the exchange of words between both parties, the insolence about views, and the resentment, bitterness, and exasperation are not settled internally, it can be expected that this disciplinary issue will lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time, and the monks will not dwell at ease.

"Monks, when, in regard to a disciplinary issue, the exchange of words between both parties, the insolence about views, and the resentment, bitterness, and exasperation are well settled internally, it can be expected that this disciplinary issue will not lead to acrimony and animosity for a long time, and the monks will dwell at ease."

## **5. Mutual Correction (AN 2:62)**

"Monks, I will teach you about co-residency among the bad and about co-residency among the good. Listen and attend closely. I will speak."

"Yes, bhante," those monks replied. The Blessed One said this:

"And how is there co-residency among the bad, and how do the bad live together? Here, it occurs to an elder monk: 'An elder [monk]—or one of middle standing or a junior [monk]—should not correct me. I should not correct an elder [monk], or one of middle standing or a junior [monk]. If an elder [monk] corrects me, he might do so without sympathy, not sympathetically. I would then say "No!" to him and would trouble him, and even seeing [my offense] I would not make amends for it. If [a monk] of middle standing corrects me ... If a junior [monk] corrects me, he might do so without sympathy, not sympathetically. I would then say "No!" to him and would trouble him, and even seeing [my offense] I would not make amends for it.'

"It occurs, too, to [a monk] of middle standing ... to a junior [monk]: 'An elder [monk]—or one of middle standing or a junior [monk]—should not correct me. I should not correct an elder [monk] ... and even seeing [my offense] I would not make amends for it.' It is in this way that there is co-residency among the bad, and it is in this way that the bad live together.

"And how, monks, is there co-residency among the good, and how do the good live together? Here, it occurs to an elder monk: 'An elder [monk]—and one of middle standing and a junior [monk]—should correct me. I should correct an elder [monk], one of middle standing, and a junior [monk]. If an elder [monk] corrects me, he might do so sympathetically, not without sympathy. I would then say "Good!" to him and would not trouble him, and seeing [my offense] I would make amends for it. If [a monk] of middle standing speaks to me ... If a junior [monk] corrects me, he might do so sympathetically, not without sympathy, I would then say "Good!" to him and would not trouble him, and seeing [my offense] I would make amends for it.'

"It occurs, too, to [a monk] of middle standing ... to a junior [monk]: 'An elder [monk]—and one of middle standing and a junior [monk]—should correct me. I should correct an elder [monk] ... and seeing [my offense] I would make amends for it.' It is in this way that there is co-residency among the good, and it is in this way that the good live together."

## 6. Accepting Correction from Others (MN 15)

[Venerable Mahāmogallāna told the monks:]

2. "Friends, though a monk asks thus: 'Let the venerable ones correct me, I need to be corrected by the venerable ones,' yet if he is difficult to correct and possesses qualities that make him difficult to correct, if he is impatient and does not take instruction rightly, then his companions in the holy life think that he should not be corrected or instructed, they think of him as a person not to be trusted.

3. "What qualities make him difficult to correct?"

(1) Here a monk has evil wishes and is dominated by evil wishes; this is a quality that makes him difficult to correct.

(2) Again, a monk lauds himself and disparages others; this is a quality that makes him difficult to correct.

(3) Again, a monk is angry and is overcome by anger; this is a quality ...

(4) Again, a monk is angry, and resentful because of anger ...

(5) Again, a monk is angry, and stubborn because of anger ...

(6) Again, a monk is angry, and he utters words bordering on anger ...

(7) Again, a monk is reproved, and he resists the reprover ...

(8) Again, a monk is reproved, and he denigrates the reprover ...

(9) Again, a monk is reproved, and he counter-reproves the reprover ...

(10) Again, a monk is reprovved, and he prevaricates, leads the talk aside, and shows anger, hate, and bitterness ...

(11) Again, a monk is reprovved, and he fails to account for his conduct ...

(12) Again, a monk is contemptuous and insolent ...

(13) Again, a monk is envious and avaricious ...

(14) Again, a monk is fraudulent and deceitful ...

(15) Again, a monk is obstinate and arrogant ...

(16) Again, a monk adheres to his own views, holds on to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty; this is a quality that makes him difficult to correct.

“Friends, these are called the qualities that make him difficult to correct.

4. “Friends, though a monk does not ask thus: ‘Let the venerable ones correct me; I need to be corrected by the venerable ones,’ yet if he is easy to correct and possesses qualities that make him easy to correct, if he is patient and takes instruction rightly, then his companions in the holy life think that he should be corrected and instructed, and they think of him as a person to be trusted.

5. “What qualities make him easy to correct?

(1) Here a monk has no evil wishes and is not dominated by evil wishes; this is a quality that makes him easy to correct.

(2) Again, a monk does not laud himself nor disparage others; this is a quality ...

(3) He is not angry nor allows anger to overcome him ...

(4) He is not angry or resentful because of anger ...

(5) He is not angry or stubborn because of anger ...

(6) He is not angry, and he does not utter words bordering on anger ...

(7) He is reprovved, and he does not resist the reprover ...

(8) He is reprovved, and he does not denigrate the reprover ...

(9) He is reprovved, and he does not counter-reprove the reprover ...

(10) He is reprovved, and he does not prevaricate, lead the talk aside, and show anger, hate, and bitterness ...

(11) He is reprovved, and he does not fail to account for his conduct ...

(12) He is not contemptuous or insolent ...

(13) He is not envious or avaricious ...

(14) He is not fraudulent or deceitful ...

(15) He is not obstinate or arrogant ...

(16) Again, a monk does not adhere to his own views or hold on to them tenaciously, and he relinquishes them easily; this is a quality that makes him easy to correct.

“Friends, these are called the qualities that make him easy to correct.

6. “Now, friends, a monk ought to infer about himself in the following way:

(1) ‘A person with evil wishes and dominated by evil wishes is displeasing and disagreeable to me. If I were to have evil wishes and be dominated by evil wishes, I would be displeasing and disagreeable to others.’ A monk who knows this should arouse his mind thus: ‘I shall not have evil wishes and be dominated by evil wishes.’

(2–16) ‘A person who lauds himself and disparages others ... A person who adheres to his own views, holds on to them tenaciously, and relinquishes them with difficulty is displeasing and disagreeable to me. If I were to adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and relinquish them with difficulty, I would be displeasing and disagreeable to others.’ A monk who knows this should arouse his mind thus: ‘I shall not adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and I shall relinquish them easily.’

7. “Now, friends, a monk should review himself thus:

(1) ‘Do I have evil wishes and am I dominated by evil wishes?’ If, when he reviews himself, he knows: ‘I have evil wishes, I am dominated by evil wishes,’ then he should make an effort to abandon those evil unwholesome states. But if, when he reviews himself, he knows: ‘I have no evil wishes, I am not dominated by evil wishes,’ then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

(2–16) Again, a monk should review himself thus: ‘Do I praise myself and disparage others?’ ... ‘Do I adhere to my own views, hold on to them tenaciously, and relinquish them with difficulty?’ If, when he reviews himself, he knows: ‘I adhere to my own views ... ,’ then [100] he should make an effort to abandon those evil unwholesome states. But if, when he reviews himself, he knows: ‘I do not adhere to my own views ... ,’ then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

8. “Friends, when a monk reviews himself thus, if he sees that these evil unwholesome states are not all abandoned in himself, then he should make an effort to abandon them all. But if, when he reviews himself thus, he sees that they are all abandoned in himself, then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states. Just as when a woman—or a man— young, youthful, fond of ornaments, on viewing the image of her own face in a clear bright mirror or in a basin of clear water, sees a smudge or a blemish on it, she makes an effort to remove it, but if she sees no smudge or blemish on it, she becomes glad thus: ‘It is a gain for me that it is clean’; so too when a monk reviews himself thus ... then he can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.” **Settling Disputes**

### **Between Laity and Sangha —Overturning the Almsbowl (AN 8:87)**

"Monks, when a lay follower possesses eight qualities, the Saṅgha, if it so wishes, may overturn the almsbowl on him.<sup>4</sup> What eight? (1) He tries to prevent monks from acquiring gains; (2) he tries to bring harm to monks; (3) he tries to prevent monks from residing [in a certain place]; (4) he insults and reviles monks; (5) he divides monks from each other; (6) he speaks dispraise of the Buddha; (7) he speaks dispraise of the Dhamma; (8) he speaks dispraise of the Saṅgha. When a lay follower possesses these eight qualities, the Saṅgha, if it so wishes, may overturn the almsbowl on him.

"Monks, when a lay follower possesses eight qualities, the Saṅgha, if it so wishes, may turn the almsbowl upright on him. What eight? (1) He does not try to prevent monks from acquiring gains; (2) he does not try to bring harm to monks; (3) he does not try to prevent monks from residing [nearby]; (4) he does not insult and revile monks; (5) he does not divide monks from each other; (6) he speaks praise of the Buddha; (7) he speaks praise of the Dhamma; (8) he speaks praise of the Saṅgha. When a lay follower possesses these eight qualities, the Saṅgha, if it so wishes, may turn the almsbowl upright on him."

## **Class 5 — Community and Establishing an Equitable Society**

### **Four Means of Embracing Others (AN 4:32)**

"Monks, there are these four means of embracing others. What four? Giving, endearing speech, beneficent conduct, and impartiality. These are the four means of embracing others."

Giving, endearing speech,  
beneficent conduct, and impartiality  
under diverse worldly conditions,  
as is suitable to fit each case:  
these means of embracing others  
are like the linchpin of a rolling chariot.

If there were no such means of embracing others,  
neither mother nor father  
would be able to obtain esteem  
and veneration from their son.

But these means of embracing exist,  
and therefore the wise respect them;  
thus they attain to greatness  
and are highly praised.

### **Seven Conditions for Social Harmony (AN 7:21)**

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Vesālī at the Sāranda Shrine. Then a number of Licchavis approached the Blessed One, paid homage to him, and sat down to one side. The Blessed One said this to them:

"I will teach you, Licchavis, seven principles of non-decline. Listen and attend closely. I will speak."

"Yes, bhante," those Licchavis replied. The Blessed One said this:

"And what, Licchavis, are the seven principles of non-decline?"

(1) "Licchavis, as long as the Vajjis assemble often and hold frequent assemblies, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(2) "As long as the Vajjis assemble in harmony, adjourn in harmony, and conduct the affairs of the Vajjis in harmony, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(3) "As long as the Vajjis do not decree anything that has not been decreed or abolish anything that has already been decreed but undertake and follow the ancient Vajji principles as they have been decreed, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(4) "As long as the Vajjis honor, respect, esteem, and venerate the Vajji elders and think they should be heeded, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(5) "As long as the Vajjis do not abduct women and girls from their families and force them to live with them, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(6) "As long as the Vajjis honor, respect, esteem, and venerate their traditional shrines, both those within [the city] and those outside, and do not neglect the righteous oblations as given and done to them in the past, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

(7) "As long as the Vajjis provide righteous protection, shelter, and guard for arahants, [with the intention]: 'How can those arahants who have not yet come here come to our realm, and how can those arahants who have already come dwell at ease here?' only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.

"Licchavis, as long as these seven principles of non-decline continue among the Vajjis, and the Vajjis are seen [established] in them, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline."

### **Ten Principles of Cordiality (AN 10:50)**

On one occasion a number of monks assembled in the assembly hall and were sitting together when they took to arguing and quarreling and fell into a dispute, stabbing each other with piercing words.

Then, in the evening, the Blessed One emerged from seclusion and went to the assembly hall, where he sat down on the prepared seat. The Blessed One then addressed the monks:

"Monks, what discussion were you engaged in just now as you were sitting together here? What was the conversation that was underway?"

"Here, bhante, after our meal, on returning from our alms round, we assembled in the assembly hall and were sitting together when we took to arguing and quarreling and fell into a dispute, stabbing each other with piercing words."

"Monks, it is not suitable for you clansmen who have gone forth out of faith from the household life into homelessness to take to arguing and quarreling and to fall into a dispute, stabbing each other with piercing words.

"There are, monks, these ten principles of cordiality that create affection and respect and conduce to cohesiveness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. What ten?"

(1) "Here, a monk is virtuous; he dwells restrained by the Pātimokkha, possessed of good conduct and resort, seeing danger in minute faults. Having undertaken the training rules, he trains in them. Since a monk is virtuous ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces to cohesiveness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity.

(2) "Again, a monk has learnt much, remembers what he has learnt, and accumulates what he has learnt. Those teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life—such teachings as these he has learnt much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, investigated mentally, and penetrated well by view. Since a monk has learnt much ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.

- (3) "Again, a monk has good friends, good companions, good comrades. Since a monk has good friends ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (4) "Again, a monk is easy to correct and possesses qualities that make him easy to correct; he is patient and receives instruction respectfully. Since a monk is easy to correct ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (5) "Again, a monk is skillful and diligent in attending to the diverse chores that are to be done for his fellow monks; he possesses appropriate investigation there, and he is able to carry out and arrange everything properly. Since a monk is skillful and diligent ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (6) "Again, a monk loves the Dhamma and is pleasing in his assertions, filled with a lofty joy pertaining to the Dhamma and discipline. Since a monk loves the Dhamma ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (7) "Again, a monk has aroused energy for abandoning unwholesome qualities and acquiring wholesome qualities; he is strong, firm in exertion, not casting off the duty of cultivating wholesome qualities. Since a monk has aroused energy ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (8) "Again, a monk is content with any kind of robe, almsfood, lodging, and medicines and provisions for the sick. Since a monk is content with any kind of robe ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (9) "Again, a monk is mindful, possessing supreme mindfulness and alertness, one who remembers and recollects what was done and said long ago. Since a monk is mindful ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.
- (10) "Again, a monk is wise; he possesses the wisdom that discerns arising and passing away, which is noble and penetrative and leads to the complete destruction of suffering. Since a monk is wise ... this is a principle of cordiality that creates affection and respect and conduces ... to unity.

"These, monks, are the ten principles of cordiality that create affection and respect and conduce to cohesiveness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity."

## **2. The Harmonious Assembly**

### **Two Kinds of Assemblies (AN 3:95)**

"There are, monks, the divided assembly and the harmonious assembly.

"What is the divided assembly? Here, the assembly in which the monks take to arguing and quarreling and fall into disputes, stabbing each other with piercing words, is called the divided assembly.

"What is the harmonious assembly? Here, the assembly in which the monks dwell in concord, harmoniously, without disputes, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with eyes of affection, is called the harmonious assembly.

"When the monks dwell in concord, harmoniously, without disputes, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with eyes of affection, on that occasion they generate much merit. On that occasion the monks dwell in a divine abode, that is, in the liberation of mind through altruistic joy. When one is joyful, rapture arises. For one with a rapturous mind, the body

becomes tranquil. One tranquil in body feels pleasure. For one feeling pleasure, the mind becomes concentrated.

"Just as, when it is raining and the rain pours down in thick droplets on a mountain top, the water flows down along the slope and fills the cleft, gullies, and creeks; these, becoming full, fill up the pools; these, becoming full, fill up the lakes; these, becoming full, fill up the streams; these, becoming full, fill up the rivers; and these, becoming full, fill up the ocean; so too, when the monks dwell in concord, harmoniously, without disputes, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with eyes of affection, on that occasion they generate much merit. On that occasion the monks dwell in a divine abode, that is, in the liberation of mind through altruistic joy. When one is joyful, rapture arises. For one with a rapturous mind, the body becomes tranquil. One tranquil in body feels pleasure. For one feeling pleasure, the mind becomes concentrated."

### **Future Perils** (from AN 5:78)

"Again, a monk reflects thus: 'People are now dwelling in concord, harmoniously, without disputes, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with eyes of affection. But there will come a time of peril, of turbulence in the wilderness, when the people of the countryside, mounted on their vehicles, flee on all sides. In a time of peril, people migrate to places where there is safety and living conditions there are congested and crowded. Now when living conditions are congested and crowded, it is not easy to attend to the Buddhas' teaching; it is not easy to resort to remote lodgings in forests and jungle groves. Before that unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the as-yet-unattained, for the achievement of the as-yet-unachieved, for the realization of the as-yet-unrealized. Thus when I am in that condition, I will dwell at ease even in time of peril.' This is the fourth future peril considering which it is enough for a monk to dwell heedful, ardent, and resolute ... for the realization of the as-yet-unrealized.

"Again, a monk reflects thus: 'The Saṅgha is now dwelling at ease—in concord, harmoniously, without disputes, with a single recitation. But there will come a time when there will be a schism in the Saṅgha. Now when there is a schism in the Saṅgha, it is not easy to attend to the Buddhas' teaching; it is not easy to resort to remote lodgings in forests and jungle groves. Before that unwished for, undesirable, disagreeable condition comes upon me, let me in advance arouse energy for the attainment of the as-yet-unattained, for the achievement of the as-yet-unachieved, for the realization of the as-yet-unrealized. Thus when I am in that condition, I will dwell at ease even though there is a schism in the Saṅgha.' This is the fifth future peril considering which it is enough for a monk to dwell heedful, ardent, and resolute ... for the realization of the as-yet-unrealized.

"These, monks, are the five future perils considering which it is enough for a monk to dwell heedful, ardent, and resolute for the attainment of the as-yet-unattained, for the achievement of the as-yet-unachieved, for the realization of the as-yet-unrealized."

### **An Ideal Community (from MN 31)**

1. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Nādikā in the Brick House.

2. Now on that occasion the venerable Anuruddha, the venerable Nandiya, and the venerable Kimbila were living at the Park of the Gosinga Sāla-tree Wood.

3–4. [The Buddha went to visit them.]

5. Then all three went to meet the Blessed One. One took his bowl and outer robe, one prepared a seat, and one set out water for washing the feet. The Blessed One sat down on the seat made ready and washed his feet. Then those three venerable ones paid homage to the Blessed One and sat down at one side. When they were seated, the Blessed One said to them: “I hope you are all keeping well, Anuruddha, I hope you are all comfortable, I hope you are not having any trouble getting almsfood.”

“We are keeping well, Blessed One, we are comfortable, and we are not having any trouble getting almsfood.”

6. “I hope, Anuruddha, that you are all living in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes.”

“Surely, venerable sir, we are living in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes.”

“But, Anuruddha, how do you live thus?”

7. “Venerable sir, as to that, I think thus: ‘It is a gain for me, it is a great gain for me, that I am living with such companions in the holy life.’ I maintain bodily acts of loving-kindness towards those venerable ones both openly and privately; I maintain verbal acts of loving-kindness towards them both openly and privately; I maintain mental acts of loving-kindness towards them both openly and privately. I consider: ‘Why should I not set aside what I wish to do and do what these venerable ones wish to do?’ Then I set aside what I wish to do and do what these venerable ones wish to do. We are different in body, venerable sir, but one in mind.”

The venerable Nandiya and the venerable Kimbila each spoke likewise, adding: “That is how, venerable sir, we are living in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes.”

8. “Good, good, Anuruddha. I hope that you all abide diligent, ardent, and resolute.”

“Surely, venerable sir, we abide diligent, ardent, and resolute.”

“But, Anuruddha, how do you abide thus?”

9. “Venerable sir, as to that, whichever of us returns first from the village with almsfood prepares the seats, sets out the water for drinking and for washing, and puts the refuse bucket in its place. Whichever of us returns last eats any food left over, if he wishes; otherwise he throws it away where there is no greenery or drops it into water where there is no life. He puts away the seats and the water for drinking and for washing. He puts away the refuse bucket after washing it and he sweeps out the refectory. Whoever notices that the pots of water for drinking, washing, or the latrine are low or empty takes care of them. If they are too heavy for him, he calls someone else by a signal of the hand and they move it by joining hands, but because of this we do not break out into speech. But every five days we sit together all night discussing the Dhamma. That is how we abide diligent, ardent, and resolute.”

### **1. When Kings Are Unrighteous (AN 4:70)**

"When kings are unrighteous, the royal vassals become unrighteous. When the royal vassals are unrighteous, brahmins and householders become unrighteous. When brahmins and householders are unrighteous, the people of the towns and countryside become unrighteous. When the people of the towns and countryside are unrighteous, the sun and moon proceed off course. When the sun and moon proceed off course, the constellations and the stars proceed off course. When the constellations and the stars proceed off course, day and night proceed off course ... the months and fortnights proceed off course ... the seasons and years proceed off course. When the seasons and years proceed off course, the winds blow off course and at random. When the winds blow off course and at random, the deities become upset. When the deities are upset, sufficient rain does not fall. When sufficient rain does not fall, the crops ripen irregularly. When people eat crops that ripen irregularly, they become short-lived, ugly, weak, and sickly.

"But when kings are righteous, the royal vassals become righteous. When the royal vassals are righteous, brahmins and householders become righteous. When brahmins and householders are righteous, the people of the towns and countryside become righteous. When the people of the towns and countryside are righteous, the sun and moon proceed on course. When the sun and moon proceed on course, the constellations and the stars proceed on course. When the constellations and the stars proceed on course, day and night proceed on course ... the months and fortnights proceed on course ... the seasons and years proceed on course. When the seasons and years proceed on course, the winds blow on course and dependably. When the winds blow on course and dependably, the deities do not become upset. When the deities are not upset, sufficient rain falls. When sufficient rain falls, the crops ripen in season. When people eat crops that ripen in season, they become long-lived, beautiful, strong, and healthy."

When cattle are crossing [a ford],  
if the chief bull goes crookedly,  
all the others go crookedly  
because their leader has gone crookedly.  
So too, among human beings,  
when the one considered the chief  
behaves unrighteously,  
other people do so as well.  
The entire kingdom is dejected  
if the king is unrighteous.

When cattle are crossing [a ford]  
if the chief bull goes straight across,  
all the others go straight across  
because their leader has gone straight.  
So too, among human beings,

when the one considered the chief  
conducts himself righteously,  
other people do so as well.  
The entire kingdom rejoices  
if the king is righteous.

## **2. The Wheel-Turning Monarch (AN 3:14)**

The Blessed One said: “Monks, even a wheel-turning monarch, a just and righteous king, does not govern his realm without a co-regent.”

When he had spoken, a certain monk asked: “But who, venerable sir, is the co-regent of the wheel-turning monarch, the just and righteous king?”

“It is the Dhamma, the law of righteousness,” replied the Blessed One.

“The wheel-turning monarch, the just and righteous king, relying on the Dhamma, honoring the Dhamma, esteeming and respecting it, with the Dhamma as his standard, banner, and sovereign, provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety for his own dependents. He provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety for the khattiyas attending on him; for his army, for the brahmins and householders, for the inhabitants of town and countryside, for ascetics and brahmins, for the beasts and birds.

“A wheel-turning monarch, a just and righteous king, who thus provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety for all, is the one who rules by Dhamma only. And that rule cannot be overthrown by any hostile human being.

“Even so, monk, the Tathāgata, the Arahant, the Perfectly Enlightened One, the just and righteous king of the Dhamma, relying on the Dhamma, honoring the Dhamma, esteeming and respecting it, with the Dhamma as his standard, banner, and sovereign, provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety in regard to action by body, speech, and mind thus: ‘Such bodily action should be undertaken and such should not be undertaken. Such verbal action should be undertaken and such should not be undertaken. Such mental action should be undertaken and such should not be undertaken.’

“The Tathāgata, the Arahant, the Fully Enlightened One, the just and righteous king of the Dhamma, who thus provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety in regard to action by body, speech, and mind, is the one who turns the incomparable wheel of the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma only. And that wheel of the Dhamma cannot be turned back by any ascetic or brahmin, by any deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

## **3. The Duties of a Sovereign (from DN 26)**

3. “And, after many hundreds and thousands of years, King Dalhanemi said to a certain man: ‘My good man, whenever you see that the sacred wheel-treasure has slipped from its position, report it to me.’ ‘Yes, Sire’, the man replied. And after many hundreds and thousands of years the man saw that the sacred wheel-treasure had slipped from its position. Seeing this, he reported the fact to the king. Then King Dalhanemi sent for his eldest son, the crown prince, and said: ‘My son, the sacred wheel-treasure has slipped from its position. And I have heard say that when this happens to a wheel-turning monarch, he has not much longer to live. I have had my fill of human pleasures, now is the time to seek heavenly pleasures. You, my son, take over control of this land. I will shave off my hair and beard, put on ochre robes, and go forth from the

household life into homelessness.’ And, having installed his eldest son in due form as king, King Dalhanemi shaved off his hair and beard, put on ochre robes, and went forth from the household life into homelessness. And, seven days after the royal sage had gone forth, the sacred wheel-treasure vanished.

4. “Then a certain man came to the consecrated khattiya king and said: ‘Sire, you should know that the sacred wheel-treasure has disappeared.’ At this the king was grieved and felt sad. He went to the royal sage and told him the news. And the royal sage said to him: ‘My son, you should not grieve or feel sad at the disappearance of the wheel-treasure. The wheel-treasure is not an heirloom from your fathers. But now, my son, you must turn yourself into a noble wheel-turner. And then it may come about that, if you perform the duties of a noble wheel-turning monarch, on the *uposatha* day of the fifteenth, when you have washed your head and gone up to the verandah on top of your palace for the *uposatha* day, the sacred wheel-treasure will appear to you, thousand-spoked, complete with rim, hub, and all accessories.’

5. “‘But what, Sire, is the duty of a noble wheel-turning monarch?’—‘It is this, my son: Yourself depending on the Dhamma, honoring it, revering it, cherishing it, doing homage to it, and venerating it, having the Dhamma as your badge and banner, acknowledging the Dhamma as your master, you should establish righteous guard, ward, and protection for your own household, your troops, your khattiyas and vassals, for brahmins and householders, town and country folk, ascetics and brahmins, for beasts and birds. Let no crime prevail in your kingdom, and to those who are in need, give wealth. And whatever ascetics and brahmins in your kingdom have renounced the life of sensual infatuation and are devoted to forbearance and gentleness, each one taming himself, each one calming himself, and each one striving for the end of craving, from time to time you should approach them and ask: “What, venerable sirs, is wholesome and what is unwholesome, what is blameworthy and what is blameless, what is to be followed and what is not to be followed? What action will in the long run lead to harm and sorrow, and what to welfare and happiness?” Having listened to them, you should avoid what is unwholesome and do what is wholesome. That, my son, is the duty of a noble wheel-turning monarch.’

“‘Yes, Sire,’ said the king, and he performed the duties of a noble wheel-turning monarch. And as he did so, on the *uposatha* day of the fifteenth, when he had washed his head and gone up to the verandah on top of his palace for the *uposatha* day, the sacred wheel-treasure appeared to him, thousand-spoked, complete with rim, hub, and all accessories. Then the king thought: ‘I have heard that when a duly anointed khattiya king sees such a wheel on the *uposatha* day of the fifteenth, he will become a wheel-turning monarch. May I become such a monarch?’

“Then, rising from his seat, covering one shoulder with his robe, the king took a gold vessel in his left hand, sprinkled the wheel with his right hand, and said: ‘May the noble wheel-treasure turn, may the noble wheel-treasure conquer!’ The wheel turned to the east, and the king followed it with his fourfold army. And in whatever country the wheel stopped, the king took up residence with his fourfold army. And those who opposed him in the eastern region came and said: ‘Come, Your Majesty, welcome. We are yours, Your Majesty. Rule us, Your Majesty.’ And the king said: ‘Do not take life. Do not take what is not given. Do not commit sexual misconduct. Do not tell lies. Do not drink intoxicating drinks. Enjoy your possessions as before.’ And those who had opposed him in the eastern region became his subjects.

7. “Then the wheel turned, south, west, and north ... (as section 6) ... Then the wheel-treasure, having conquered the lands from sea to sea, returned to the royal capital and stopped before the king’s place as he was trying a case, as if to adorn the royal palace.”

#### **4. Providing for the Welfare of the People (from DN 5)**

9. Sitting to one side, the brahmin Kutadanta addressed the Blessed One: “Master Gotama, I have heard that you understand how to conduct successfully the triple sacrifice with its sixteen requisites. Now I do not understand all this, but I want to make a big sacrifice. It would be good if Master Gotama would explain this to me.”

“Then listen, brahmin, pay proper attention, and I will explain.”

“Yes, sir,” replied Kutadanta, and the Blessed One continued:

10. “Brahmin, once upon a time there was a king called Mahāvijita. He was rich, of great wealth and resources, with an abundance of gold and silver, of possessions and requisites, of money and money’s worth, with a full treasury and granary. And when King Mahāvijita was reflecting in private, the thought came to him: ‘I have acquired extensive wealth in human terms, I occupy a wide extent of land which I have conquered. Let me now make a great sacrifice that would be to my benefit and happiness for a long time.’ And calling his chaplain, he told him his thought. ‘I want to make a great sacrifice. Instruct me, venerable sir, how this may be to my lasting benefit and happiness.’

11. “The chaplain replied: ‘Your Majesty’s country is beset by thieves. It is ravaged; villages and towns are being destroyed; the countryside is infested with brigands. If Your Majesty were to tax this region, that would be the wrong thing to do. Suppose Your Majesty were to think: “I will get rid of this plague of robbers by executions and imprisonment, or by confiscation, threats, and banishment,” the plague would not be properly ended. Those who survived would later harm Your Majesty’s realm. However, with this plan you can completely eliminate the plague. To those in the kingdom who are engaged in cultivating crops and raising cattle, let Your Majesty distribute grain and fodder; to those in trade, give capital; to those in government service assign proper living wages. Then those people, being intent on their own occupations, will not harm the kingdom. Your Majesty’s revenues will be great; the land will be tranquil and not beset by thieves; and the people, with joy in their hearts, playing with their children, will dwell in open houses.’

“And saying: ‘So be it!’, the king accepted the chaplain’s advice: he gave grain and fodder to those engaged in cultivating crops and raising cattle, capital to those in trade, proper living wages to those in government service. Then those people, being intent on their own occupations, did not harm the kingdom. The king’s revenues became great; the land was tranquil and not beset by thieves; and the people, with joy in their hearts, playing with their children, dwelt in open houses.”

## Epilogue

Alan Senauke

If Shakyamuni Buddha is the Great Physician, then his teachings are medicine we need to bring our lives into balance and harmony. Medicine is of no use if it remains in the cabinet. Teachings and texts are of no benefit if they sit unopened on a shelf. Medicine and teachings alike must be taken into our bodies and mind, where they can catalyze freedom from suffering.

When Bhikkhu Bodhi shared with me the manuscript of this book (under its original title, *Fostering Social Harmony*), it was clear that this collection would have wide appeal to Buddhists in Asia and in the West, those who understand that *dukkha* is personally *and* socially constructed. No individual lives apart from the mutual influence of community, society, and nation. Society exists as the co-construction of all who live within it. Though technology ever accelerates *the pace and scope of human connection and division, the social reality of mutual co-creation was as true in the Buddha's time and place as it is in ours.*

I was right about the book's appeal. When I showed friends a printout of *Fostering Social Harmony* they were invariably eager to get a copy. With Bhikkhu Bodhi's permission, very limited Burmese and English editions of an earlier version were published inside Myanmar in 2014. Queries about publication in local languages have since come from Thailand, Sri Lanka, India, and Japan. All this is encouraging, but the question remains: How might we use these teachings as good medicine to foster social harmony?

Over the last few years of teaching I have explored this question. My own Buddhist roots grow from the Mahayana soil of Zen Buddhism. From high school I have been a social activist, and that has continued now into my late sixties in ways that feel resonant with the Dharma. For nearly twenty-five years I have been closely involved with the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, two respected organizational voices for socially engaged Buddhism. By personal inclination I have always been an internationalist, seeing the inverted linkages between the wealth and privilege of the West and the poverty of many millions around the world. Through the circles of BPF and INEB I have come into close contact with the suffering of those less privileged than I, and with their great faith in the liberative potential of the Buddhadhamma.

This is particularly true in India, where a Buddhist revival has given rise to a powerful movement in the land of the Buddha's birth. This movement, inspired in the mid-twentieth century by a visionary social and religious leader, B. R. Ambedkar, has its roots in communities of India's most oppressed, those who for thousands of years had been classified from birth as untouchable. I work among these Ambedkarite Buddhists, and with them I have explored how to use *the contents of this book* as living teachings. In this chapter I will share a picture of these communities and how we studied the Buddha's social teachings.

Because this emerging Indian Buddhism is little known in the West, to begin with I offer some background.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-five hundred years ago, when the Buddha was enlightened, he created *a four-fold community* that included monks and nuns, laymen and laywomen of all

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<sup>5</sup> For more detail on the Dalits, the former "untouchables," Dr. Ambedkar, the "new" Buddhist movement in India, and the students with whom I have worked, see my book *Heirs To Ambedkar: The Rebirth of Engaged Buddhism in India*, Berkeley: Clear View Press, 2013.

castes. A hereditary caste system, based on occupation and skin color, was already in place by the Buddha's time. It has since evolved into a complex and hierarchical social system of graded inequality. At the top of the pyramid are the *brahmins* or priests. The Buddha himself was born into the warrior caste, the *kshatriyas*. Below them is a merchant and agriculturalist caste, the *vaishyas*. *Shudras* are laborers and servants. And below them were untouchables, more recently called *Dalits*, meaning, in Hindi and Marathi, people "broken" or ground up in the wheels of oppression. The Buddha's egalitarian vision included them all, but position and nobility were evaluated on the basis of ethical action and understanding. In the Suttanipāta (v. 142) the Buddha says:

Birth makes not a man an outcast,  
Birth makes not a man a brahmin;  
Action makes a man an outcast,  
Action makes a man a brahmin.

But Buddhism was subject to a re-assertion of brahmanic values from the first millennium C.E. Later it was systematically repressed by Muslim invaders from the twelfth century on, and so it more or less disappeared as a distinct cultural force in India. Of course there are remnants woven into the culture. The nineteenth-century discovery of storied Buddhist sites inspired the Sri Lankan Buddhist revivalist Anagarika Dharmapala to call for the renaissance of Buddhism in India, towards which end he founded the Maha Bodhi Society.

However caste is still a defining element of Indian society. In *The Age of Kali* William Dalrymple writes:

In much of rural India, caste still defines not only what you wear, but where you live, what trade you follow, whom you marry, even the colour you paint your home. Every detail of life in the traditional Indian village, where 80 percent of Indians still live, is regulated.

By the 1920s a new figure came to prominence, agitating for the human, religious, and economic rights of the **U**ntouchables or Dalits, India's vast population of oppressed communities. B. R. Ambedkar was a powerful thinker and writer, who came from the untouchable Mahar caste in central India. By virtue of his brilliance, Ambedkar won scholarships to Elphinstone College in Bombay and went on to earn advanced degrees at Columbia University in New York and the London School of Economics. He returned from the West in the 1920s as one of the most educated men in colonial India, still facing the discrimination that has been the lot of all **U**ntouchables.

In his university teaching and legal work Ambedkar became a passionate advocate for the Untouchables. Where Gandhi pursued an anti-colonial and nationalist course, we can see Dr. Ambedkar as the leader of a civil rights movement. He worked to deconstruct caste oppression in India while the colonial regime persisted, until after World War II and the collapse of Britain's empire, and into the first decade of India's independence. Despite sharp conflicts with Gandhi, following independence Ambedkar was chosen as India's first Law Minister. He is generally seen as the "father of the Indian constitution," a visionary document even today.

By the 1930s Ambedkar concluded that the dominant Hindu religion, with its inherent caste discrimination, was not likely to respond to political or religious reform. At the 1935 Yeola Conference of Depressed Classes, Ambedkar declared: "I was born a Hindu, but I solemnly assure you that I will not die as a Hindu." Over the next decade he investigated Islam, Christianity, and Sikhism—and was courted by each of these groups, who were well aware that Ambedkar's conversion would bring along with him millions of Untouchables and the promise of wide political power. But it was Buddhism, indigenous to India, open to all, and profoundly rational, that won his heart and mind.

By 1956, feeling the shadow of mortality, B. R. Ambedkar organized his conversion to Buddhism. On October 14, 1956 at the Deekshabhoomi (Conversion Ground) in Nagpur, he took the Three Refuges in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, and received the five ethical precepts from the senior Theravadin Buddhist monk in India, U Chandramani. Then Ambedkar did an unprecedented thing, particularly unprecedented for a Buddhist layperson. Turning to 400,000 Untouchable followers who were present, he offered them the refuges and his own twenty-two vows, which included the five precepts and the renunciation of specific articles of Hindu practice and belief. This act of conscious conversion signaled a momentous renewal of Buddhism in India. A number of mass conversions followed within weeks, transforming the spiritual identity of millions of Dalits. But by early December, less than two months later, Dr. Ambedkar had died, succumbing to complications of diabetes and heart disease.

Nearly sixty years later Buddhism is still taking root among Dalit communities. Roadside viharas and modest temples can be found in all corners of the country. A 2012 Pew Research report puts the population of Indian Buddhists near ten million. Undeclared Buddhists greatly increase that number. But caste discrimination—with daily atrocities and murders against the poorest of the poor—remains a bitter and violent fact of Indian life. The goal of social harmony, so clearly articulated by the Buddha and by Dr. Ambedkar, is as yet a distant dream.

Nagaloka, in Nagpur where the first conversion ceremony took place, is a fifteen-acre campus dedicated to the unity of Buddhism and social change, in keeping with Ambedkar's vision. The physical heart of this peaceful campus is a 40-foot golden Buddha, sculpted as striding determinedly with his hand raised in the *abhaya mudra*, generating safety, dispelling fear. Within Nagaloka there is a residential training program, the Nagarjuna Training Institute, teaching young people meditation, basic Buddhism, social organizing, and the work of Dr. Ambedkar. Since 2002 more than eight hundred young women and men between seventeen and twenty-five, coming from almost every Indian state, have completed NTI's nine-month program. Many continue in residence and study a second or third year before returning to their home region or going on to higher education.

I have been working with these young people over the last six years. My ongoing effort is to provide economic support for NTI students, raising funds in the West by sharing my experience of the social and spiritual vitality of this "new" Indian Buddhism. Each time I visit Nagaloka I offer a short but intensive course that explores the territory where Buddhist practice and social action meet. We have done units on gender in the history of Buddhism and in contemporary Indian society; race, caste, and discrimination—looking at the U.S. Civil Rights movement and Indian untouchability; story-telling as a method for crossing social barriers; and Dr. Ambedkar's Buddhist teachings.

In November 2014 I used this book as our core text, drawing from several key sections in the course of a week:

- Right Understanding
- Community
- Proper Speech
- Anger
- Disputes and Settling Disputes

The teachings in these sections, and throughout *The Buddha's Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony*, are quite clear in language and intent. Step by step they point practitioners away from what is unwholesome and towards the wholesome. But in the classroom we met a challenge. As Bhikkhu Bodhi has suggested in conversation, we found that the Sutta Piṭaka is short on ambiguity—and the world we live in is not. To put this another way, our classroom discussions, beginning with the unambiguous canonical text, quickly arrived at circumstances in which wholesome choices were not so easy to identify. Without the diamond-cutting wisdom of a Buddha, we often found ourselves in uncertainty, aware of our mixed motivations.

Actually, a ground of ambiguity is set out in the third paragraph of the very first chapter, “Right View,” drawn from the Majjhima Nikāya:

“Right view, I say, is twofold: there is right view that is affected by influxes, partaking of merit, ripening in the acquisitions; and there is right view that is noble, free of influxes, supramundane, a factor of the path.”

“Right view affected by influxes” implies that even as we attempt to see and act in accord with the Dharma, we are still affected by the delusion of self. “Partaking of merit” is using Buddhist practice for what we perceive as our own benefit. “Ripening in the acquisitions” means becoming or acquiring a self. These are mundane or worldly ways. Right view as a factor of the noble eightfold path is noble, free of influxes or unstained, and supramundane, beyond the traps and snares of this world.

Note that the Buddha does not say that worldly or mundane right view is equivalent to wrong view, which would be an absolutist stance. His case might be more that right view affected by influxes is a good start . . . keep going. Right view that is free of influxes and supramundane is the view of wisdom and the clarity of keeping the Dharma in mind. Take that as a goal.

The following section, also from the Majjhima Nikāya, explains how to practice with what is unwholesome, meaning our actions rooted in greed, hate, and delusion, actions that set one person against another. He asks, “What is the root of the unwholesome?”

“The destruction of life is unwholesome; taking what is not given is unwholesome; sexual misconduct is unwholesome; false speech is unwholesome; divisive speech is unwholesome; harsh speech is unwholesome; idle chatter is unwholesome; covetousness is unwholesome; ill will is unwholesome; wrong view is unwholesome.”

We recognize these as a version of the basic Buddhist precepts, the moral foundation of our practice. The practice of what is wholesome is simply refraining from these habitual acts, which is easier said than done.

Of course, we begin in this world, with all our incomplete views and difficult relationships. At first the NTI students found this discouraging. We humans often want a set of divine instructions, signposts showing us the right way. Instead, our classroom discussion placed us in the complexity of real life and threw each of us back on our own judgment, experience, and wisdom.

This was clear when we took up the Buddha's teaching on speech. These and similar instructions appear at several points in the body of Pāli suttas.

"Monks, possessing five factors, speech is well spoken, not badly spoken; it is blameless and beyond reproach by the wise. What five? It is spoken at the proper time; what is said is true; it is spoken gently; what is said is beneficial; it is spoken with a mind of loving-kindness. Possessing these five factors, speech is well spoken, not badly spoken; it is blameless and beyond reproach by the wise."

(AN 5:198)

So the Buddha's conditions for proper speech call for words that are timely, true, gentle, beneficial or useful, and motivated by loving-kindness. The Nagaloka students, who practice a traditional loving-kindness meditation daily, were quick to agree to these instructions, but I raised a series of questions.

How does one know what is "timely"? If I am involved in a conflict with a friend, what is timely for me may not be so for my friend. What is "true"? We know that the truth is (almost) always a subjective matter. My own experience as a mediator is that two people often have mutually contradictory versions of the "truth."

"Gentle" and "beneficial" are similarly subjective. As Bhikkhu Bodhi points out in his introduction:

...while the discourses stress the importance of establishing a gentle and compassionate attitude before criticizing others, they do not advocate speaking to others only in agreeable ways. To the contrary, they advise one to censure others when criticism is due...

A Buddha, with powers of omniscience, would not be guessing. But for most of us here in *samsāra* these four conditions of speech can be elusive. If I know my friend well, I might be able to make a good guess about what she might perceive as timely, true, gentle, and useful. And I might guess wrongly. If my difference is with someone I don't know or with whom I already have a history of conflict, it is likely we will not agree on one or all of these points.

The fifth condition for proper speech is being "motivated by loving-kindness." While one can, of course, fool oneself about motivation, this is the aspect of speech that we can best know for ourselves. Using the Dhamma for investigation I can determine if my wish is to connect with another person or to separate myself from him or her. Am I turning towards sentient beings or away from them?

This provoked a rich classroom discussion about speech—what we say to one another, when, and why. The value of this discussion was not that all the students came to consensus on the issue, but that we were able to have an energetic conversation and enjoy it. The students noticed that they could hold different views—agree and disagree—while remaining in relationship with each other. This is the first step towards a society that is based on critical thinking.

As we read other sections of *Fostering Social Harmony* similar issues arose. Investigating the ten “grounds for resentment”—see III,4—led to a lively debate about whether anger is understandable in the face of violence and oppressive social systems, and whether such anger is ever useful.

The chapter on “the intentional community” contains an excerpt from the *Anguttara Nikāya*’s “Book of the Sevens,” here VII,3 (4), in which the Buddha preaches the seven conditions for social harmony to the ancient North Indian Licchavis or Vajjis. Included is an admonition that “as long as the Vajjis do not abduct women and girls from their families and force them to live with them, only growth is to be expected for them, not decline.” This point touched off a passionate discussion about rape, the trafficking of women, gender oppression, and fear in the Nagaloka students’ own communities.

I saw these Indian students using the Buddha’s teaching not as dogma or doctrine, but as a guide for looking at the complexities of their real life situations. They were learning to think for themselves and to accept a diversity of views by using the Dhamma itself.

In a 1950 essay, “Buddha and the Future of His Religion,” Dr. Ambedkar considered the conversion of Dalit communities from untouchability to Buddhism. He saw a spiritual tradition grounded in critical thinking:

... (The Buddha) told Ananda that his religion was based on reason and experience and that his followers should not accept his teaching as correct and binding merely because they emanated from him. Being based on reason and experience they were free to modify or even to abandon any of his teachings if it was found that at a given time and in given circumstances they do not apply.... He wanted that it should remain evergreen and serviceable at all times.... No other religious teacher has shown such courage.

The plight of India’s Buddhists is particular to their cultural circumstances. But the many-sided discourse I describe, using *The Buddha’s Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony* as a jumping-off point, is inevitable. I’ve had the same kind of provocative discussions in Burma and in the U.S. Reality can’t be encompassed by truisms. Even well-intentioned people can hold a diversity of views. Yet a true vision of social harmony and tolerance points to a more peaceful world.

In a practical sense, developing our intention to connect is the key, which is done through training and practice of these teachings. Again and again the Buddha speaks to the challenge and necessity of this practice. He says:

“One who repays an angry man with anger  
thereby makes things worse for himself.  
Not repaying an angry man with anger,  
one wins a battle hard to win.

“He practices for the welfare of both—  
his own and the other’s—  
when, knowing that his foe is angry,  
he mindfully maintains his peace.

“When he achieves the cure of both—  
his own and the other’s—  
the people who consider him a fool  
are unskilled in the Dhamma.”

Through our diligent effort, may we learn to find harmony even in times of conflict. As we grow in wisdom may we reflect that our “land was tranquil and not beset by thieves, and the people, with joy in their hearts, playing with their children, dwelt in open houses.”



