



UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK 2019



Edited by  
Most Ven.Dr. THICH NHAT TU

# Family and Society: A Buddhist Perspective



HONG DUC  
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## FAMILY AND SOCIETY: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

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VIETNAM BUDDHIST UNIVERSITY SERIES

**FAMILY AND SOCIETY:  
A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE**

Editor

**Most Ven. Thich Nhat Tu, *D.Phil.*,**

HONG DUC PUBLISHING HOUSE



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## FOREWORD

In 1999, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the resolution to recognize the Vesak Day as an International Day of Recognition of Buddhists and the contribution of the Buddha to the world. Since then, the people and the Royal Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, in general, and Mahachulalongkorn-rama-vidyalaya University, in particular, were very honored to have successively and successfully held for twelve years the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations in Thailand.

From 2004 to date, we have come a long way in the celebrations, and we are happy to be the host and organizer, but it is time for the celebrations to grow and evolve. The United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations is coming to maturity, with twelve celebrations under our belt, much experience gained, it is time now to share this with others. There will always be room for growth and development, and we are elated to see it grow.

In 2006-2007, having joined the International Organizing Committee for UN Day of Vesak as Deputy Secretary General, Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu has played a crucial role in building strong relationship between the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and International Council for Day of Vesak in particular and Global Buddhist community in general.

We have supported and congratulated Vietnam for organizing successful UNDV celebrations and conference in 2008 and 2014 respectively. We have full trust in Vietnam being the host of UNDV 2019 for the third time. We like to thank all those who have contribute to the success of previous celebrations and wish all the future celebrations be successful.

The teachings of the Buddha see no boundaries, the minds of all are alike, the sufferings of all are similar and truly, the liberation of all is the same. We are happy to initiate the process, develop the

scope and now it is time for others to follow in footsteps similar, evolve the celebrations into a truly international event that can be shared with the Buddhists and Non-Buddhists alike.

Let the Dhamma of the Buddha be the beacon to the world, shredding away the ignorance within our hearts, bringing development into sustainable capacity for humanity and more importantly, peace and harmony to the world.

**Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit**

President, International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV)  
President, International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU)

## PREFACE

The history of mankind records how the Buddha got enlightenment and showed a path which not only leads but also guides the world till date. That is solely to emanate wisdom and offer insights which help us overcome numerous challenges and achieve the welfare of humanity.

Recognizing his pragmatic approach, values and contribution of Buddhism, the United Nations in a resolution in 1999 decided to celebrate the Triply Blessed Day of Vesak (Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Gautama), falling mostly in a lunar calendar in the month of May. The first celebrations were held way back in the year 2000 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and subsequently the day has been celebrated hugely in different countries.

Today our planet is confronted with a number of crises and unprecedented natural disasters. The imminent threat of terrorism and ethnic violence, tackling poverty, providing education and sustainable development leads us to strive for social justice. There is an urgent need for concerted and constant planning and right effort at an international level to foster permanent peace in the societies and in the lives of individuals.

Against the backdrop of such widespread misery and strife leading to complex issues and crises, Buddhism with its rich heritage of tolerance and non-violence can contribute immensely and inspire us with His message of loving-kindness, peace and harmony in today's world. The United Nations Day of Vesak (UNDV) 2019 is a testimony to this fact.

Vietnam got the chance and responsibility of hosting this international Buddhist event UNDV in 2008 and 2014 respectively. The event proved an amazing spectacle of religious and spiritual festivity, with thousands of Buddhists from around

the world converging in Vietnam, to spread the Buddha's message of peace, love and harmony.

This is the third time that Vietnam is hosting this important international event which is viewed by Buddhists as an opportunity to spread the Buddha's message and values of love, peace, non-violence, tolerance and compassion across the world.

It is a great honor for Vietnam, the Vietnamese people, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Buddhists all around the world to participate in the UNDV celebrations and spread the rich Buddhist heritage, especially its teachings of equality, social justice, respect and understanding for the benefit of all humanity. World Buddhists and particularly the Vietnamese people are excited about their country hosting this auspicious and important event for the third time. This international religious, cultural and academic event would also certainly promote interaction and exchange of Buddhist cultural and intellectual values among diverse countries.

The International Buddhist conference with the main theme of "Buddhist Approach to Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Sustainable Societies" during the celebrations could not have been more relevant and timely. The present book is the outcome of one workshop representing one perspective of the conference. Other perspectives of the conference include: (i) Mindful Leadership for Sustainable Peace, (ii) Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare and Sustainable Societies, (iii) Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics, (iv) Buddhism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and (v) Buddhist Approach to Responsible Consumption and Sustainable Development. This international conference aims to foster co-operation among Buddhist communities and institutions, and to develop Buddhist solutions to the global crisis.

Papers selected for this volume are those that combine thematic relevance, familiarity with the main theme or sub-themes, significant research in primary resources, innovative theoretical perspectives, clarity of organization and accessible prose style. Acceptable articles in this volume are determined by

the Academic Peer-Review Committee.

UNDV 2019 certainly is an opportunity for the world Buddhists, the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and all the members of the international community to benefit from the rich traditions, values and spiritual ideals of Buddhism. The pragmatic path shown by Buddha can make the world a better, safer, more peaceful and harmonious place to be cherished and enjoyed by all sentient beings.

On behalf of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and myself, I would like to warmly welcome President of Myanmar, H.E. Mr. U Win Myint, Prime Minister of Nepal, Right Hon. Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Vice President of India, H.E Mr. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Chairperson of the National Council of Bhutan, H.E. Mr. Tashi Dorji, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations/Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific, H.E. Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Director-General of UNESCO, H.E. Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Ambassadors, and many other dignitaries.

It is my honor to warmly welcome National Assembly Chairwoman H.E. Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Prime Minister of Vietnam, H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, President of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Central Committee H.E. Mr. Tran Thanh Man, Permanent Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of External Affairs H.E. Mr. Pham Binh Minh, other dignitaries including former Political leaders of the Government of Vietnam.

I extend my warmest welcome to all respected Sangharajas, Sangha Leaders, Buddhist Leaders, Sangha members and 1600 Buddhist Scholars and practitioners from 115 countries and territories, participating in this international celebration and conference. Let me thank all of you for your contributions to this celebration and Conference.

My heartfelt thanks are extended to respected members of the Supreme Patriarch Council and Executive members of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, especially 25 sub-committees for UNDV 2019 in Vietnam for their devotion and contribution.

I take this opportunity to express here my profound gratitude to Most Ven. Prof. Brahmapundit for his continuous supporting Vietnam to host this international event. I also thank profusely all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV), Conference Committee and Editorial Board for their devotion.

I am grateful to Mr. Xuan Truong for his generosity and other donors, sponsors, volunteers and agencies from the public sector and the private sector for their excellent contribution.

This publication and other 29 books printed for Vesak could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of Editorial Committee for their devotion including Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien, Prof. Le Manh That, and especially Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu serving as the international conference coordinator.

I extend my warmest and best wishes to all the delegates and participating countries on this special occasion which strengthens our resolve to improve the world by walking on the path shown by the Lord Buddha.

Whatever merit there is in publishing this book may be transferred over to the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings be happy and released from suffering.

We wish the celebration of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam every success.

**Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon**

President of the National Vietnam Buddhist Sangha  
Chairman of the United Nations Day of Vesak 2019 in Vietnam

# EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

## Background

There have been significant changes in the world today, so much so that the terms *Harmonious Families, Healthcare, and Sustainable Societies* are no longer taken for granted for a point of reference for understanding the contemporary chaotic situation. These disruptive changes mean that it is now arguable whether we live in justice, legality, peace and prosperity. The nature of these changes and the concept of the Buddhist approach are central to the whole project of this book. In this light, we place great emphasis on understanding Buddhist teaching in dealing with the matter in question. We argue that any investigation of the changing character and context in the present time, therefore, needs to be aware of the Buddhist philosophy. We focus on providing a thorough and critical understanding of the changes as a starting point of discussion. In doing so, we attempt to clarify the nature of the Buddhist approach. We conceptualize "approach" here as the result of a complex contested and fragile set of arrangement. We do not want to imply that the frameworks based on the Buddhist teachings are fully fixed and agreed upon by everybody. Instead, they might be more productively conceived of as a set of arrangements that needs to be further discussed.

Given this, the volume brings together papers presented at and published for the conference panels on *Harmonious Families, Healthcare, and Sustainable Societies* which took place on 13 May 2019 at International Conference Center Tam Chuc, Ha Nam, Vietnam on the occasion of THE 16TH UNITED NATIONS DAY OF VESAK CELEBRATIONS 2019.

The participants in this workshop were not representative of the mainstream thinking or conventional wisdom of this field, although this volume reflects this richness and diversity. Treating the

Buddha teachings as a fundamental theoretical reconstruction, we examine the relationships between societies and Buddhist responsibilities. We combine analyses of the conflicts, trends and dynamics affecting the future development with more focused studies of a range of policy areas: migration, education, leadership, climate change, etc....

Two of our most crucial presumptions are that making Buddhism great again at the time of disruption is our first and foremost duty and the Buddhist responsibility can contribute to creating a new foundation for Global Leadership and Sustainable Development.

### **Review of contents**

*Ven. Polgolle Kusaladhamma*, SIBA Campus, Sri Lanka, identifies the *Utility of Buddhist Meditation to Overcome Physical Infirmitiy and Mental Disorder Based on Modern Neuroscience Researches*. His main idea of this paper is to present the particular importance of meditation practice regarding the human neural system and body functions. In the theoretical view, the Buddhist practice of traditional meditation based on some philosophical concepts. On the contrary, scientific research tries to distinguish from Buddhist teaching to the practical aspects of its modern practices. At a closer look, neurologists prove that the meditation can make noticeable changes in the human neuron system. Some health benefits are considerably notable; namely, they are increased immunity, increased fertility, lower the blood pressure, anti-inflammatory, relieves irritable bowel syndrome, reduce the physical pain, anxiety and stress and helps lower blood sugar.

*Dr. Jenny Ko Gyi*, The International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, Myanmar, deals with the *Buddhist Approach Toward an Ethical and Harmonious Society*. The main questions in this paper are the meaning of karma, from fear of suffering, conventional truth, the ultimate realities and seeking the peace of the Buddhist way. After explaining these matters in question, he concludes that learning and following of Buddhist teaching is the best way to help peace, love, friendship and understanding prevail in every corner of the world, and make it happen peacefully and enjoyably for all.

*Dr. Bajrangi Yadav*, Kamla Nehru Institute of Physical and Social Sciences, India, investigates *The Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Healthcare, Happiness and Sustainable Development in India*. It is a case study dealing with 100 males and 100 females from Ayodhya and Sultanpur city of Uttar Pradesh in India. In the first part of his paper, he presents different schools of thought on sustainable development in Western and Buddhist perspectives. He also highlights meanings of the real quality of life, values of consumption and work, production. In the second part, he proposes a new approach of Buddhist Sustainable Development (BSD), which is human-centered sustainable development, driven by inner happiness. After indicating the result of his case study, he concludes that the BSD approach can be used as an effective solution in dealing with the world's development challenges.

*Sushma Shree*, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, identifies *Brahmavihara: Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Family and Sustainable Society*. In this paper, he concerns with the significant meaning of Brahmavihara which is a Buddhist concept. Main relevant topics of this notion are universal friendliness, compassion, state of mind and equanimity. He stressed that there are four sublime notes for the Buddhist followers need to be strictly observed. In concluding, he tells us that who wants to be happy and peaceful in his life itself and who wants to make this society worth living; he should cultivate this four sublime virtues on the background of Brahmavihara.

*Patitham Samniang* presents the *Evaluation of Chanting: Project that creates a healthy intellectual and reduces problems*. That is a case study with 1360 participants in using the CIPPI Model and applies the evaluative framework of Daniel L. Stufflebeam. Three purposes of the project are to promote the daily praying project relates with stop doing vices, to try to use this praying project on four important days of Buddhism in also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties, and to follow up the changing result in those places. Finally, he shows that positive outcome is different, because the empirical evidence of belief, value, advantages of praying is differently evaluated.

*Dissanayake Mudiyanselage Inoka Udani Dissanayake*, Vipassa-

na Counseling Center, Sri Lanka, looks at the *Buddhist Perspectives on health with special reference to the sick and elderly care*. Based on the idea that human being is responsible for protecting and serving the elder and ill person in the society, he suggests that we need to promote to create harmonious families and sustainable societies in the world in the light of Buddhist teaching. In illustrating this, he proves that in the ground of Theravada Buddhism, some Suttas focus on physical, mental, social and spiritual health care service. It is obvious that Buddhism deals with the welfare of mankind and their happiness. Although every religion focuses on the human being and their healthiest lives, he concludes that The Buddha is like the best Physician.

*Niharika Labh*, University of Delhi, India, deals with *Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Family and Stronger Social Bond*. Generally speaking, a family is obviously bound by mutual love, care, concern, and sacrifice. He notes that the Buddhist concepts are helpful in generating and strengthening mutual understanding and harmonious relation among the members of a family. This positive development would be good for the whole society and the nation. Indeed, we need to understand the factors that lead to formation and cordiality in the family. In the light of Buddhist teaching, he explains four most popular features are loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative pleasure and equanimity. In his concluding, he states that the Buddhist message contains the seed formula of humanistic consideration for the good of oneself as well as of others and paves the way for the formation of harmonious family and healthier society. Fortunately, with this successful effort, we could live peacefully with mutual respect, trust and love.

*Anita Meena*, Delhi University New Delhi, India, examines the *Buddhist Approach to Inclusiveness and Sustainable Development For Social Harmony*. In the light of nonviolence culture, she explores the potentiality of the Buddhist contributions to the peacemaking efforts and the promotion of a culture of social harmony. After indicating that the Buddhist worldview is in accordance with the insight of peace studies, she suggests that we should learn the cause of social peace and harmony, because without the basic understanding of Buddhism, one cannot take any action in one's quest for peace.

In illustrating her thesis, she looks at the meaning of five sheelas, and they are conditions of the mind which leads to peaceful speech and peaceful actions for sustainable social development. At last, she concludes that the Buddhist approach is deeply attached to the notion of peace and harmony in which we need to introduce. A balance between the two is imperative.

*Dr. Tran Thi Dieu Huong*, Gautam Buddha University, India, explores the *Role of Women and Buddhist Nuns to Harmonious Families Healthcare and Environmental Protection*. Main questions of her thesis are: What is the environment, the importance of the environment to humans, the emergency status of the environment in the current world, the role of women to harmonious families, health care and protecting the environment, the role of Buddhist nuns to health care and environment. After discussing all aspects of the said questions in details in the light of Buddhist teaching, she comes to conclude that Buddhist nuns are capable of not only ensuring a pleasant environment but also bringing happy and peaceful life for themselves and all beings.

*Ludovic Corsini*, International Buddhist College of Thailand, explores the question *Filial Piety in Buddhism at the Time of Globalization: How Buddhism can save the concept of family?* After presenting that the traditional concept of family has lost his values in the age of globalization, he explains the modern nature of the Buddhist concept of family. In doing so, he demonstrates that Buddhism could make sense for improving family life in the modern age. For exploring this, we need a better understanding of the Buddha's teaching. Specifically, he investigates the cultural concept of filial piety through Chinese and Indian Buddhism and the relationship between parents and children. In concluding, he states that traditional Buddhism is able to complement the current concept of family. Its importance is quite relevant today.

*H. M. Mahinda Herath* examines the question of *Buddhist Psychological Teachings for a Harmonious Family in a Sustainable Society*. The concern of this paper is to explain the ethical teaching on harmonious family life as depicted in Early Buddhism. In doing so, he collected the data from the Sutta Piṭaka and the relevant books and articles. It is obvious that the Buddhist Suttas make the point

that we have conflicts with others due to anger. This is harmful to oneself. To overcome this, he explains that everyone should look at others with pleasure, compassion and loving-kindness. By this way, he concludes that these are the valuable insights that help us to build a peaceful society.

*Mahakachchakodiye Pangngasekara* discusses the significance of the *Family Function in the Modern Society (According to the Theory of Functionalism and Buddhist Teaching)*. Based on the sociological theory, he explains the historical foundation and current development of functionalism. Main questions of this part are the different types of societies, its function and the emerging of new types and the Buddhist teachings in dealing with the question of family. In the light of the *Uggaha Sutta*, *Dhīga Nikāya* and *Singālowāda Sutta*, he explains that the traditional teaching of Buddhism matches with the modern ideas of the functionalism. In illustrating some basic duties of parents and children, he stressed that the Buddhist teachings have similar points of view regarding the functions of the family and the government. He made clear that physical and spiritual development can be achieved by following the Buddhist guidance. In doing so, the family and society life would be peaceful.

*Dr. Ven. Panahaduwe Yasassi Thera*, University of Sri Jayewarde-nepura, Sri Lanka, focuses on *Paradigm for Sustainable Healthcare*. His main objective is to present the Buddhist techniques of food consumption to overcome improper food consumption. At first, he acknowledges that nowadays we have to face the failures and shortages of food consumption. Understandably, we need food, because it is essential to provide energy for the body and to regulate body processes. Second, he asks about the question of how Buddhist teaching deals with the matter in question. Principally speaking, Buddhism considers food consumption as the first factor and that hunger is the most severe sickness. At a closer look, he explains that while certain people are over-consuming food and other individuals are facing malnutrition. In the light of the teaching from *Kabalinkārahara*, *Phassāhāra*, *Manosancetanā-hāra*, *Viññāhāra* and *Āhāra* sutta, he highlights four distinctive types of food. They are eatable food, drinkable food, absorbable food and tastily food and are of importance for daily life. Finally, he states that *Dronapana*

utta gives us more insight into the value of proper consumption of food. More specifically, only either one or maximum of two portions of food should be consumed per day to maintain sustainable healthcare.

*Kishor Bapu Londhe, Dr. Pandurang Tukaram Gaikwad*, Gaikwad Hospital, India, identifies the *Relevance of Padma and Buddha in Management of Modern Lifestyle Diseases*. Due to the fact that many disease incidences are increasing: diabetes, obesity and hypertension are the most common examples. This depends mainly on the bad lifestyle. Given this, he explores the question of how the Buddhist teaching is dealing with this matter. The principal lesson of the Buddha for management of lifestyle disease is “Eat half, walk double, laugh triple and love without measures” In this light, he presents some medical features of lotus, its benefit for health is not yet described clearly in various literature. Finally, he argues that medicinal uses of lotus should be explored further for the management of lifestyle disease.

*Dr. Nilima Chawhan*, Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, India, looks at the *Buddhist Approach to Harmonious Families, Health Care and Sustainable Societies*. At first, he complains that our living conditions today are most deplorable. We are challenging with many problems as health and disputes of families. It is time for us to know how to maintain the relationship between parents and children, husband and wives, friends and friends and owners and servants. Based on the Sigala Sutta, he explains the Buddhist teaching in dealing with the matter in question. Practically speaking, the Buddha advised us how to develop the relationship between man to man, family to family and society to society. In this light, if everyone understands their responsibilities towards families, then the whole society could become peaceful and healthy.

*Dr. Pushkar Singh*, University of Delhi, India, investigates *The Essence of Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta: Individual and Societal Benefits*. Based on the meaningful importance of the Dhamma-cakka-vattana Sutta, he explains its leading role in laying the foundation stone of Buddhist tradition. Main issues of his thesis are the different aspects of the said Sutta, the development of discourse, the meaning of four noble truths and the eightfold path and the es-

sentials of Sutta. In concluding, he contains that the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta is the first turning of the wheel of the dharma, although the different scholars have many various ways of grammatical or semantic interpretations.

*Moggallana Sraman*, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, offers an *Analysis of Buddhist Perspective of Family Policy Towards Sustainable Society*. His main concern is to analyze the question of how Buddhism plays a vital role in establishing a sustainable society through the application of the method of dependent co-origination and core early Buddhist teachings. After explaining the Buddhist approach based on Sigālovāda Sutta, Parābhava Sutta, Vasala Sutta and Maṅgala Sutta, he advocates that Buddhist teachings always focus on practical aspects in family life. For this reason, individuals should follow the teachings in their lives. Its basic traditional philosophy is quite relevant for all of the current problems of family policy. In this light, he concludes that Buddhism is valueless until human beings value it.

*Ven. Omalpe Somananda*, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka, deals with a *Study on Social Work Intervention: Psychological Challenges Faced by Teenage Mothers: A Case Study-based Analysis*. The author identifies the social challenges of teenage mothers and future expectations and the role of social work intervention strategies. He explains how psychosocial challenges affect teenage mothers in conducting a case study. The participants of this investigation were ten teenaged mothers in the 13-20 year age range, from a woman's home in the Rathnapura District. His methodology based on data collection of interviews and observations. As a result of this survey, he concludes that the ideology about teenaged mothers is negative. There is no definite vision in society about the underage mothers and about the social and psychological challenges that they are facing. To respond this, he presented some appropriate recommendations and suggestions.

*Dr. Prem Shankar Shrivastava*, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, examines *The Tibetan Buddhist approach to a happy and harmonious family life in modern perspective*. At first, he explains the concept of family, and it would be seen as a unique creation of the human mind. Significant ingredients of its happiness are Educa-

tion, Ethics, Economics and Psychophysical Health. After briefing an overview of Tibetan historical development, he highlights some particularities of Buddhism, most of its teaching is a culture of truth, forgiveness, reconciliation, co-operation, harmony, peace and happiness. Finally, aiming at the welfare of the human, he notes that modern social scientists have also thrown a flood of light on it according to their own ways, they have not reached up to the mark as that of the Buddha. Fortunately, one of the notable elements of Brahmavihara Vipassana is the marvelous gift of the Buddha to the human way of life.

*Rev. Ihala Gokeralle Pasadike Thero's* paper emphasizes on the *Importance of Buddhist qualities and ethics for a sustainable society* to avoid conflicts of economic, social and health issues. *Thripitaka, Commentaries, Sub-Commentaries* are recommended methods by the author to achieve such a goal. The research was conducted in depth in various countries such as Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and France with various means to achieve the results. Studies from these helped the author conclude that reason for conflicts are originated from anger, attachment and delusion and Buddhist practices would help people to change from negative to positive lifestyle, which eventually contributes to a sustainable society.

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Duc Thien**

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu**



# UTILITY OF BUDDHIST MEDITATION TO OVERCOME PHYSICAL INFIRMITY AND MENTAL DISORDERS BASED ON MODERN NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCHES

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by Ven. Polgolle Kusaladhamma\*

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## INTRODUCTION

Buddhist Meditation practices mainly focus to train the mind for overcoming the suffering, problems, especially negative forces in emotions that create mental unrest, unhappiness, fear, and frustration etc., which brings more problems and suffering. The negative emotions bring not only mental unrest, but also it is detrimental to physical health. The positive states of the mind bring inner strength, mental fortitude and, due to that beneficial to the physical health. The modern neuroscientist also explore about the brain mechanisms pertain of attention and emotion. Neuron system is the most complex organ system in the body. Neurons are cells specialized for communication. The neurons send information one neuron to another as electrical signals. These cells have the ability to communicate with other types of cells. The neuron electrically excitable cells that receives, processes and transmits information through electrical and chemical signals. The transmission occurs via synapses. Mainly neurons system consists with two components, the central nervous system and the peripheral nervous system.<sup>1</sup>

Buddhist traditional Meditation practices associate with some philosophical and metaphysical concepts also. Therefore scientific

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\* Doctor. Coordinator & Lecturer, Department of Buddhist Studies, SIBA Campus, Sri Lanka

1. Wade, Nicholas.1999. p 234

research about the Meditation practices must distinguish the empirical aspects of the Buddhist teaching and other aspect of the Meditation practices. Neurologists prove the simple Meditation practices can make observable changes in the human neuron system.

## BUDDHIST MEDITATION AND NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCHES

The Pali term *bhāvanā* has been translated into English as Meditation. The term *bhāvanā* has derived from the term “*bhāva*” which gives the meanings such as “emotion,” “sentiment,” and “state of mind.” The Pali term *bhāvanā* literally means “development,” “cultivating,” and “producing.” Pali Text Society’s Pali-English Dictionary has given the meaning for term *bhāvanā*, as producing, dwelling on something, putting one’s thoughts to, application, developing by means of thought or meditation, cultivation by mind, culture<sup>2</sup>. The English term Meditation derived from the Latin term “*meditari*,” considering the state of consciousness in which the individual eliminates environmental stimuli from awareness. So that, the mind has a single focus for the relaxation and relief from stress. A wide variety of techniques are used to clear the mind of stressful outside interface.

Mosby’s medical Dictionary define Meditation as a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention order to awareness of the present moment, reduce the stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth. Medical Dictionary for the Health Professions and Nursing defines Meditation as; any mental activity intended to keep the practitioner’s attention in the present; has been used for several thousand years to balance physical, emotional, and mental states; sometimes employed as part of overall therapy for diverse medical conditions (e.g. providing pain relief, lowering blood pressure)

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2. See Sutta - See on term Dhs. trsl 261 (240); Expos. I. 217 (DhsA. 163); Cpd. 207 n. 2. Cp. pari, vi, sam.Vin. I, 294 (indriya); D. III, 219 (three: kāya, citta, paññā), 221, 225, 285, 291; S. I, 48; Dh. 73, 301; J. I, 196 (mettā); III, 45 (id.); Nd 143 (saññā); Nett 91 (samatha-vipas-saṇam); Vbh. 12, 16 sq.99, 325; Vism. 130 (karaṇa, bhāvanā, rakkhaṇa; here bh. bringing out, keeping in existence), 314 (karunā), 317 (upekkhā); Miln. 25 (manuyuñjati); Sdhp. 1S, 216, 233, 451.

Buddhist meditations divide into two categories as *samatha* and *vipassana* meditations. Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary imply *Samatha* as, Calm, quietude of heart, tranquility, serenity and cessation of the *Saṅkhāras*<sup>3</sup>. The Pali Term *Vipassanā* translated to English as "insight," "clear seeing." The Prefix "Vi" means special and the root "pas" means see. The term *Vipassnā* means "seeing deeply." It define as,

"Looking into something with clarity and precision, seeing each component as distinct and separate, and piercing all the way through so as to perceive the most fundamental reality of that thing<sup>4</sup>."

The synonym for term *Vipassanā* is "*paccakkha*"; gives the means such as "before the eyes" or "direct experiential perception." It rejects the knowledge derived from reasoning or arguments. In Tibatian Buddhism Pali term *Vipassanā* use as "*ihagthong*." The term *ihag* means "higher," "superior," "greater," the term "*thong*" means "view," or "to see." Thus, *ihagthong* gives the meaning "superior seeing," "great vissioin," "supreme wisdom," "superior manner of seeing," and "seeing that which the essential nature is." It refers to insight into the *tilakkhaṇa* or three marks of existence such as impermanence, suffering, or unsatisfactoriness, and realization of non-self. (*aniccatā, dukkhatā, anattatā*).

The *Sabbāsava Sutta* and the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* mainly explain the way of free from all kind of un-satisfactoriness, unhappiness and unpleasantry. All the problems come to human beings according to Buddhism not mainly due to the external world. Buddhism emphasize that human mind is the main object which pertaining to suffer and happiness. *Sabbāsava Sutta* in *Majjhima-Nikāya* Buddha says,

"Monks, I will teach you the method of restraining the mind from all the desire or cankers."

Then the Buddha proclaimed impotent of wise attention. "Yo niso manasikāra." When people live with wise attention new defilements

3. PTS. M. I, 33; A. I, 61, 95; II, 140; III, 86 sq. (ceto), 116 sq. , 449; IV, 360; V, 99; D. III, 54, 213, 273; DhA. II, 177; S. IV, 362; Dhs. 11, 15, 54.

4. Gunaratana, Henepola. 2011, P. 21

will not enter into the mind. The defilements exist in the mind can see clearly through wise attention and it is easy to eradicate from the mind. Buddhist meditation prescribe regard to the human temperaments or *carita*. The term *carita* derived from the “*car+ta*” which gives the meanings such as behavior, temperaments or the perfuming of charity. Pāli *canon* use another synonyms “*cariya*” which gives the meaning behavior, practice, habit, familiarity, and temperament. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, *carita* means personal nature (*pakati*), and idiosyncrasy (*ussanna*) etc. There are six temperaments.

### *Rāga carita* - greedy temperaments.

Psychic phenomena related to greedy temperaments are Deceit (*māyā*), hypocrisy (*sātheyya*), excessive wish (*mahiçchatā*), evil wish (*pāpicchatā*), discontentment (*asantuṭṭhi*), persuasion (*saṅga*) avariciousness (*tintina*), discourteous living (*asabhāgavutti*), tedium (*arati*), apathy (*tandi*), restlessness (*vijambhita*), after meal drowsiness (*bhattasammado*), sluggishness (*satasolīnattam*), guile (*kuhanā*), insinuating talk (*lapanā*), and seeking profit by profit. (*lābena lābam nijiginsanatā*)

**Abnormal Behaviors:** Harming to others, Killing animals, Stealing, Sexual misconduct, taking intoxicant, frequently watching drama, wandering the streets at inappropriate times, associate with evil companions.

**Treatment (Meditation):** *Nilakasiṇa* (Blue kasiṇa), The ten Loathsome Objects (*asubha- kammaṭṭhāna*) Bloated corpse, Livid corpse, Festering corpse, Corpse cut open, Gnawed corpse, Scattered corpse, Hacked and scattered corpse, Bleeding corpse, Worm-infested corpse and Skeleton. And *Kayagatāsati*. (contemplation on body)

### *Dosa Carita* - Anger Temperaments.

Psychic phenomena related to anger temperaments are anger (*kodha*), grudge (*upanāha*), ingratitude (*makkha*), disparaging (*palāsa*), jealousy (*issā*), meanness (*macchariya*), contumacy (*dovacassata*), and having evil friends (*pāpamittā*).

**Abnormal Behaviors:** Harming to others, Killing animals,

uncontrolled senses, self-mortification, malevolence, disobedient, Associate with evil companions, and engaged with war.

Treatment (Meditation): *Nīla kasiṇa* (blue *kasiṇa*), *Pīta kasiṇa* (Yellow *kasiṇa*), *Lohita kasiṇa* (red *kasiṇa*), *Odāta kasiṇa* (White *kasiṇa*), The four sublime abodes (*Brahma vihāra*); Loving-kindness meditation (*mettā bhāvanā*), Compassion meditation (*karuṇā bhāvaā*), meditation of sympathetic joy (*muditā bhāvanā*), and meditation of Equanimity (*upekkhā bhāvanā*).

### *Moha Carita* - Dull Temperaments

Psychic phenomena related to dull temperaments are sloth (*thīna*), restlessness (*uddaccha*), remorse (*kukkucca*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), dogma (*adanaggāhi*), difficulty in renouncing (*duppaṭinissaggitā*), un-mindfulness (*muttahasacca*), and absence of awareness (*asampajañña*).

Abnormal Behaviors: frivolous talk, false speech, talkative, laziness, confuse, admiring the evil doer, insulting to wise, delight on should not delight, non-delight on should delight, no his own opinion, and does not like to eliminate wrong views.

Treatment (Meditation): simple mediation practices such as Ānāpānasati Bhāvanā (mindfulness on breath).

### *Saddhā carita* - faithful temperaments.

Psychic phenomena related to faithful temperaments are free generosity (*muttacāga*), desire to see a Noble person (*ariyānādassana kāmatā*), desire to hear doctrine of the Noble person (*saddhammām sotukāmatā*), great gladness (*pāmojjabahulatā*), ingenuousness (*asaṭṭha hatā*), honesty (*amāyāvitā*), and faith in things of faith (*pasādāniyeshūhānesu pasādo*), are frequently arising whole mental phenomena in faithful temperaments.

Behaviors: they have benevolence activities. Only they have improve their qualities. Patient, wisely talking, compassion, loving-kindness, like share knowledge, clean, gentle, generosity, not a opportunist, beloved to father, mother, sisters, brothers, wife and husband, faithful to religion, admiring other's good qualities, like to development, practice the equanimity, doesn't like give pain to others, like to calm environment, like to read books, and have wide vision.

However there is a chance to cheat them due to *amūlikā saddhā*.

Meditation: *Dasa Anussati* (ten recollections): Recollection of the Buddha, Recollection of the *Dhamma*, Recollection of the *Saṅgha*, Recollection of Virtue, Recollection of Generosity, Recollection of Divine Beings, Recollection of Death, Recollection of the Body, Recollection of Breathing, and Recollection of Peace.

*Buddhi Carita* - Intelligence temperaments.

Psychic phenomena related to intelligence temperaments; the person is easy to be admonished (*savacassatā*), possession of good friends (*kalyāna mittatā*), has moderation in diet (*bojane amattaññutā*), devotes to wakefulness and has sense of urgency at eight grounds for the sense of urgency (*sañveganiyesu thanesu sañvego*), and practices wisely by means of sense of urgency (*sañviggassaca yoniso padhānam*)

Behaviors: keen knowledge, inheritably wise, improve the intellectual capacity, wise, easily understand, benevolence behaviors, associate with the good companions, mindful, have good memory power, and no indulge in foods. They have only develop their good qualities.

Mediation: *marañānussati bhāvanā* (recollection of death), *āhārepaṭikūla saññā* (Repulsiveness of Food), and *catudhātuvatthāna* (Analysis of the Four Elements).

*Vitakka Carita* - Speculative temperaments.

Psychic phenomena related to speculative temperaments; talkativeness (*bhassabahulata*), sociability (*ganaramatā*), boredom with devotion to the profitable (*rattindumayana*), and flaming by day (*divapajjalana*).

Abnormal Behaviors: Talkative, Frequenting public spectacle, does not like to meritorious deeds, live in dream world, constantly change the opinion, believe others, everything without any order, and like to dwell in impure environment.

Treatments: *Ānāpānasati* meditation, blue *Kasiṇa*.

IBMT did the experiment using two different groups of students. One group of students practiced the Meditation while

other practice relaxation. Before 5days two groups were similar by, behavioural, endocrine, and immune. After 5days Meditation training, control group showed significant improvement of attention and positive mood. They showed reduced of cortisol and secretion hormones, which pertaining to reducing the stress and increased immune reactivity. The scientists used new technologies such as physiological reaction in heart rate, respiratory amplitude and rate, skin conductance response (SCR), and brain imaging to monitor autonomic nervous system.

The Meditated group showed higher levels of self-regulation than relaxation group. The anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and prefrontal cortex (PFC) of the brain show mechanism of self-regulation of attention and emotion. During the training, activity of the ACC and PFC increased more in the Meditation group than relaxation group.

Furthermore, scientists showed Meditation affiliated by physical changes such as oxygen consumption, heart rate, skin resistance etc. Especially the function of autonomic neuron system, including heart rate, skin resistance and conductance, respiratory amplitude rate and EEG frequencies. The Meditation group shows an increase of autonomic neuron system, especially parasympathetic neuron system than others. The Meditated group shows greater EEG power in the midline theta wave and the frontal midline theta rhythm will be positively correlated with high-frequency of heart rate. Major chemicals inside the brain that affect neural activity. Primary neurotransmitters and its affect to the body,

1. Glutamate - excites receiving neurons
2. GABA (Gama amino-butyric acid) - inhibits receiving neurons.

The main Neuromodulators (influence the neurotransmitters);

1. Serotonin - regulate mood, sleep, and digestion.  
Antidepressants increasing
2. Dopamine - involved with rewards and attention.
3. Norepinephrine - alerts and arouses

4. Acetylcholine - Promotes wakefulness and learning
5. Opioids - buffer stress, provide soothing, reduce pain, produce pleasure
6. Oxytocin - promotes nurturing behaviours toward children and bonding couples. Associate with blissful closeness and love.
7. Vasopressin - supports pair bonding. It may promote aggressiveness toward sexual rivals.
8. Cortisol - released by the adrenal glands during the stress response.
9. Estrogen - affect libido, mood, and memory

In human brain contains 100 billion neurons and 1000 synapses on each. If the person stuck on certain thoughts, he has problem with cingulate system. If trouble in focusing his attention, he has problem in Prefrontal cortex precription. If increase the anxiety, the problem is in basal ganglia system. If it is difficult to connect meaningfully with others, the problem is in the deep limbic system. If cannot tame the temper, the problem is in the temporal lobes. According to estimate, human body can sense some 20 million bites of information per second. While conscious mind it is about 40 bits of information per second. The compassion and happiness for the infant helpful to enlargement of the brain during first few weeks.

John Denninger, a psychiatrist at Harvard Medical School, show how Meditation practices affect genes and brain activity. His latest work show how Meditation can switch on and off some genes linked to stress and immune function. Meditation makes free of all the neurotic behavior that results from the existence of a tortured. The Meditation certainly is the way to cure such neurosis and unhealthy emotional states.

The mind is immaterial. It is co-occurs and interrelated with material neural activity. What flows through the mind sculpts your brain. It makes physical changes such as,

1. Alterations brain waves
2. Consumption of oxygen and glucose

3. Ebbs and flows of neurochemicals
4. Increased blood/nutrient flow to active regions.
5. Altered epigenetics.
6. Increasing the excitability of active neurons.
7. Strengthening existing synapses.
8. Building new synapses; thickening cortex
9. Neuronal “pruning”
10. Thickness and strengthens the anterior (frontal) cingulate cortex and insula. Those area involved with controlled attention, empathy, and compassion. The Meditation can improve these functions.
11. Less cortical thinning with aging
12. Increase activation of the left frontal regions, which lifts moods.
13. Increases the power and reach of fast, gamma brainwaves.
14. Decreased stress-related cortisol
15. Stronger immune system<sup>5</sup>

The activity in the frontal region of the brain reflects a person's emotional state. Especially right frontal areas marks the fleeting positive mood. The negative emotions fade more quickly in people by more left-frontal activities. The Meditation on compassion showed greater shift toward left-frontal activation.

With the support of His Holiness Dalai Lama, Richard Davidson, a neuroscientist at the University of Wisconsin started an experiments on effects of Meditation on the brain. His results explained that long-term, or short-term practice of Meditation affect in different levels of activity in brain regions related to qualities such as attention, anxiety, depression, fear, and anger. He show body it-self has ability of healing.

Many doctors prescribing Meditation for blood pressure,

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5. Rick Hanson, 2011 p. 26

angina, and asthma breathe easier, relieve insomnia and stress. The experiments describe that deep relaxation changes our bodies on a genetic level. The researchers at Harvard Medical School discovered that, “disease-fighting genes” were active in long-term practitioners of Meditation more than others. They found genes that protect from afflictions such as pain, infertility, high blood pressure arthritis, stronger immunity, healthier hormone levels and lower blood pressure. The hypnotherapist at London’s Body Mind Medicine Centre report on their experiment and says,

“After two months, their bodies began to change, the genes that help fight inflammation, kill diseased cells and protect the body from cancer. All began to active.”

Fifteen minutes of Meditation can produce following health benefits,

1. Increased immunity - Researches at the Ohio State University found that Meditation increased immunity in recovering cancer patients. When it practices daily, reduce the risk of breast cancer recurrence. A month of mediation exercises boost natural killer cells, and giving them resistance to tumors and to viruses. Scientists at the University of Wisconsin reported meditators also showed a significant increase in immunity to the flu.
2. Increased Fertility – A research at the University of Western Australia found that women are more likely to conceive during periods when they are relaxed rather than stressed. A research at Trakya University, in Turkey, also found that stress reduces sperm count and motility, relaxation also boost male fertility.
3. Lowers the blood pressure - Harvard Medical School and British Medical Journal report that Meditation lowered blood pressure by making the body less responsive to stress hormones.
4. Anti-inflammatory - The researchers at Emory University in the US say that Stress leads to inflammation, a state linked to heart disease, arthritis, asthma and skin conditions such as psoriasis, say Meditation can help prevent and treat such symptoms.

5. Relives irritable bowel syndrome - The researchers at the State University of New York recommended Meditation twice a day as an effective treatment to irritable bowel syndrome.
6. Reduce the physical pain, anxiety and stress - A study published in Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics showed sustained benefits over a three year period in a group of women who had taken an eight-week course in Meditation.
7. Helps lower blood sugar- Researchers at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles showed that patients were able to lower their blood pressure, blood sugar and insulin by practicing Meditation.
8. Donald K. Swearer has said: Meditation is also promoted in Thailand as a treatment for patients with AIDS. Beginning in 1989, a team of psychologists, social workers and nurses utilized Meditation techniques as part of a hospital training program to help care workers who treat HIV and drug dependent patients.

Meditation more helpful for various health problems such as anxiety, pain, depression, stress, insomnia etc. (Physical or emotional symptoms that may be associated with chronic illnesses (such as heart disease, HIV/AIDS, and cancer) and their treatment.) Researches in 210 institutes including Harvard, and UCLA Medical School, in 33 countries show benefits of Meditation.

1. Reduced High Blood Pressure and Death Rates - American Journal of Cardiology
2. Reduced High Blood Pressure and Reduced Hypertension - American Journal of Hypertension
3. Reduced Atherosclerosis - American Journal of Cardiology
4. Reduced Thickening of Coronary Arteries - The American Heart Association's Stroke
5. Reduced Blood Pressure - International Journal of Neuroscience
6. Slowing of Aging - International Journal of Neuroscience

7. Reduced Hospitalization Rates - American Journal of Managed Care
8. Increased Creativity - Journal of Creative Behavior
9. Decreased Anxiety - Journal of Clinical Psychology
10. Reduced Alcohol Abuse - American Journal of Psychiatry
11. Increased Productivity - Academy of Management Journal
12. Reduced Blood Pressure: Comparisons with Other Procedures - The American Heart Association's Hypertension

## CONCLUSION

In first two years every single neuron has 2500 synapses and at age three grow into 15000 synapses per neuron. In average adult has half that number of synapses. The reason is some connections are strengthened while eliminated and some connections never used and die. It is known as synaptic pruning. The Meditation practices influence to the human neuron system and body functions. Scientists investigate use of effective, preventative, and non-pharmacological options to treat the mental illnesses. The Meditation practices important to regulate emotions, mood, and stress. Short time period meditation practice makes people calm, less stressed, and relax. 20 minutes of Meditation leads to physical changes such as reduced blood pressure, lower the heart rate, deeper and calmer breathing, lower risk of heart attack, and treatment for chronic and acute pain.

Four days of Meditation show reduced of unpleasantness and intensity of the pain. The Meditation increases the function of the left hemisphere, orbito-frontal cortex and hippocampus regions which linked with positive mood, immune functions. While aging the people thins the cortex of the brain and it can be cause for dementia. Scientific experiments show around one hour Meditation for six years increased the cortical thickness.

Neurobiologist believed human brain grow during infancy and childhood until 1960. The brain plasticity means brain's ability of changing and adapt as a result of experiences. Modern neurobiologists believe the brain continues to create new neural pathways and learn new information and create new memories according to

neuron plasticity. The plasticity occur during the lifetime but more predominant during specific life ages. The plasticity involves brain cells other than neurons including glia and vascular cells. The plasticity occurs due to learning, experiences, memory formation, or damage to the brain. The environment and genetics influence it.



# THE BUDDHIST APPROACH TOWARD AN ETHICAL AND HARMONIOUS SOCIETY

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by Jenny Ko Gyi\*

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## ABSTRACT

Everywhere in society, there are disagreements, disputes, violence. Also there are harmony, peace, understanding, good-will.

It is for all human-beings, regardless of faith, nationality, convictions, to make their surrounding a safe and happy place, making moments there worthwhile and fruitful.

As buddhists we learn of the four brahmavihara, sublime living, as ways of peace within oneself and toward others.

Following the Buddha's Teachings, and experiencing things good and bad, one only has to understand and believe in the law of kamma, the Dependent Arising, the frightful samsara.

Having lived a life of peace and harmony, it is important that higher practice is pursued so that one could further gain higher knowledge.

Learning of, and following the path of morality, concentration, knowledge/wisdom, one carries out the practice, share it with those around oneself, so that society becomes peaceful and harmonious, and ultimately the way out of all suffering is achieved.

Everywhere in society there could be disagreements, disputes, clashes, violence, cruelties. Then, worse, there could be, there have

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\* Doctor. The International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University. Ministry of Religious Affairs, Yangon, Myanmar

been, wars. Even all the peerless Buddhas that have appeared, as countless as the sand particles in the Ganga river, could not wipe out all that is evil and unfair. And yet, throughout the long *samsāra*, the good and the virtuous, again, as countless as the sand particles an earth, also appeared trying to do and achieve as much good as they can. Because of them, throughout the aeons of time, there also have been harmony, peace, understanding, goodwill. It is for all beings, regardless of faith, nationality, convictions, to make their surrounding a safe and happy place, making moments in their lifetime worthwhile and fruitful.

There are beings born wise and virtuous. They are those with inborn goodness. Then there are those with inborn kindness and compassion. There are those who become good because of the surrounding they are in. Again there are those with inborn wickedness, greed, cruelty. There are those with intrinsic goodness but then turn cruel and bad because of the surrounding they are thrown into. And when in the part of the world the cruel and the evil are predominant, then there it becomes difficult for all to be in. Hearing the Buddha's Teachings, and experiencing things good and bad, one as a Buddhist only has to believe in His Teachings, His guidance, follow it, and act it.

Amidst a crowd, among groups, between countries it is tolerance, forbearance, loving-kindness the Buddha taught us that pacify us so that violence is prevented, so that wars do not break out, so that leaders of countries and their citizens do not bear grudge and seething hatred against one another.

Worldlings of course do wrongs, not having been cleansed of ignorance and defilements. There will always be differences among individuals.

It is well known that in the Buddha's time, forgetting to radiate loving-kindness brought about the Discourse on Loving-kindness, Metta Sutta<sup>1</sup>. Five hundred monks during the Buddha's lifetime were practising in the forest for the attainment of the Path and the Fruition. It was mere lack of this one thing, radiating loving-

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1. Aṭṭhakathā Khuddaka Pātha, 198-201

kindness, that made it difficult for deities, many with their young, to remain up in the trees, above the venerables who were meditating at the foot of the trees. The morality and purity of the venerables made it unbearable for the deities to stay above them, and this prompted them to try to disturb and scare away the monks. When finally the deities made repulsive smell to diffuse among the practising monks, they fell ill and could no longer remain in the forest.

The three trainings of morality, concentration, insight knowledge were there in the monks. The practice they carried out was noble, aiming at the attainment of the path and fruition. Effort was rightly exerted.

In spite of ardent practice being carried out, it was lack of this one thing, that was to radiate loving-kindness, that made the monks leave the forest and hurry back to the Buddha.

Loving-kindness is all the more needed these days as man creates advanced weaponry to harm one another, to harm defenseless man, to harm poor, defenseless animals, and to destroy inanimate objects they perceive as undesirable or unacceptable. For loving-kindness to be nurtured, there first has to be forbearance, tolerance of things disagreeable. This loving-kindness again is to be accompanied by equanimity so that, if things do not go as desired, one can still feel at peace and accept the adverse situation. Many times there is the desire for oneself, for others, and loved ones, to fare well, then find they do not fare well. Then equanimity toward others would help overcome the disappointment, bitterness, and unhappiness.

Seeking the answer to being successful, or being a failure, seeking the answer to being conquerors or being victims of cruelties and injustice, the only thing that makes sense, that is reasonable, or logical and acceptable, is the Buddha's answer that is kamma.

## 1. KAMMA

It is kamma that brings about rebirth in happy planes; it is bad kamma that brings about rebirth in woeful planes. Mere words which may be taken as insignificant could amount to weighty kamma as in the case of Devadatta causing schism among the Buddha's followers, and this would be the irreversible cause of sending him to hell.

Kamma means “‘action or doing’<sup>2</sup>; kamma means ‘all moral and immoral volition’ all that is included in ‘thought, word, and deed’. ‘Every volitional action, except that of a Buddha or of an Arahant is called kamma.’”

It is the understanding and acceptance of kamma and its results that evil and bad actions are refrained from; and tolerance and goodwill nurtured. Tolerance and forbearance bring about harmony amidst a crowd. Loving-kindness is to be radiated toward one another when among a crowd.

When alone, the venerable Tipiṭaka Dhammadhāraṇīka Yaw Sayadaw reminds us, a worldling is to hold onto mindfulness. Without mindfulness, even when alone, one struggles with one’s inner enemies – greed, hatred, delusion.

When unwholesome states arise, with mindfulness, with awareness, these could be controlled. When mindfulness is not there, one might find others disagreeable, or vice-versa. Buddhists fundamentally believe in kammic deeds and fear the painful outcome of unwholesome kamma. Yet when overcome by defilements, being forgetful of the outcome, wrongdoings are committed.

Even among those familiar with the Buddha’s Teachings, during moments of lack of mindfulness, there could be incidences of verbal and physical outbursts.

If all could see and know the depth and profundity of kamma and its results, they would be so frightened learning of the results of bad kamma that no one would dare commit the tiniest of evil action. If all could see how a minuscule of good deed done with the purest of mind could bring unforeseeable well-being, there would be no one who would stay away from doing good deeds.

The venerable Dr. Dhammapiya quoted Myanmar’s Ledi Sayadaw thus:

*‘One cannot transmigrate into whatever kind of existence one might wish, but is liable to fall into any one of the thirty one kinds of abodes or*

*existences, accordingly as one is thrown by one's past kamma'.<sup>3</sup>*

*'Wholesome and unwholesome actions performed once by a being during his life time, may ripen after a lapse of hundreds of thousands of existences or world cycles or even a longer period. Thus the wholesome kamma that gives resultant effect of sukha (happiness) and unwholesome kamma that gives woeful results always accompany the life-continuum of a being'.<sup>4</sup>*

When incidences as results of bad kamma are heard, physical, verbal, mental wrongdoing, out of fear of the outcome, would be avoided.

'There is nothing for you to rest assured', the Venerable Mogok Sayadaw said.

'You won't know it when your own mother is reborn as a dog.'<sup>5</sup>

Not knowing this, the son will beat the dog. The dog which in the previous life had been the mother, now gets beaten by him who had been her beloved son.

No one will be spared, in the long *samsāra*, from lowly rebirths, if the way to cut off ignorance and craving is not learnt.

The Buddha in the Dependent Origination, *Paṭiccasamuppāda*, teaches us how dependent upon the rounds of defilements, there arise the rounds of deeds. This again gives rise to the rounds of results in planes happy or woeful, but always ending in ageing and death, all being mere travellers in the literally beginningless and endless *samsāra*.

'The beginning of the *samsāra* cannot be known'<sup>6</sup>

## 2. FROM FEAR OF SUFFERING

In the unending *samsāra* cycle of death and rebirth, beings go on in planes happy and woeful, dependent on kammic deeds good or bad, committed in existences that are as innumerable as the sand particles on earth. Throughout the *samsāra* cycle, beings have always lived with

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3. Nibbana in Theravāda Perspective, 50

4. The Manuals of Buddhism, 139

5. The Meaning of Nirodha Sacca, 150

6. Samyutta Pāli, 394

the notion of man, woman, animals, beings, etc., which are but names or concepts that do not exist at all. And when attention is turned toward these concepts, there may arise defilements of greed, hatred, delusion, and so on that comprise the rounds of defilements – kilesa vatta.

Unless a Buddha appears in the world, the ultimate realities – paramattha, that truly exist, viz. khandha or aggregates, are never heard of. Sadly, in between world-cycles in which a Buddha appears, there take place innumerable ‘world-cycles’<sup>7</sup>, in which Buddhas do not appear at all.

“If (white) mustard seeds are kept full in a storage of a hundred ‘yojanas’<sup>8</sup> square, and a hundred yojanas deep, and if one mustard seed is taken out of the storage after each hundred-year interval, even after all the mustard seeds have been taken out, the world-cycle will not come to an end”<sup>9</sup>. This is how long a world-cycle takes. Therefore for beings to be in woeful planes like hell for such immeasurable periods, it is pain enough even to imagine it. But then at one time or the other, almost all beings, without exception, have been to those torturous planes for unimaginable spans of duration, undergoing all forms of suffering which are painful and fearsome even to think of. Out of fear of these sufferings, Buddhists try to attain the escape from these. Even when Buddhas appear in the world, there are innumerable beings that are not born in places where they can be near the Buddha. Even when they are born at a time and in places where they have chances to see and listen to the Buddha’s teachings, they may be followers of a different faith, thereby losing the rare chance to develop right view. Instead, nurturing the wrong views that they learn from their teachers, being blinded by ignorance, they may go against and become rivals of the Buddha and this brings them great losses. Following their own faiths, having false views, they create causes which give results in woeful planes. Being born in woeful planes, for instance animal plane, they will further commit unwholesome actions, and these will further send them down into more rebirths in woeful planes and more losses. (Not possessing the wisdom eye), ‘man is completely blind. In this world only a few

7. Saṅgaha-bhāṣāṭīkā, 317

8. A Dictionary of Pāli Language, 604; one yojana is about 12 miles

9. Saṅgaha- bhāṣāṭīkā, 317

can see the nature of impermanence, etc. Birds that escape the net are few; likewise man (beings) who attain Nibbāna are few'.

The 'beginning of the samsāra cannot be known'.<sup>10</sup> The beginning of beings bound by craving, blinded by ignorance, going about in the samsāra cannot be known. The beginning of the samsāra is not known. Blinded by ignorance, there never has been even the slightest idea how long this samsāra of suffering is. There should be disenchantment, dispassion, in all these conditioned things which are nothing but suffering. Escape from these is to be desired. The young novice Tissa, when asked by the Buddha, what he was pondering, he answered that as he travelled in the samsāra of suffering, 'the decayed corpses' that had been thrown away after he had died, in that very place of his dwelling in the valley, was 'beyond count'. There was 'not a place on earth'<sup>11</sup> where each being, in various positions, 'had not died'.

Even at a time when a Buddha appears in the world, even when it is in a place which is within a reachable distance to the Buddha, there are beings that are born as animals or as lowly petas; and there are beings born in immaterial (or formless) brahma planes, or in hell. Then, even if there appears a Buddha in the world, these beings will not have chance to hear the Lord Buddha's Teachings, thereby losing the rare chance to be delivered from the rounds of the samsāra cycle.

In the innumerable existences in the long samsāra, tears that have flowed due to association with the unloved, or 'tears that have flowed' due to dissociation from loved ones, is 'more than the water in the four oceans'.<sup>12</sup> As we run about in the long samsāra 'blood that flows when we get beheaded as buffaloes, as lambs, goats, deer, chicken, pigs, as convicts, is more than the water in the four oceans'. Therefore while the Buddha's Teachings can still be heard, those fortunate enough are to learn to avoid what is unethical and harmful to oneself and to others. One also has to learn to do what is ethical and beneficial to oneself.

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10. Samyutta I, 394

11. Dhammapada II, 287

12. Samyutta Pāli, 394

Then who knows what evil one also may have done in the unseeably long *samsāra*? And when the time comes back to pay for things that have been unknowingly done, then there will be no running away. Even if one is free of these results of bad kamma, what is there to escape from the inevitable ageing, ailments, and finally death? From fear of all these sufferings, it should be endeavoured so that the deliverance from all suffering is achieved.

Actions both good and bad are done physically, verbally and mentally. The ups and downs, the high and low, the unfairnesses, the inequalities in life are proof of the results of good and bad kamma in the long *samsāra*. There is no arguing over the results of kamma as the answer to why one is rich, the other poor, why one lives long, while the other dies young, why one lives a blissful life, while the other's is that of misery and pain.

Then there are blissful planes and woeful ones not visible to ordinary man. But all ends in ageing and death, until the way out of all suffering is reached.

So long as view based on concepts is not differentiated from the ultimate realities, what is cognized at the six sense doors will be perceived in the conceptual sense. For example, sound will be perceived as words of anger or hatred or insult. Or sound will be perceived as well meaning, kind words. Thus the ultimate reality, paramattha, which is sound, will be perceived as words that are warm and welcoming, or those that are ill-meaning, insulting, and undesirable. It is ignorance, *avijjā*, that sends beings afloat or sunken in the unending *samsāra* current.

### 3. CONVENTIONAL TRUTH

Conventional truth, is also known as relative truth in the sense that it is applicable or understood within a certain community, or among people who belong to the same group, or to the same geographical location. Outside this community it is no longer understood. It is therefore only relatively true within a confined group that speaks and understands the same language. However,

‘Statements of the Buddha couched in conventional language, are called ‘truth’ – *vohāra-saccā*, being correct in their own level,

which does not contradict the fact that such statements ultimately refer to impermanent and impersonal processes’<sup>13</sup>.

Thus conventional truth – *sammuti saccā* is:

- That which is generally received as truth by the ‘general consent of mankind’<sup>14</sup>,
- That which conforms to the ‘conventional usage of the world’<sup>15</sup>

‘Conventional realities are the references of ordinary conceptual thought and conventional modes of expression’; ‘these notions do not possess ultimate validity, for the objects which they signify do not exist in their own right as irreducible realities. Their mode of being is conceptual, not actual’. ‘They are products of mental constructions, not realities existing by reason of their own nature’.

They include such entities as living beings, persons, men, women, animals, and the apparently stable persisting objects that ‘constitute our unanalyzed picture of the world’<sup>16</sup>.

According to the conventional truth, it is said that a person, a being, exists; that a person or a being continually ‘transmigrates from one existence to another in the ocean of life’<sup>17</sup>. According to concepts there exists what is named ‘the world’<sup>18</sup>. ‘Where there is the eye, where there is the visible object, where there is the eye-consciousness, where there are those cognized by the eye-consciousness, there is the world, there is the concept, there is the name ‘the world’’<sup>19</sup>.

Being carried afloat in the *samsāra*, there is rebirth in the human planes and deity planes, so that if one comes across the right teacher, one can be saved out of the stream of *samsāra*. Thus one could be delivered from endless cycles of sorrow and pain. Even then this

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13. Buddhist Dictionary, 124

14. A Dictionary of Pāli Language, 436

15. Lectures on Abhidhammattha Saṅgha

16. The Fundamental Abhidhamma, 16

17. The Manuals of Ledi Dipani, 20

18. Samyutta II, 259

19. Ibid, 259

could take beings through aeons of world cycles, before the final deliverance.

Being sunken, rebirth would be in woeful planes, and even when Buddhas appear, after aeons of world cycles when Buddhas do not appear, these beings would miss the rare chance of escape from suffering.

When the eye and the visible object come into contact, there arises the eye-consciousness that cognizes the object. When the paramattha is not heard of, the object is taken as man, people, and beings of the world; it is taken as 'I', 'others', etc. The eye, the visible object, eye-consciousness, eye-contact, contact-borne feeling, tend to go into dissolution. The ear, the nose, etc. also tend to go into dissolution. The Buddha says, 'It is to be called the world because it tends to go into destruction (dissolution)'<sup>20</sup>.

The world of concepts, with its man, deities, brahma, individuals, beings, is thought to exist. Thinking it is a man, touch it. At the body door there is contact with only hardness or softness, or heat/warmth or cold. Thinking it is a man, look at it. At the eye door, there is cognition of the visible object only. It has been mentioned that only names and concepts are heard of and remembered throughout the endless (and literally where the beginning cannot be known, or beginningless) samsāra. But this remembering and knowledge of only names is not the ultimate truth, because it is knowledge only of those that do not exist in reality.

Concepts change with forms, shapes, states, etc.

'Concept changes its designation when its form or substance changes'<sup>21</sup>

For example, when a tree is cut down, it becomes logs; when logs are cut length-wise, they become wood-planks; when smaller parts of trees like peripheral branches are cut, they become firewood, when firewood is burned to a certain extent, they become charcoal, etc. But the intrinsic nature which is hardness remains unchanged whether it is a tree, or a log, or a plank. This unchanging

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20. The Manuals of Ledi Dipani, 271

21. The Fundamental Abhidhamma, 16

intrinsic nature is the ultimate truth while different names such as trees, logs are conventional truth or concepts.

As long as contemplation is made only on these concepts it cannot be said that the right path is reached. Wholesome actions like abstinence from killing, from stealing, are founded on concepts. 'When it is wholesomeness it is on concepts' says the venerable Pakoku Sayadaw. Only with contemplation of the truth will there be abandoning of the wrong, the (utmost) wrong view of 'I' or *sakkāyaditthi*. According to name concepts, in the world there are man, beings. There are gems, etc, that are categorized as precious, and on account of which individuals are classified as rich. In the eye of a dog, or of a cow, or of a ten-month old baby, those that are deemed precious are only visible objects which render no distinctive entity of wealth or high-class. To them these will not be even as precious as the food they take. As has been mentioned earlier, throughout the generations, it has been taught that these so-called jewels are precious. Remembering these by concepts, in the way that has been taught, these jewels come to be categorized as precious.

Even though it is said that in truth there only exist the ultimate realities, conventional truth with its names and concepts also plays a part in the conditioned world. But it is to be understood that there exist only the ultimate realities which only the Buddha realized.

#### 4. THE ULTIMATE REALITIES

Throughout the *samsāra* there only has been the notion of man and beings, and the ultimate realities, *paramattha*, that truly actually exists, is never heard of or known by ordinary beings unless a Buddha appears in the world. Even then a Buddha appears in the world only after aeons of world-cycles in which Buddhas do not appear. Therefore the ultimate realities, *paramattha*, are heard only after unimaginably long, immeasurable intervals. When the Teachings of the Buddha are not heard, when the ultimate realities are not known, worldlings always live perceiving only the conventional truth - *sammuti sacca*, in which names, concepts, the medium of expressing things that take place in daily life, are the only things that man knows. In the *paramattha*, there is the intrinsic nature alone,

which indeed has no words at all, but only the essence. It remains unbiased, unprejudiced toward any one, irrespective of rank, or status, or age. Thus the paramattha persists unchanged; it remains irreducible, unchangeable. The same can be said of Nibbāna, the unconditioned reality - asaṅkhata paramattha, the final deliverance from all suffering.

Knowing only the conventional truth, seeing things as desirable or detestable, there arise greed, hatred, etc. Yet there have also been good factors of loving-kindness, compassion, etc. But because the ultimate realities are not known, even these good factors take place only on names and concepts. And wisdom, which comes with knowledge of the ultimate realities, is not there.

The conventional truth is that accepted by man, but does not actually exist. It is very wrong if it is thought that the Buddha's Teachings can be readily heard. Said the Buddha to the venerable Ānanda, 'Even the words Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, are not heard in many hundreds of world cycles'<sup>22</sup>; 'In the long saṃsāra, beings have lived only hearing the various languages of animals'<sup>23</sup>.

In the Buddha's time, there were those who were enlightened upon merely hearing the Dhamma. Buddhists, hearing and learning about the noble truths, are awakened, and long for deliverance from it. Once after each infinite interval, when a Buddha appears in the world, the paramattha dhamma is heard of.

Of the six sense-doors, for instance, it is the ear door upon which sound comes in contact with, with the resultant arising of the ear-consciousness. At the ear of a dog, or of a new-born baby, or of a grown up who does not understand English, words spoken in English will be cognized only as sound. There will be nothing well meaning or ill meaning in it.

But through perception, when man has learned the English language, sound will come to be cognized as a language, as that bearing friendly words, insulting words, etc.

Sound that is equally heard by a baby or a dog or by a non-En-

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22. Majjhimanikāya I, 53

23. Patisambhidāmagga (English Translation), 10-12

glish-speaking grownup, is the ultimate reality. In sound which is the ultimate reality there is nothing good or bad. It is merely sound. But when sound is repeatedly heard, when perception remembers sound as words good or bad, when a language has been learnt, sound cognized by the ear-consciousness will be perceived by the mind-consciousness as words desirable or undesirable. Through ignorance of the ultimate realities, perceiving sound as words of a language, there will arise pleasant or unpleasant feeling. This brings about pleasure, anger, grudge, etc. Thus beginning with words of conventional truth, cognized, for example, at the mind door, begins friendships, harmony, understanding, peace. So also with sound perceived as words insulting, infuriating, etc. there could be hatred, grudge, that disrupts friendship, which could be the beginning of tensions among groups, among countries, among leaders, and even finally leading to wars.

## 5. SEEKING PEACE THE BUDDHIST WAY

The truth that is the impermanence of all conditioned things is a reminder to not be attached to happiness, pleasure, or anger, hatred, grudge. With the arising of any state, there is the passing away. They arise only to instantly pass away. Thus hatred or anger too arises to pass away. Repeatedly contemplating the passing away of happiness, or anger, helps us get over losses, dissatisfactions, though some may bring instant relief while others take it longer to heal.

Greed, lust, sorrow, jealousy, etc. also arise but these also are not there permanently. Loss of parents, of wealth, failures, of course bring about much sorrow. Though these take longer to heal, they are not there permanently. Soon these will be replaced by laughter, anger, etc. Then also enemies become friends too, as grudge and hatred pass away, replaced by friendship and understanding.

At the ear door, what is heard in the ultimate sense is sound. Perceiving it as words of hatred is a concept. Again sound is matter impinging upon the ear base which also is matter. When sound impinges upon ear base, the ear-consciousness arises. The arisen ear-consciousness is mind. It is not words of a language heard, but mind-matter arising. Sound, after impinging on the ear base, passes away. Ear consciousness, after arising, passes away. Mind-matter,

arises and passes away.

When hatred passes away, non-hatred arises. Thus it is the arising and passing away of mind and matter. Succeeding mind-matter arises, again to instantly pass away.

Mind-matter is the ultimate reality. Perceiving it as words of hatred or good-will is a concept.

When contemplation is turned toward impermanence of mind and matter which is the ultimate reality, the delusion as words or insults, or grudge will be no more. Then there is peace that comes with equanimity toward conditioned things, which is knowledge of the truth.

And when the unavoidable and uncontrollable take place, when leaders and their followers turn violent, when innocent victims suffer, then, as buddhists, understanding of, and belief in the resultant rounds of past kamma would help us understand and accept the unavoidable. Then it would help us overcome the anger, and grudge, sorrow and pain.

And with time, all that is intensely hurtful, with its nature of passing away, will be found to have passed away, replaced by feelings less painful. Smiles and laughter will arise in place of sorrow. It will be found that living the past has become more bearable.

Applying this impermanent nature of the reality, the truth, there comes the understanding that whatever wholesome or unwholesome states arise, they arise only to pass away, to be replaced by succeeding transient states. With knowledge of this transiency of the truth, it is hoped that the wise and the virtuous help peace, love, friendship and understanding prevail in every corner of the world, and make it peaceful and enjoyable for all.

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# BUDDHIST APPROACH TO HARMONIOUS FAMILIES, HEALTHCARE, HAPPINESS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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by Bajrangi Yadav\*

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore impact of buddist approach to harmonious families, healthcare, happiness and sustainable development in India. The methodology of this research was descriptive and co-relational. The aim of the study to observe the buddist approach to harmonious families, healthcare, happiness and sustainable development in 100 males and 100 females from Ayodhya (Faizabad) and Sultanpur city of Uttar Pradesh in India were randomly selected to participate in the study. Pre and post test experimental design was used in this study. The study consisted of 200 children's. Standard statistical techniques (Mean, S.D., t-Test, and ANOVA) were used in the analysis of data. This paper deals with human-mind development and an appropriate path for individuals and for socioeconomic in order to achieve the objective of sustainable development. This paper begins by providing background and discussion on different schools of thought on sustainable development. It also discusses conceptual changes in economics and happiness from Western and from Eastern Buddhist perspectives.

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\* Doctor, Assistant Professor in Psychology, Department of Psychology, Faculty of New Science Kamla Nehru Institute of Physical and Social Sciences (KNIPSS), Sultanpur (U.P.), India; International Research Life Time Member in Global Research Development Services (GRDS), GAHSSR, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and American Psychological Association (APA), U.S.A., America

The paper explains the meaning of happiness in Buddhism and compares it with those used in general studies / theories. It also highlights meanings of real quality of life, values of consumption, work, production, and natural wellbeing in Buddhist concept. The difference between Buddhist concepts and Western theories of happiness and economics are compared, and focus on different implications for development. The paper proposes a new approach and concept of Buddhist Sustainable Development (BSD), which is human-centered sustainable development, driven by inner happiness (happiness at the mind and wisdom levels). By applying Buddhist happiness concepts, human beings can be happy with reasonable and moderated levels of consumption and resource use as well as exhibiting more compassion and loving kindness towards others and nature. Wisdom is essential to develop a high level of happiness; whereas, a high level of consumption and resource use may not lead to an increase in happiness. This development direction contrasts with that of conventional economic theories, which promote self-centeredness, competition, ever more increased consumption and accumulation, and consequently threaten resource exploitation. The BSD approach, supported by the Buddhist economics concept integrating Buddhist principles into development, provides a new pathway for sustainability with right views (understanding natural truths) towards living and true happiness, also moderation in consumption and in lifestyle. Further, the BSD concept emphasizes an understanding of the interdependence of all beings and nature, and caring for nature for humanity's wellbeing. By focusing on analysis of human happiness, BSD extends the conventional widely used sustainable development framework by dealing with the root causes of sustainable development problems arising from human behavior. Thus, the BSD approach can contribute to a possible new approach and solution to the world's development challenges and problems.

## INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has been a topic of discussion in development practices and theories for a long time. Since the industrial revolution, development has mainly focused on economic progress in consumption, production, and industrial growth together with technological advancement. Human and social

development as well as the environment has not much received careful consideration, and all three have deteriorated. As human beings have experienced social, environmental, and psychological problems from development driven mainly by economic growth, there have been increased discussions on development directions and new paradigms for development. Sustainable development has become a topic of interest among development agencies. Among major milestones in the sustainable development movement, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in June 1972, may be considered as the start of global concern towards the international environment.<sup>1</sup> Shortly thereafter, related UN organizations, as well as the World Commission, were established. This stream of consciousness has promoted international attention to environment-friendly development. At the same time, another stream of movement from UNESCO declared, in December 1986, "the World Decade for Cultural Development" (1988-1997) to focus on culture (related to human values) for development. However, it seems that only sustainable development, focused on the environment, has been popular within the active global movements and consequently a second global conference was organized in 1992, held in Rio de Janeiro. Environment economics has since become a subject of study in its own right, and seems to dominate the idea of sustainable development.

Meanwhile, the global environmental situation has been deteriorating, even though organizations all over the world have put in efforts to solve this problem. Over the last twenty years, there have been many active movements towards sustainable development. Since the 1992 UN conference in Rio, heads of states and governments adopted Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration; however, environmental problems have not been resolved effectively and have gotten worse. Obviously, there are still huge implementation gaps across the world in moving the sustainable development pathway forward. Mainstream sustainable development framework covers economic, social and environmental dimensions.

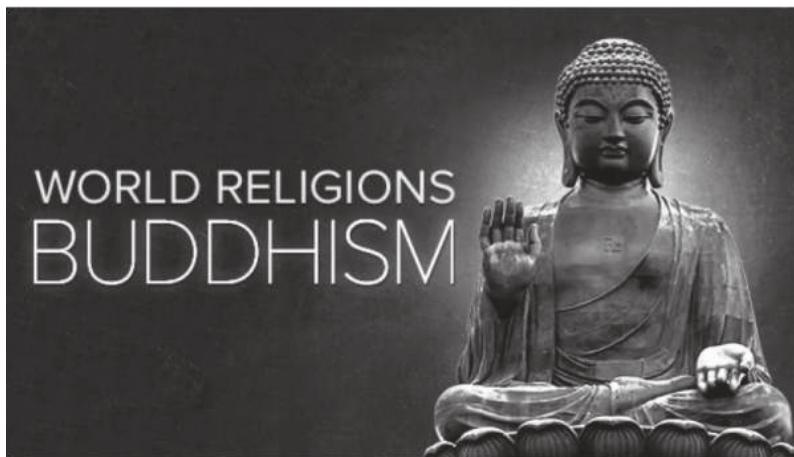
The Sustainable Development Solution Network (SDSN),<sup>2</sup> a global initiative for the UN in support of the SDGs, proposed a

fourth dimension - good governance - to this framework, though, it relates to systems rather than human beings. However, that conventional idea, implemented globally, may need a rethinking because it is still focused on growth, and consequently ineffective to solve sustainable development problems. As environmental problems in global development today are largely driven by consumption-led growth, the development framework needs a new paradigm. There may be some missing elements in the sustainable development pathway that are more crucial than the four dimensions noted above which exclude human minds and spirit. In contrast, this study draws attention to the inner-human dimension as a critical factor for sustainable development and a starting point for all change. Greater concern for living with nature is likely to be driven from spiritual or inner happiness obtained by wisdom directed towards understanding the interdependence of all kinds of living beings and nature, as well as promoting happiness from less use of resources and being more independent from physical materials.



In this regard, Buddhist principles and practices, focusing on inner happiness, well support holistic sustainable development. The inner happiness focused sustainable development may be called “Buddhist Sustainable Development”, driven by the “Buddhist sustainable happiness” path or happiness at high (mind

and wisdom) levels. Payutto (1995; 2006) has indicated that Buddhist sustainable happiness can make sustainable development effective and can explain why the Western sustainable development pathway - which does not include sustainable happiness - has not been effective. This research, therefore, aims to study and clearly demonstrate this idea academically. To achieve the goal of sustainable development successfully, human beings must be happy with moderation and be consciously willing to preserve environment and resources for future generations. That is why the Buddhist approach outlined in this paper has to relate to the issue of happiness, insightfully. Moreover, the study relates to external factors such as right environment (i.e., the social and economic system) surrounding peoples' lives as supporting conditions for their Buddhist practice and Buddhist way of life, which can reinforce sustainable development. Consequently, the study offers a new development paradigm focusing on human-mind development as a critical factor to drive sustainable development.



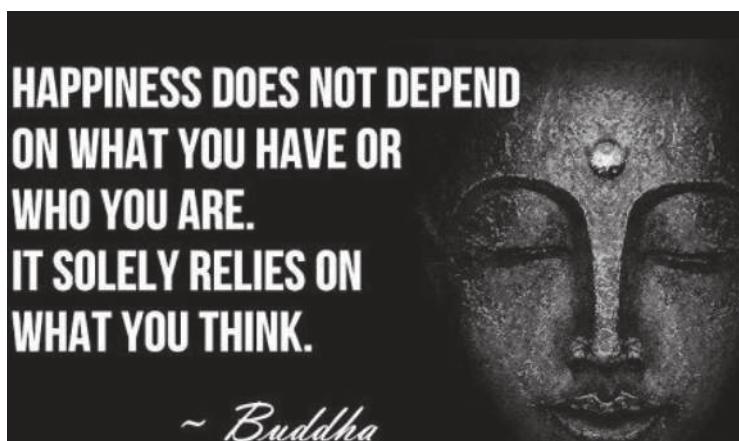
Buddhism is a world religion. The philosophy of Buddhism is based on moral codes and principles which originated around 2,500 years ago in Kapilavastu (now Nepal). The teaching of Buddhism offers a rational understanding of human suffering and also shows a path to diagnosis human suffering. The teaching of Buddhism is based on compassion, non-violence and understanding of self and offers a moral code for all people irrespective of their gender, caste, religion, region etc. Buddhism shows a way to reach in deeper

insight of human nature of reality and spiritual insight through meditation. It promotes self-awareness to interact with in everyday life with others. Today, an estimated 500 million people in various parts of the world practice one of the many varieties of technique of Buddhism. The Life of Buddha - The Awakened One: The story of Buddhism begins in the year 563 B.C in Lumbini, in Nepal near the present border of Northern India, where Siddhartha was born.



The story is told that, one day, Siddhartha saw an old man, bent and trembling, and discovered old age. On the second encounter, he saw a sick man suffering from disease and on the third journey he witnessed a funeral procession and corpse. Finally, on the forth journey, he met a wandering monk who had an inner tranquillity despite living an austere life, and the attempt of the aesthetic to seek meaning and solution to it all. Soon after seeing all the signs, Siddhartha left all pleasures, his wife and son and at the night of his 29th birthday, the young prince renounced his regal life and entered the real life in search of truth. He went from one holy man to other holy man and pursued his spiritual quest. For six years he punished his body and lived the most austere life. In the end, he vowed harder. However at the point of near death, he saw a three stringed lute, a musician's instrument. He saw that if the string is too loose, no sound is produced, too tight and it breaks and turned just right it would produce pleasant sound. He saw that the austere way would not take him to his quest of enlightenment. At this point, Gautama gave up his extreme life and began to eat normally again. He again decided to search for his

quest and sat himself under the Bodhi tree at the place called Bodh Gaya and determined not to move until he had found the answers he sought. He meditates very deeply and on the night of the full moon in May, complete enlightenment (Nirvana - complete freedom from birth) came to him. His mind became calm and he understood the cycle of birth, death and wheel of life. He understood the true nature and that of all living beings. This was the end of his spiritual journey, and at the moment he became “the Buddha”.



Teaching of Buddhism: Buddha first sermon was sharing of his insight. He said that there were two extremes of life; one was over indulgence and attachment to the luxuries of life, of wealth, food, drink and the flesh, while the other was the masochistic indulgence in self-denial. Both to be avoided in their place one should strive for the middle path. This, he said, leads to spirituality, calmness and an insight into life, leading to higher knowledge, Enlightenment and ultimately Nirvana.



**The Four Holy Truths may be expressed as follows:**

Existence is unhappiness

Unhappiness is caused by desire and selfishness

Desire and craving can be overcome by

Following the Eight Fold Path

**The steps of the Eight-fold Path are**

Right Understanding

Right Purpose

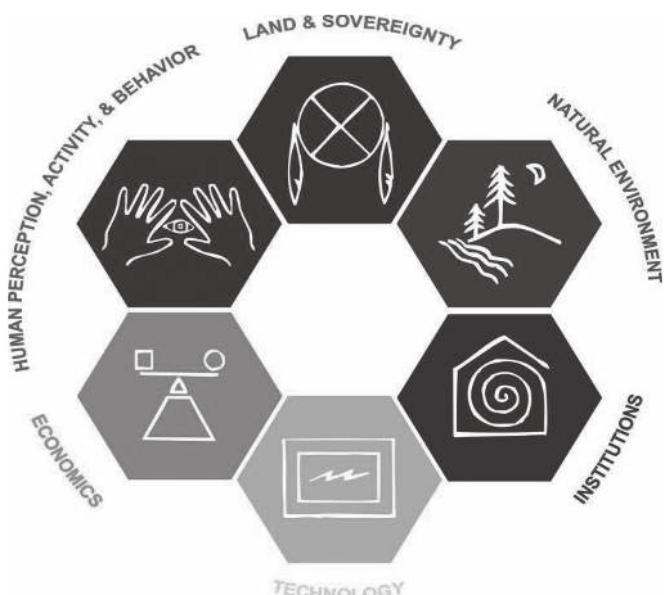
Right Speech

Right Behavior

Right Vocation

Right Effort

Right Alertness



## Objectives

This paper aims to contribute to innovative thinking on happiness and development. Specifically, its objectives are:

- To rethink the current development paradigm, economics,

happiness, and sustainable development frameworks.

- To rethink the current development paradigm, economics, happiness, and sustainable development frameworks.
- To provide Buddhist perspectives on new development concepts and support for individual practices leading to sustainable happiness and sustainable development.
- To provide a new Buddhist development paradigm that can lead to world peace and social happiness as well as effective sustainable development.

## Methodology

This is a documentary research project exploring relevant concepts with analytical review and discussion of essential concepts from both Western and from Eastern Buddhist perspectives. With critical analysis, the paper suggests a new idea and approach for development from Buddhist perspectives. The research project has also included two workshops: one at the beginning of the study for brainstorming ideas and shaping direction of the study, and the final one for presenting the research draft as well as getting feedback for possible follow-up studies. Comments from participants have been considered for adjustment and improvement of the final research paper.

## Benefit of Research

The study contributes to extending knowledge of core values in Buddhist philosophy that can contribute to individual / societal peace and happiness, as well as to development conceptual / theories and sustainable development. In addition to individuals, Buddhist principles can also be applied to much broader social and global development issues. People and organizations continue to search for better paradigms or alternative development approaches that can bring in better results and solve existing world development problems holistically. Buddhist sustainable development approach offers a new way of thinking and can fill some gaps of missing key elements in development today.

The study will suggest how Buddhist practices and theories can be framed as a new development model, contributing to

solution of current world problems and conflicts. The research and education on this subject is intended to be useful for both Thai and international societies, academically and practically. Moreover, this new idea on Buddhist sustainable development or the new sustainable development framework is a timely contribution to global discussion on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) towards 2030. This research is offered as an input for the discussions or global dialogues on sustainable development.

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# BRAHMAVIHĀRA: BUDDHIST APPROACH TO HARMONIOUS FAMILY AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

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by Sushma Shree\*

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## ABSTRACT

Brahmavihāra is a Buddhist concept. It means divine abode or sublime states of mind for leading a harmonious life in the society. It has four limbs, namely, Mettā (loving kindness), karūna (compassion), Mūdita (joy) and Īupekkha (equanimity). These four excellent, lofty or sublime states of mind are actually the right or ideal way of human conduct towards living beings- *sattesu sammā patipatti*. These four attitudes of mind provide the answer to all situations arising from social contact. These are the great removers of tension; the great healers of wounds suffered in the struggles of existence; levelers of social barriers; builders of harmonious communities; revivers of joy and hope long abandoned; promoters of human brotherhood against the forces of egotism. He who assiduously develops these four sublimes states by conduct and meditation is said to be at para with Brahma (*Brahma-Samo*) and if these become the dominant influence in his mind he will be reborn in congenial worlds, the realms of Brahma. Hence these states of minds are called God-like or Brahma-like. These are called abodes (vihāra) because these should be mind's constant dwelling places where our minds feel 'at home'; they should not remain merely places of rare and short visits. Our mind should be thoroughly saturated by these four human qualities. These are, in fact, four pillars of human society. These are also known as the boundless states (*Appamaññā*)

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\* Research Scholar, Dept. of Buddhist Studies, Nava NalandaMahavihara, Nalanda

because in their perfection and their true nature they should not be narrowed down by any limitations. A mind that has attained to that boundless of the Brahma-vihāra, will not harbor any national, racial, religious or class- hatred. It is necessary to use these four quality not only as principles of conduct and objects of reflection, but also to take theme as subjects of methodical meditations, called *Brahma-vihāra- bhāvanā*. The Buddha taught these four sublimes states of mind called Brahmavihāra in order to lead a harmonious family life and to establish a sustainable human society.

At the very outset it is essential to keep into notice the fact that due to rapid progress of scientific researches and advancement of information technology this world has become smaller and closer. Because of satellite and other forms of space technology, new discovery had been made indifferent aspect of human life. Although political boundaries still continue to exist, however an easy excess to distant parts of the world has become possible through internet. Industrialization with rapid speed has brought the globalization of the people of different social and cultural background closer.

However, the modern day globalization brought out by higher technology and industrialization has failed miserably in creating an ideal global human society from the social unit of family up to international level. With the beginning of this millennium one can see the growing tendency of the selfishness, mutual hatred, sectarian violence, arrogance and religious violence. It is due to defect that mankind has mastered enormous amount of technical forces which it never possessed before. With the rise of science and technology modern man desired of all types of physical comfort, various means of worldly pleasure and new commodities of consumer goods. Although the distinction of human being based on caste, creed, color, sex and nationality etc. is narrowed down due to new trend of globalization, however there is a drastic and unfortunate change of high traditional human values. The values, culminated by human beings in the past are now being analogue out by the new age. Man invented machine and high technology for fulfillment of his necessities, but now he has become slave of machine. Today industrial regeneration throughout the world has made man sick of himself.

It is also essential to remember that globalization is an outcome of growing financial and commercial interest of rich nation for capturing world market and thereby to establish their supremacy over the major world economy. Eventually this globalization is also associated with a type of cultural imperialism as it leads to the homogenization of various cultures. It is undermining local culture and is disrupting tradition value oriented relationship in the society. The gradual disappearance of traditional Hindu joint family in India, the conversation into the micro families and the growing number of divorces etc. is the glaring examples of the sad picture of modern globalization. In fact this globalization has failed in creating a harmonious social units and in developing global human values and global sustainable human society. Although man has succeeded to sum extend, in attaining the control over nature around him, yet his suffering prevails, as he could not control his own mind. Therefore it becomes essential to examine the efficacy of Buddhist thought in general and the teachings of the Brahmavihara in particular for transforming the modern trend of social turmoil and to make the modern society more concerned with human welfare.

While examining the theoretical aspect of Buddhism, manifested in literary sources, it is clearly observed by most of the impartial readers that after attaining enlightenment Buddha was not satisfied only by the attainment of personal enlightenment and he tried hard to help others also in solving their individual and social problems. In fact the Buddha belong to that genre of the enlightened being who were not at all satisfied with what they have personally attained, but also making suitable efforts to help the humanity to get rid of different problems. Out of compassion towards the sorrowing millions masses, the Buddha showed them the middle way, the sure way of liberation from all source of problems, weather at individual level or social level. It seems that this middle path of the Buddha stand for a balanced mentality and reminds every human being to remember that mind management is essence of every aspect of life management. It is also essential to remember here that the essence of Buddha's Dhamma is universal in nature and it is equally effective even in the atmosphere of modern society. The external practices may change from time to time and place to place but the cosmic law

of the Dhamma defied time and the climb. The Buddha did not take in to notice the ceremonial part of the religious practices. According to him the most important problem for the humanity in all time is the unsatisfactoriness or restlessness of the mind (Dukkha). He showed a path to get rid of them and unfold the truth that there are three roots of all misery (akusalmulani). These are greed or attachment (lobha), aversion or ill will (doso) and delusion or ignorance (moho). By complete eradication of these evil roots, the mind is purified and brings the end of all worldly sufferings. The Buddha showed a path consisting of virtues or morality (sila), concentration or meditation (Samadhi) and insight or wisdom (panna). The mind is purified by the practice of meditation or Samadhi. Without which the minds remains polluted and there is no end of misery of worldly problems.

A practitioner of the way fairer has to fix his mind concentrate object in order to make it peaceful. Forty such objects are prescribed in the Pali text which are called kammathana or the objects of fixing the mind among these forty kammathana are included the four sublime states of minds which are called Brahmavihara.

The word Brahmaviahara is a compound word consisting of them Brahma means divine or sublime and vihara means state of mind thus the word Brahmavihara means the sublime states of mind. These virtues tend to elevate man. They make one divine in this life itself. They can transform man into a supreme. If all try to cultivate them, irrespective of creed, color, race or sex, the earth can be transformed into a paradise where all can live in perfect peace and harmony as ideal citizens af one world. The four sublime virtues are also termed illimitable (appamanna). They are so called because they find no barrier or limited and should be intended towards all beings without exception. They embrace all living beings including animals.

Irrespective of religious beliefs one can cultivate these sweet virtues and be a blessing to oneself and all others. These sublime mental states, if develop properly, can be highly useful for establishing harmonious relationships between the members of family as well as can serve as the best means for the creation of a sustainable human society.

There is a brief note on the relevance of each of them.

Metta (Universal friendliness): the first of these sublime states is called Metta or Maitri in Sanskrit. Literally it means an attitude of a true and sincer friend towards all living beings. For it is a mental state of a true friend which transform hard and makes it soft. It is defined as a sinsier resolution of our mind for the welfare and true happiness of all living beings without any exception.

*Mātā yathā niyam puttam , Āyusā ekaputtam anurakkhe  
Evam pi sabbabhūtesu , Mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam<sup>1</sup>*

Or “Just as mother protects her only child even at the risk of her life; even so one should cultivate boundless loving kindness towards all living beings,”

In this technique the Buddha makes it clear that one should develop the shinier wish of a mother for the genuine welfare of her child without any pass a mat e love. If this type of mental deposition is developed in a family, there will be no problem of any conflict of self interest among the members of the family and full harmony, which is essential for a happy family, will be created undoubtedly. It is essential to note here. That this sublime virtue of universal friendliness does not represent personal affection or carnal love because personal affection produces grief but this sublime virtue is free from all types of griefs. There is no limit or barrio for the extended of universal friendliness it is intended not only towards all human beings but embarks all living being including animal and even insects who need greater compassion and in are helpless condition. The Buddha says:

*Ye keci pāṇabhūtathī , Tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā  
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā , Majjhimā rassakā aṇukathūlā<sup>2</sup>  
Ditṭhā vā ye vā additṭhā , Ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre*

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1. The Sutta-Nipata, Dinesh Andersen and Helmer Smith, PTS by Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1913, verse no-149.

2. Ibid. verse no-146.

3. Ibid. verse no-147

Bhūtā vā sambhavesī vā sabbe , sattā bhavantu sukhitattā<sup>3</sup>

All the living beings weather moving or not moving, big or large or of medium or not moving, big or large or of medium size, short, subject or gross, seen, or unseen, dwelling far or near, those who have come into existence may all of them be happy and delighted.

The antithesis of universal friendliness or metta is hatred or ill will or anger. It is due to hatred is one of the powerful distractive vice in human consciousness. Due to this destructive psychics factors there arises caviar problem disturbing the harmony in a family or society. It is historical truth that the evil of hatred or enmity cannot be eradicated by hatred. On the contrary counter hatred, strengthens, the evening more and more. It is the scoot virtue of metta which solidus this evil and sublimes man. The Buddha says:

*Na hi verena verāni , Sammantīdha kudācanam*

*Averena ca sammanti , Esa dhammo sanantano<sup>4</sup>*

Hatred is, indeed, never appeased by hatred in this world. It is appeased only by loving- kindness. This is an ancient law.

Just as the sun sheds its rays on all without any distinction, even so sublime metta bestows its sweet blessings equally on the pleasant and the unpleasant, on the rich and the poor, on the high and the low, on the vicious and the virtuous, on man and woman, and on human and animal.

*Mettañ ca sabbalokasmim , mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam*

*Uddham adho ca tiriyañ ca, asambādham averam asapattam<sup>5</sup>*

Selfish affection or pen (prem) is totally different from metta or universal friendliness. The affection of family members to words each other are quite natural but this attitude of mutual affection is selfish which sublime mental states metta is totally unselfish. The chief characteristic of metta is the benevolent attitude. The person practicing metta is always interested in promoting the welfare of

4. The Dhammapada, translated by Daw Mya Tin, sri satguru publication, verse no-5

5. The Sutta-Nipata, Dinesh Andersen and Helmer Smith, PTS by Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1913, verse no-150

other living being and he sees the good and beautiful in all but avoids ugliness in others, with such basic characteristic metta serves as the solid foundation or the creation of a harmonious family and human society.

It is also essential to remember here that metta should not be misunderstood for ordinary affection of the family members or the members of different social groups towards each others. For example: parents of a family have deeps affection to words their children, children to words their parents, husbands to words their wives, and wives towards their husband. Any social group's including the family cannot exist without this mutual affection but such affection is not free from selfish motives. On the contrary metta is totally unselfish and should be practice without having and self entreat and without having any hateful thoughts to words others. There are many attendant worldly blessing of metta, a person practicing metta is not only free from hatred to words others but also possess a magnetic power which can produced a very good influence on others. There are many examples in the life of the Buddha himself, where even strong opponents where converted in to animal friends and well wishes. For- example- on one occasion an intoxicant elephant was driven towards the Buddha by the Devadata , an afford to kill him. The Buddha, by the sublime attitude of the metta radiated his love to words his elephant and subdued it. High standard of metta be understood by the following words of the Buddha:

Aham nāgova sangāma, cāpato patitam saram  
Ativākyam titikkhissam, dussilo hi bahujano<sup>6</sup>

As an elephant in the battle field withstands the arrow shot from a bow, so shall I endure abuse? Indeed, many people are without morality.

Today the word is in restless and war weary condition. There is chock in each and every units of society including the family. At the international liven there is a blind race among nations to store atomic weapon. There nations are frightened of one another and human life is in danger by nuclear weapon which may be released

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6 . The Dhammapada, translated by Daw Mya Tin, sri satguru publication, verse no-320.

at any moment. There is no mutual trust between members of a family and the tendency of individual interest is growing rapidly. Aged members are neglected. In such a situation the man is certainly in need of this universal loving, friendliness or metta. It is only by this sublime mentality that all men may live in perfect peace and harmony, like brothers and sisters in a family or bigger group society. There would be genuine peace and happiness in the world only when all people including members of family or nations could be prevailed upon to substitute this spiritual metta for the destructive tendency of materialism and run the family or rule the world not with mistress or force but with right and love. The Dhammapada says:

Akkodhena jine kodham, asādhum asādhum sādhunā jino  
Jine kadariyam dānena, saccenā likavādinam<sup>7</sup>

It is to say- on should conquer anger by non-anger; one should conquer evil by good; one should conquer miserliness by giving; one should conquer a liar by truth.

Jayam veram pasavati, dukkham seti parājito  
Upasanto sukham seti, hitvā jayaparājayam<sup>8</sup>

It mean: victory produces hatred. The defeated one sleeps painfully. Calmed one sleeps happily, having abandoned both victory and defeat.

### **Karuna:**

The second sublime mental virtue is karuna or compassion. It is defined as that which makes the hearts of the good persons to quiver when others are subject to different types of sufferings or that which removes the sufferings of others.

Paradukkhe sati sādhūnam hadaya kampanam, Karoti ti karuṇā<sup>9</sup>

Kinati vā paradukkham himsati vināsetiti karuṇā, ahitadukkhāpanayana kāmatā karuṇā<sup>10</sup>

7. The Dhammapada, translated by Daw Mya Tin, sri satguru publication, verse no-223.

8. The Dhammapada, translated by Daw Mya Tin, sri satguru publication, verse no-201

9. Vism-318

10. Suttanipata athakatha-128

Like mettā karuṇā also should be extended without any limits to words all sufferings helpless being. The chief characteristic of karuna is wished to remove the suffering of others. It should be noted that compassion or karuna does not mean mere shading of tears and the like it is a real afford and action to help all sorrow striking beings. In fact the Jataka story reviews that a compassionate person cannot rest until he relieves the sufferings of others. Sometimes he sacrifices his life to protect the life of suffering being. For ex- in the story of vyaghri Jataka, the Bodhisatava sacrifices his life in other to save the life of the starving tigress and her cubs. A truly compassionate person lives not for himself but for other. To lay the world needs such compassionate men and woman who can uproot the violence and cruelty from the face of the earth. In modern society there are many men and other living beings that deserve our compassion. In vain in a family there are some members who are poor and needy, sick and helpless due to their old age, lonely and the destitute. There are also some in the family and in the society who may be ignorant, the impure and undisciplined and uneducated. All such types of deprived being demand the compassion of noble minded men and woman without any discrimination of religion, casters, sect and rays. In the international level there are countries like USA, Great Britain and France Etc. which are material rich and there also many Asian and African country which are materially poor or underdeveloped, who unfortunately lack basic necessities of life. It is the duty of the developed or wealthy nation to come and help the help needy poor nation with the spirit of universal compassion or karuna.

Sickness prevails throughout the world today even than the poverty. There are many in a family or in the entire human society who are physically sick similarly there are many who are mentally sick. By the practice of karuna or compassion men and woman can try to remove the causes of this sickness and can cure the vast majority of the people who are physically or mentally sick. There may be some members in a family who are destitute and deprived. Such members deserve the compassion of those members of a family.

Who are physically and mentally healthy? Now days it is observed that the aged parents are not being taking care of properly even in rich countries. They are compelled to live in isolation in old boys

home. Sometimes unemployed members are neglected and the servants and the workers are not well paid, well clothed and often ill treated. Glaring examples of inhuman cruelty are reported in some cases. These unfortunate people have no other ultimate but to suffer silently. There are many examples when such unfortunate people are compelled to commit suicide in utter depression. Therefore there is a great role of the noble mentality of karuna or compassion.

### **Metta:**

The third sublime states of mind are mudita. It is not merely sympathy but it is sympathetic joy, which destroyed jealously, which is its direct enemy.

*Modanti vata bho suttā modanti sādhu satthū ti*

*Ādina mayena hitasukhavippsyogo kāmata mūditā<sup>11</sup>*

*Modanti tāya, tam- samangino, sayam vā modati sutnipat<sup>12</sup>*

Jealousy is such evil of human mind which positions our mind and mental structure which leads to unhealthy rivalries and dangerous completion in different social units of human society. The Buddha found out its antidote and declared that mudita or sympathetic joy is the most effective remedy for the jealousy which is a poisonous drug.

In very days common experience one can see that there are people who cannot bear to see or hear the successful attainments of not only their neighbor, friends and relative but other members of the family. Usually such people become happy when they see or hear the failures of other family member's neighbor friends or relatives but they cannot tolerate successes instead of pressing their success they try to condemn and vilify them. The Buddha identified mudita or sympathetic joy as one the sublime mentality which is concerned more with oneself than with others because it eradicates jealousy which harms ones who mind. To some extent mudita also helps others because the practitioner of the mudita will not try to disturbed in a progress of other to family or society.

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11. sutnipat- Att-128

12. vism-318

The history makes it clear that there are many bloody encounters in international level and in other levels of society due to jealousy on the basis of religion, nationality, caste and creed etc. Socrates was poisoned; Jesus Christ was crucified; Mahatama Gandhi was shot dead due to jealousy, generated by differences of opinion. Today rich Western countries rejoice over the poverty of the Eastern or under-developed countries. Followers of one religion are jealous of another religion; one institution is jealous of another institution. Sometimes even brothers and sisters become jealous of other brothers and sisters. Therefore, there is a need to develop or practice the sympathetic joy or karuna for individuals or groups in order to sublimes themselves and be internally happy.

The practice of metta and karuna is easier than the practice of mudita or sympathetic joy because it demands great personal efforts and strong will power. Mudita embrassees of purposes being and chief characteristic of mudita is happy mentally feeling when other prospers and gain success.

The fourth sublime state of human mind is upekkha or equanimity. It is most difficult but most essential state of mind. Etymologically upekkha means discerning rightly or looking impartially that is to say without being attached to raga lethal or doso (aversion).

Upekkhā , samm passati , appkhakhpitatva hutva passastiti attho<sup>13</sup>

Or indifferent attitude in regards to the pleasant or unpleasant experiences is also called upekkha or equanimity.

Upetta yutta sukhadukhañ avirudhha ikha anubhavañ upekkhā<sup>14</sup>

In fact there are two mental factors which upset the mind of a man, these are:

Lobho or rage (attachment to pleasurable objects)

Abersionordoso (non-pleasurable objects)

These two opposite forces can be eliminated by developing the sublime state of upekkha or equanimity.

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13. parajika attha.I.III

14. dhammasaṅgani mula tika 39.

The direct enemy of upekkha is attachment or raga and its indirect enemy is unintelligent indifference. The main function of upekkha is to discard clinging raga and aversion (dosa). A person practicing has impartial attitude and is not attracted by desirable things nor is he averse to undesirable things. Ordinary men leading house hold life are living in ill balanced atmosphere and in fluctuating circumstances. Almost every day a house holder encounters the situations which are sometimes of mental delight similarly, there moments of enmity quite often. Thus these fluctuating circumstances disturb the peace of mind of a common man well as the highly educated person also. Even the good end the virtues people are subjected to unjust criticism and under such circumstances it is very difficult to main proper balance of our mind in our society almost every family as well as the others social units encounter the opposite aspects such as praise and blame, loss and gain, fame and infamy. Most of the people are mentally disturbed when such favorable or unfavorable conditions arise. It is very difficult to remain natural or indifferent at a time when a person is praised or blame.

Page or attachment to worldly objects is the direct enemy of upekkha or equanimity and unintelligent indifference is upekkha is indirect enemies. By practicing upekkha we can become free from the strode evil psychic factors of clinging rage and aversion or doso and can develop an impartial attitude in regard to all conditions. A person practicing upekkha or equanimity is neither attracted by favorable object or neither conditions nor he is a base to the unfavorable or undesirable objects.

**Conclusion:** Thus it is clear that the basic object of Buddha's teaching or the Dhamma is to make this world peaceful and the happy. For this first of all he found of he himself realize that the polluted mind is the basic source of all sufferings and we will have to manage or purified our mind if we urgent to live in a peaceful and happy society. The Buddha also showed a path for transforming this disturbed society into a harmonious social organization and for the purification of human consciousness the prescribed the healing medicine of four sublime states or the Brahmavihara. He who wants to be happy and peaceful in this life itself and the one who wants to

make this society worth living and tension fore; he should cultivate this four sublime virtues. A person who wants to purify himself and his surroundings should develop this four sublime states of consciousness and only them he can think of contributing for the creation of ideal human society which would be free from the evils, cruelty, selfishness sectarian prejudice, religious, intolerance and mutual hatred based on such discrimination as caste, creed color nationality etc.

*Mettañ ca sabbalokasmim , mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam uddham adho ca tiriyañ ca, asambādham averam asapattam<sup>15</sup>*

*Tiṭṭham caram nisinno vā, sayāno vā yāvat assa vigatamiddho*

*Etam satimadhiṭṭheyya, brahmam etam vihāram idha-m-āhu<sup>16</sup>*

“On one should cultivate the infinite mental state of universal friendliness in regards to the in time word- up world, down words, across, without any hurdle, without amenity and without any opponent.”

“*Weather, moving being seated, or sleeping, so long as one is not over powered by mental, dullness, as long as one is not subdued by sloth or temper and should string them this mindfulness the Buddha's called it the most sublime states of mind is or the Brahnvihara.*

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15. The Sutta-Nipata, Dinesh Andersen and Helmer Smith, PTS by Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1913, verse no-150

16. The Sutta-Nipata, Dinesh Andersen and Helmer Smith, PTS by Oxford University Press Warehouse, 1913, verse no-151



# THE EVALUATION OF CHANTING PROJECT THAT CREATES A HEALTHY INTELLECTUAL AND REDUCES PROBLEMS

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by Patitham Samniang

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This research is an evaluative research using CIPPI Model and applies the evaluative framework of Daniel L.Stufflebeam. The purposes of this research are 1) to evaluate the achievement of objectives, 2) to evaluate the context, input factors, process, output and cumulative impact of this project and 3) to study way of developing the project. It collects samples from both quantitative and qualitative data; quantitative data is collected from youth and general public who have participated in this project's activity by using Cluster Sampling technique. The samples are separated into 4 parts and determine the scope of group by using Yamanae technique therefore the totally population is 1,360 people participate this project. On the other hand, qualitative data is collected from 2 groups of informants which are specific selected from 1) central, regional and specific area committee for 15 people and 2) more 15 people from associated network. It is using 6 tools to collect all data which are assessment form, observation form, survey form, check list form and results are 1.result of assessing achievement of objectives finds that in preliminary of every project has achieved the project's purpose, 2. results of assessing project according to CIPPI Model are 2.1 about project's context finds that the project's purpose is compliance with both national and specific area policy, 2.2 about input factors find that (1) there is a clear criteria in the selection process of target group, (2) the appropriateness of participating places is at a high level ( $\bar{x} 4.47$ , SD. 0.25), (3) there is a

variety of association networks such as the government, academic, and public sectors in addition some areas also have cooperated with the mass media and local leaders, 2.3 about process of the project finds that (1) efficiency management of activity and (2) efficiency management of associated networks is at a high level ( $\bar{x}$  4.31, SD. 0.35), (3) participation of people in this project is also at high level ( $\bar{x}$  3.96, SD. 0.32), 2.4 results of evaluation the output are (1) all parts have certainly places according to the target, (2) most of the local leaders in particular places strengthened and having natural mechanism system due to this is an area that having original capital, (3) diary prayer activity in a special event has reached the goals defined, (4) daily prayer continuously in several areas with the continuation and sustainability based on both the original capital and supporting from the project.

Because of having this chanting cross-over the New Year project, Thai people prefer to do it continuously instead of the parties and it becomes the main cause to decrease accidents statistics from drinking alcohol during the New Year night. In addition, it also reduces statistics from controversy at the same time. However, if people change the way to cerebrate from parties in any special occasion to this chanting activity then it may decreases various problems which are arising from vices and this is the project's origin. As it can reduce the accident statistics from drinking and controversy during the New Year night, Dr.Thanaphong Jinwong, manager of Academic Center for Road Safety, National Health Foundation supported by Thai Health Promotion Foundation has mentioned that "the most worry thing during the New Year festival is an accident on road. He also reveals that during 7 dangerous days of this New Year festival finds that 341 people are died from road accidents and last year was 367 people, thus the number of losing is decrease for 7 % from last year. Although the statistic from accidents is decreasing but the severity of accidents is increasing 11.37 severity index which is measured by number of death from 100 accidents that happened. Cause of accident is mainly about over speed of driving for 40.7 % when it combines with driving cut in suddenly and unable to break the car for 24.5 %, thus from these factors are accounted as equal to 2 in 3 out of all accidents. Referring to National Institute

for Emergency Medicine's information has revealed that 45.9% of accidents happen because of the drivers are drunk especially on night of 1<sup>st</sup> January. Most of temples in Thailand have organized this praying activity in order to reduce accident number, 20% of death is decreased from 75 to 60 people. The National Office of Buddhism reveals that in this year there are 6.5 million people participates the praying activity. However, it is necessary to analyze data deeply in order to find the way to prevent accidents such as accident with walking people that happens double and 60% are local people or the use of excess speed is causing violence including the prevent of drinking and then driving problems".

The concept of New Year festival and countdown party usually contain lots of people, enjoyment, deafening music and those who are unconsciousness because of drinking alcohol compares to the praying project's concept of celebrating the festival which people go to temples to meditate and search for peace space to develop their minds and doing good things turns to their lives. Thai Health Promote Foundation has further expanded this activity to be more accepted by living activity and cooperate the various networks such as Department of Religious Affairs and Ministry of Culture. However, it will expand until it is considered that this campaign has created a new culture of life during New Year festival for Thai society. Moreover, this foundation does not merely realize the true value of this project but also the benefit of chanting as it can create sentimental value, intellectual power, personal and societal happiness. In 2014, the foundation therefore has supported this project from the beginning of project there are people from Health Promotion network take responsibility in order to do the project continuously.

In 2017, Stopdrink Network has supported the Buddhist monks network for society to play a role in the project by following these three purposes; 1. to promote the daily praying project relates with stop doing vices by setting up suitable places for chanting such as in temples, community, school, working place and others including chanting on New Year night, 2. to try to use this praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties, 3. to follow up the

changing result in those places as they are separated into 4 parts as following; 1. Northern part, 2. Central part, 3. Northeastern part and 4. Southern part.

### **Research's Purposes**

The evaluation of praying project has 3 main purposes as follows; 1) to evaluate the achievement of project's purposes, 2) to evaluate the project's context, input factors, process, output and cumulative impact and 3) to study way of developing the project.

### **Way to Study**

This project's evaluation uses the process of Evaluation Research by following the project's purpose which are to evaluate the achievement of project's purposes, to evaluate the project's context or Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Process Evaluation, Product Evaluation and Impact Evaluation and study to find a way of developing this praying project.

### **The Scope of Population, Sample Grouping and Key Informant**

#### **Population**

1. Central, Regional and Local Committee
2. Participants
3. Related Networks

This project consists of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data is collected by using probability Sampling theory and qualitative data is collected from key informants.

#### **Sample Grouping**

It is including youth and general people who always participate the daily chanting and Buddhist important days by using Cluster Sampling devices after 4 areas under the project which are Northern, Central, Northeastern and Southern part design the scope of group by applying Yamanae technique so there are totally 1,360 people and 15 people from central, regional, and local project's staff and other 15 from associated networks.

#### **Key Informants**

In this project's evaluation has collected quantitative data from participated observation and deeply interviewing 2 groups of key informants by using specific selection.

### **Materials for Evaluation**

Materials uses in the evaluation of praying project at this time there are 6 versions as follows;

1. Compliance assessment of the project's context. This assessment model created to evaluate the consistency of the project in regional and local contexts.

2. Suitability of the observation according to the principle of Suppaya Four. This observation is built to observe the suitability of project's activity according to principle of Suppaya Four. This observation is considered as one which in the process of triangulation data collection.

3. Survey of network organization and the level of cooperation of area level. This survey is built to measure the level of cooperation of network organization in area level of the project.

Since the level of giving information, Participation in the consultation, Participation as playing an important role, Participation in the cooperation until the participation in extra levels of power.

4. Model checking entries network management's processes.

5. Assessment of suitability based on principle of Suppaya Four.

6. Behavioral assessment to reduce Six Vices both before and after joining the project by storage data from 2 intervals which are the beginning of a project and the end of the project.

Tools that used in evaluation have passed the process in finding the quality of tools which are Validity and Reliability by checking the validity from three experts. The rate IOC (Index of Item Objective Congruence) was 0.6-1.0 for all items. Then the tool is tested with a similar sample (Try out) 30 people and measure sentiment according to Cronbach and gets coefficient alpha for the whole questionnaire quality checking. The survey of level of cooperation of enterprise network area level equal to 85. The confidence score of

a suitability assessment based on the Suppaya Four equal to 92. The confidence score of a suitability assessment based on the Sappaya Four equal to 94.

### **Statistical and data analysis methods.**

- Frequency and percentage.
- Mean and standard deviation.
- Open-ended questions. Bringing all similar suggestions to conclude respectively.
- Statistics comparison t-test.

### **Project Evaluation.**

#### **1. TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT.**

This praying project have 4 objectives include:

**Firstly**, to promote the daily praying project relates with stop doing vices by setting up suitable places for chanting such as in temples, community, school, working place.

Result is the project in the regions has activity that based on target specified in the project which is not less than 28 places. The northern areas are the most as there are 29 places and the strength of these areas are that some Christian people have joined the project. Central and Northeast have been featured in a variety of areas of operation. In the central part, the area was carried out at a monastery and school. There is also an area of the establishment which is foundation to participate in project's activity and it is also similarly to the Northeast that hospital has joined the project.

The areas that always carry chanting activities there are totally 113 places; there are temples 99 places accounted as 87.61 percent while there are only 14 school which is representing 12.39 percent and it is only 2 establishments or companies accounted as 1.77 percent.

**Secondly**, to try to use this praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties.

Result in overview found that this chanting project is

characterized differently in each sector such as in the central regions are the daily prayer in the concrete area that has been developed to provide valuable meaning and elevating to inviting prayers on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties. In the concrete areas are established as the pilot has reported changes in the area of prayer in daily life by devising a video summary of the lessons and lesson summary document, including the potential of the Buddhist monks in the project that developed the concept for better project and public media can be created with various media in public relations activities continually.

**Northern region**, the praying on the important Buddhist four days which are the Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day doing as normal practice regularly. But supportive of the project cause more in the dimension of talking, exchange situation in the community and lead to problems to troubleshoot together, especially being a good modal for community. On the part of chanting on birthday found that it was a popular activity in the network measurement project that operates in 15 places by obtaining cooperation from owners of birthday very well.

**Northeastern area**, the temple is still the main event to hold the daily praying activity and on important Buddhist holy days, especially in the most important day, including praying on the New Year night that performed annually. With the development of events in order to children and young people have more interesting and doing good in the present, such as praying for Dad etc. In addition, the hospital also doing these activities as praying regularly, especially on important Buddhist holy days and practicing meditation. There are some personnel interested in participating and has extended to their patients, and there is interesting issue in 50<sup>th</sup> Ratchaprachanukrow school where risking students are chanting in their dormitory too.

**The South** has undertaken many activities to contribute to the creation health, intellectual example prayer, together with volunteer activities, build a community around the temple to eliminate

hazardous environments. Surat Thani province's activities focus on drug prevention. In youth group Activities in Chumphon province, Wat tha Sae emphasized the creation theology, heir from staging a meeting to clarify the understanding of the project and make the Buddhist monks in the area have joined the Exchange event with attitude. Various of the South by South border provinces 3 specific projects. It is an interface to make sharing the activities of people in the community. Children in school reduces feelings of mental state that is suffering of the people in the community. School violence has occurred in the area.

**Thirdly**, to follow up the changing result in those places where are holding the chanting activity. Tracking changes in the liturgy in the life regularly. The consequences extend through the media as a whole has not seen much tangible. The period of implementation with only a short time. The change results from prayer if it is a clear need for substantial periods of time. However, the project prayer Create health problems and intellectual vices. Activities remain ongoing although the timing of projects and the promotion of missionary activity in various channels especially social media. Like an online news, Line group, Facebook etc. There is also a communication channel, TV channel, the world radio and television station, WBTV Buddhist world television by Watyannawa Temple. In addition, to develop a network of clergy and skills upgrading of prayer to strengthen intelligence and reduce vices. The working group has attempted to create a mechanism for developing a network of clergy and skills upgrading of prayer to strengthen intelligence and reduce vices.

The event discussed the project implementation. The prevailing approach to financial management and accounting, the regulations for the operation. Issues and lessons learned "Prayer create a concrete intelligence" to expand the functionality of the network and the clergy, "Innovation" to other areas. The lesson to publish the work according to various channels such as books, websites, Sangha Social Foundation by supporting the development of academic skills to work in academics and the lessons learned Effectiveness and efficiency in the workplace. Event organizing prayer create an artificial creation of life at the Royal Agricultural Museum King's

(ITD) with a network of development monks from 4 to share the stage with important events such as exhibition space, the concrete implementation prayers from various sectors. Activities woven network of monks and nuns nationwide discussion on the activity measured in the era of globalization and pray 4 network development monks and nuns network in Thailand has unanimously declared its intention to apply the Buddhist principles on praying events to solve vices problems in community. By creating a healthy way to light a candle of wisdom to happen to resolve social problems. Requires the cooperation of many sectors including public sector, private sector, civil society. Studies Institute The clergy will participate under the predominant mechanism of the community, including government agencies and home schools. The key tool is prayer, which has been confirmed to be conscious strengthen intellectual creation and contribute to creating a real pleasure.

## 2. EVALUATE THE PROJECT ACCORDING TO FRAME OF CIPPI MODEL

### Context Evaluation

#### (1) The consistency with national policy / strategic provinces

Project objectives the objective is the same in all sectors, and have a relationship with the objectives of the projects at the country level. By the project objectives at the country level have objective 3 and objective regional project, there are 3 messages as following table;

Project objectives in national level	Project objectives in regional level
1. to promote the daily praying project relates with stop doing vices by setting up suitable places for chanting such as in temples, community, school, working place and others including chanting on New Year night.	1. to promote the daily praying project relates with stop doing vices by setting up suitable places for chanting such as in temples, community, school, working place and others including chanting on New Year night.

2. to try to use this praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties.	2. to try to use this praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties.
3. to follow up the changing result in those places.	3. to help people to reduce and finally stop doing all vices.

The objective of the project in the regionals associated with the objective of the project in the province level / area. By considering the strategic plan of province level often found that quality of life, social workers and health, happiness, morality, etc. which is consistent with the objectives of the project, with the goal to achieve these things to society.

The project was in accordance with the operation the master plan to promote the integrity 1) national purpose is, is a Thai society is virtue people behave according to the Buddhist principle as their religion with the philosophy of sufficiency economy practice. Maintenance of the beautiful culture industry. And live together in peace ASEAN Economic Community and the world community sustainable development and the mission as follows; 1. Development of a morality based on religious principles. Adopted the philosophy of sufficiency economy. A major breakthrough in quality of life. According to Life and Living Culture Thailand classy 2. Development of management to effectively promoting moral dimension 3. Encourage all sectors of society. Awareness and common network involved in the process. promotion of virtue To create a moral society live together in peace, there is good governance, reconciliation and sustainable 4. promote Thailand as a model of virtue in ASEAN and the international community.

## (2) appropriate to the context

The project management plan appropriate to the context of event space. Managed using the area as a base for distribution of centralized management. Into 4 regions by a working group that was driven in the coordination and implementation of activities under the framework of the project schedule. The project activities

are appropriate to the local context. Such as in the central, especially urban citizens have free time during the holidays, Saturdays, Sundays, activity held usually focuses on the weekend. The North has long roots culture and social condition in elderly people so the activities are consistent with the area such as praying delivery in northeast region, the feature of synergism of the community and the measure, including the tradition, culture, values, beliefs, South the activities that can make people go to temple and useful to daily life, when people use it etc.

### **Input Evaluation**

#### **(1) Target groups participate in the project**

The project group as childhood immunization and youth group in the community, which is associated with the at least vices. That 8 000 people across the country, for the activity of pray regularly and not less than 1, the 000 people. All over the country in the experimental activity in prayer and religious holidays 4 day birthday according to the report, the project of the 4 sector. Detailed area concrete activities and reported number of participants in the introduction, but cannot enter the guest list joining activities. The pray regularly the experimental activities and prayer in important religious days 4 day and birthday.

#### **(2) Places to join this project**

The place with prayer, concrete management facilitation of mindfulness meditation, the number of no less than 100 of nationwide by selecting Outside the temple, community, school, workplace religious places, etc. the implementation of indicators, quantitative area check. Operation to 113 of qualitative data survey by triangulation (triangulation). The findings in the overall participants that elements of the activity is appropriate according to sappaya 4 high scores. 4.47 average standard deviation 0.25 by experts found that the highest score is the fair sappaya, average 4.59 parts. Krabi standard that 0.28 when considering the item, it was found that the highest points in human relations. The process including copying you eliminate the step. Released a good, average, standard deviation, the 4.66 0.52 and Harmony of people came together at 4.56 average standard deviation, 0.50.

### (3) Associated Network

The project has the strength on networks. Especially the network party campaigners area with the risk factors can hit hug community activities and have a chance to develop. A prototype especially the network development monks to be able to continue operating in the area. In the network section no alcohol can make knowledge sharing process to stimulate new ideas. Emphasis on the role of ASEAN and no alcohol on duty create share and learn. There is also the cooperation of government, especially the culture sector policy that welcome to join the driving. The project has the original cost of the activities. Like a prayer translation action. Work in the campaign prayer over the years and the sound of chanting the media to understand the meaning and to create an environment for peace of mind. It is also the important power.

### Process Evaluation

#### (1) Management activities in the project

Project management activities are planned for the network Board of Directors meeting of clergy, the developer to define roles and responsibilities, and the detailed design activities in the area to develop leadership and understand the meaning of prayer. Management training offered to them knowledge of the clergy leadership network, and the developer shall refrain from liquor by using processes, involvement and cooperation of the parties and Thai Health Promotion Foundation operates in the same manner, which is being implemented according to plan. However, it still lacks concrete on track the success of events in AAR just an overview of the Working Group, only the lack of information in the overview, which makes seeing the direction in the development of the next event. In the selected pilot areas are planned the number of stories and the development of guidelines provided by the committee are meant to work together with the parties, Ministry of culture but in practice the working group found that the majority of the regional project the system has a mechanism for selection there are just some. Sector is the only one who can explain the mechanism for selecting pilot areas clearly. While most use persuasion the same networks work together if there is a mechanism in the area of selection

defined area define how long it will take to help PR project planning in project management by using the PDCA principle would make the project more new networks and results go according to plan and with maximum efficiency.

(2) Management partnership networks found in the whole organization on the management network in much the average score 4.31 and standard deviation 0.35, considering each aspect inputs have the highest grades. The scores were level at the average 4.37 standard deviation 0.33, considering each aspect found that Article 3 of the cooperation and push from many sides with the highest score is the highest scoring average of 4.55 the standard deviation of 0.66.

(3) The participation of the parties to the network with the participation of the parties to the network in the image included on many levels. When considering the side list, find that the side with the highest score of 2 is first to participate in the news, information and participation in the consultation level. Average score 4.65 0.37 standard deviation translation of most levels, and the average score is 3.90 and 0.61 standard deviation very level translation, respectively. The low-rated as possible participate in auxiliary power level. 3.69 AVG rating standard deviation at 0.27 but nevertheless remains very level translation, considering the list of found text, where the text is in your organization contribute 1<sup>st</sup> issue data presentation of factual situations involving vices, 6 in the community, with the average standard deviation of 4.67 points interested people at 0.47 that rated low is 14<sup>th</sup> issues the Organization has no power to decide the design activities of the villagers (in part that an organization is responsible) the average score is 3.63 0.49 standard deviation.

## Product Evaluation

### (1) Places

The strength of northern areas these areas are that some Christian people have joined the project. Central and Northeast have been featured in a variety of areas of operation. In the central part, the area was carried out at a monastery and school. There is also an area of the establishment which is foundation to participate in project's activity and it is also similarly to the Northeast that hospital has

joined the project. There are temples 99 places accounted as 87.61 percent while there are only 14 school which is representing 12.39 percent and it is only 2 establishments or companies accounted as 1.77 percent.

### (2) Leaders in the areas

Leaders in the area, according to the concrete project is not less than 150 people there must be understanding prayer. Conscious of growing area operated by the process. 1.to exchange experiences, events arena chanted the number 5 times national and regional Exchange stage. 2 learn 2 times, and specify how to measure results is evaluated before and after the event organizer.

This is a project with activities planned processes but still do not see the report and assessment of the concrete Groove prior to and after hosting events that lead to the creation of the understanding of prayer, and prayer conscious of growing space operations.

However, the involvement of partners that participated in both levels of participation in the information. To participate in the consultation, participation in an important role, participation in the partnerships and participation in empowerment.

### (3) Activities of daily prayers in special events

Praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) and also chanting on their birthdays instead of organizing parties. In each area, the most notable are different. Overall, all the indicators are based on projects identified by an area of concrete or pilot areas in each area.

Praying project on four important days of Buddhism (Makha Puja Day, Visakha Puja Day, Asaraha Puja Day, the Buddhist Lent Day) Activity measurement and some schools are operating on a yearly basis in several areas to join the project, thus neither change or impact whatsoever. There are just certain areas such as the North and South to join the activity causing the arena to talk about a new dimension in emerging intellectual health.

Activities prayers in temples, other important dates such as birthdays and holidays to celebrate with prayers found that areas

with substantial operating in the northern because there is a consistent relationship with a prayer delivery. Discovery, which is an activity that priest to visit, meet and pray to persuade their kith and kin at home and extend the results to persuade them to pray at birthdays and important dates. However, all the activities are continued despite the end of the period of operation of the plant, and as a result for the completion of the implementation of the project activities sustainable.

#### (4) Praying in daily life

The project aims to enhance the main prayers, prayers, prayers for years to come is crossing regularly in daily life with the execution of projects in all areas of the central region have reported changes in the area of prayer in daily life by doing a summary document summary, video tutorials and lessons, including the potential of the monks in the project that developed the concept better prayer. The Northeast has operations in the area Pathum rat hospital extended prayer to the children and youth in the area in the community of the operator, which can project to pray almost every day. Especially important religious able to attract children and youth to join the prayer instead of entertainment this resulted in many parents see the importance and subsequent activities of prayer with the 50<sup>th</sup> Ratchaprachanukrow school in Konkhan province taken by started to pray at the dormitory of the students only, which this dormitory condemned as bad children. So the prayer has good image and a testament to an insult them change make prayer began to expand into the tower. Other accommodation in the school found that the operation period of the northern 5 months was found to have a place. Pray prayer activities regularly 15 places and religious school 5 places. The initial data collection process has talked to understand after prayers led to avoidance of vices, including reducing alcohol consumption and gambling South in the early stages due to flooding in the southern hemisphere, the delayed implementation than other sectors however, can be performed based on indicators.

### **Impact Evaluation**

#### (1) Belief, Value, Advantages of Praying

From interviews with participants in the conclusion;

Advantageous physical is 1. respiration rate decreases, and the body of oxygen, along with taking less carbon dioxide is good for the lungs, 2. heart rate less a heart, 3. the quantity of lactate in the blood, which is about the idea of anxiety would be reduced as a priority, 4. blood will have slightly higher alkalinity represents good health, 5. user's brainwaves, meditation has a smooth and leave an interval of more than those who sleep. 6. the resistance of the skin immediately begins higher meditation. Psychological effect are 1. make a mental stress, 2. what makes the mind clear, calm, it happens, 3. making efficiency in education, 4. a person who has mental compassion and empathy others, 5. who is the consciousness, not forgotten, 6. the people are sensible is realizing that what you're doing, 7. do not behave honestly dishonest conduct is sacrament, 8. who is the concentrate is made with a mental commitment, 9. who is the wise, is the knowledge of what is useful and the punishment, 10. leads to a good charity.

Social influences are 1. make the unity party. 2. social phenomenon happy society 3. make people live together peacefully 4. emerge Buddhist and Thai tradition.

The intellectual influence is conscious meditation 1. fasting leads to wisdom, 2. consciously distinguish the analysis of good evil, 3. consciousness in listening, speaking, thinking and action.

(2) Praying formulated meaning access to valuable health and intellectual development, reduce the vices

From the interviews, found that the factors that made participants chanted comprehension means access to valuable health and intellectual development, reduce the vices such as 1. Prayer Translation The participants have read and recite prayers for interpretation makes the understanding of prayer can be improved. Leading to a fine of applications in everyday life from the information provided does not know the translation of the prayer but when the translation to understand the meaning. One day, when the crisis in the dawn prayer, the information that the Buddha never faced a serious incident. But many dangers in life, wisdom and goodness to unravel past causes it causing a crisis in life and this is just a testament to the wisdom and goodness wisdom to solve the equation with a good Buddhist.

2. To listen to sermon after the prayers, though some say the prayer with a prayer after prayer translated but there talking. The priest or preacher is preaching example, the concrete can be applied in everyday life, sometimes an example of prayer itself.

(3) to modify the behavior of the phase out 6 vices and wellbeing, intellectual analysis of data showed that the average score on behavioral vices 6 before and after the event has a different significance the statistical level of .05. Prior to the event the respondents had negative comments on questionnaires agreed by the participants, but after the prayer. Create health problems and intellectual vices respondents agree with the minimal behavioral 6 vices.

3. Develop prayer project build intellectual and reduce the problem

3.1 Management Committee should have a central mechanism responsibility to ensure Jane interface with the working group the project in regional areas.

3.2 target group selected in the level area should participate in the selection criteria are. There has been extensive public relations opportunity to new areas are interested. It also is expanding a network of supportive and want to share some real activity.

3.3. Working Group for potential operations in the field and spatial tasks. Find July provide capacity development working group, especially the technical side to make it a more complete.

3.4 project management planning Follow the plan. Monitor and evaluate operations, and present the results from evaluation to developing activities and planning tasks in the next term.

3.5 defining metrics or goals, positive result (come out) to take on the track. Writing project, the next stage should be assigned to the duration relationship with desired results.



# BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES ON HEATH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SICK AND ELDERLY CARE

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by Dissanayake Mudiyanselage Inoka Udani Dissanayake\*

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## ABSTRACT

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of the disease or infirmity. This is the definition on Health by World Health Organization. Every religions focuses about the human being and their healthiest lives. Therefore, The Buddha said that Health is the highest gain in the life. The Buddha is like a Physician. Just as a doctor must know the diagnosis of the different kinds of illness, their causes, the antidotes and remedies, and must able to apply them, so also the Buddha has taught the four holy truths which indicate the range of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way which leads to its cessation. In Theravada Buddhism there are lots of Suttas focuses about the Health and it including Physical health, mental health, social health and spiritual health. Buddhism mainly focuses about the welfare of mankind and their happiness. When compare with life span stages Buddhism given special attention to the Elderly care and patients. "He who attends on the sick attends on me," declared the Buddha, exhorting his disciples on the importance of ministering to the sick. This famous statement was made by the Blessed One when he discovered a monk lying in his soiled robes, desperately ill with an acute attack of dysentery. With the help of Ananda, the Buddha washed and cleaned the sick monk in warm water. On this occasion he reminded the monks that they have neither parents nor

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\* Instructor, Vimansa Counseling Center, Sri Lanka

relatives to look after them, so they must look after one another. If the teacher is ill, it is the bounden duty of the pupil to look after him and if the pupil is ill it is the teacher's duty to look after the sick pupil. If a teacher or a pupil is not available it is the responsibility of the community to look after the sick.(Vinaya Pitaka) This is one of the social responsibility which is lack by today among the people. The Buddha has enumerated the qualities that should be present in a good nurse. He should be competent to administer the medicine, he should know what is agreeable to the patient and what is not. He should keep away what is disagreeable and give only what is agreeable to the patient. He should be benevolent and kind-hearted, he should perform his duties out of a sense of service and not just for the sake of remuneration (*mettacitto gilanam upatthati no amisantaro*). He should not feel repulsion towards saliva, phlegm, urine, stools, sores, etc. He should be capable of exhorting and stimulating the patient with noble ideas, with Dhamma talk. In conclusion that every human being is responsible to protect and serve elder and sick person in the society and that promote by Buddhism to lead harmonious families and Sustainable societies in the world.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Buddha is like a Physician. Just as a doctor must know the diagnosis of the different kinds of illness, their causes, the antidotes and remedies, and must able to apply them, so also the Buddha has taught the four holy truths which indicate the range of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way which leads to its cessation. In Theravada Buddhism there are lots of Suttas focuses about the Health and it including Physical health, mental health, social health and spiritual health. Buddhism mainly focuses about the welfare of mankind and their happiness. When compare with life span stages Buddhism given special attention to the Elderly care and patients. "He who attends on the sick attends on me," declared the Buddha, exhorting his disciples on the importance of ministering to the sick. This famous statement was made by the Blessed One when he discovered a monk lying in his soiled robes, desperately ill with an acute attack of dysentery. With the help of Ananda, the Buddha washed and cleaned the sick monk in warm water. On this

occasion he reminded the monks that they have neither parents nor relatives to look after them, so they must look after one another. If the teacher is ill, it is the bounden duty of the pupil to look after him and if the pupil is ill it is the teacher's duty to look after the sick pupil. If a teacher or a pupil is not available it is the responsibility of the community to look after the sick. (Vinaya Pitaka) This is one of the social responsibility which is lack by today among the people. The Buddha has enumerated the qualities that should be present in a good nurse. He should be competent to administer the medicine, he should know what is agreeable to the patient and what is not. He should keep away what is disagreeable and give only what is agreeable to the patient. He should be benevolent and kind-hearted, he should perform his duties out of a sense of service and not just for the sake of remuneration (*mettacitto gilanam upatthati no amisantaro*). He should not feel repulsion towards saliva, phlegm, urine, stools, sores, etc. He should be capable of exhorting and stimulating the patient with noble ideas, with Dhamma talk. In conclusion that every human being is responsible to protect and serve elder and sick person in the society and that promote by Buddhism to lead harmonious families and Sustainable societies in the world.

The World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity<sup>1</sup>. The Buddhist understanding of good health is similar with its emphasis on the balanced interaction between the mind and body as well as between life and its environment. Illness tends to arise when this delicate equilibrium is upset. Buddhist theory and practice aim to restore and strengthen this balance.

While modern medicine tends to address the ailing part of the body in isolation from the rest, treating it alone, the Buddhist understanding of health sees disease as a reflection of the total somatic system, or life itself, and seeks to cure it through a fundamental reorientation of a person's life-style and outlook. Physical aspects of life are inseparable from the emotional, mental

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1. World Health organization.-definition of health

and spiritual aspects. The optimal condition of health is one achieved when mind and body are functioning well and interacting together as one. Central to the Buddhist approach to health and healing is its emphasis on spiritual strength and an overriding sense of purpose in life based on compassionate action for others.

Although modern medical science has made great strides, it has not necessarily furthered the cause of human happiness. The emergence of the holistic and psychosomatic movements testifies to the need for something deeper in understanding the human being.

A sense of purpose makes people live longer, feel better and stay physically healthier. Also compassion, generosity and patience are qualities that make people strong and resilient. Buddhism directs its energy inward to train the mind to understand the mental state of happiness, to identify and defuse sources of negative emotions and to cultivate emotional states like “metta, , karuna mudita upakkha”, or loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, in order to improve personal and societal well-being.

According to the Dhammapada verse 204, explains the Buddhist concept of Health.

*Arōgyā paramā lābhā  
santutthi paramam dhanan  
vissāsa paramā nāthi  
Nibbānan paramam sukhan* <sup>2</sup>

The English translation is given for further explanations.

*“Health is the ultimate profit, happiness is the ultimate wealth, a trusted friend is the best relative, Nibbana is the ultimate bliss”.*

What is the significance of the Health and most of the Sri Lankan Hospitals they display the verse *Arōgyā paramā lābhā* in boards to emphasize benefits of being health.

A number of suttas advocate the recitation of the enlightenment factors (*bojjhangas*) for the purpose of healing physical ailments. On two occasions, when the Elders Mahakassapa and Mahamoggallana were ill, the Buddha recited the enlightenment factors and it is

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2. Dhammapada 204 verse.

reported that the monks regained normal health (S.v,79-80). It is perhaps significant to note that all the monks concerned were arahants, and had therefore fully developed the enlightenment factors. The Bojjhangsa Samyutta also reports that once when the Buddha was ill, he requested Cunda to recite the enlightenment factors (S.v,81). The Buddha was pleased at the recitation and it is said that he regained health. On another occasion, when the monk Girimananda was very ill (A.v,109), the Buddha informed Ananda that if a discourse on ten perceptions (*dasa sañña*) is delivered to him, he might get well. The ten perceptions are the perception of impermanence, egolessness, impurity of the body, evil consequences (of bodily existence), elimination (of sense pleasures), detachment, cessation, disenchantment with the entire world, impermanence of all component things, and mindfulness of breathing. Ananda learned the discourse from the Buddha and repeated it for Girimananda and it is reported that he recovered.

The advice given by Nakulamata to Nakulapita is extremely valuable in this connection (A.iii,295-98). Once Nakulapita was seriously ill and his wife Nakulamata noticed that he was anxious and worried. She advised him thus: "Please, sir, do not face death with anxiety. Painful is death for one who is anxious. The Buddha has looked down upon death with anxiety. It may be you are anxious that I will not be able to support the family after your death. Please do not think so. I am capable of spinning and weaving, and I will be able to bring up the children even if you are no more. Perhaps you are worried that I will remarry after your death. Please do not think so. We both led pure wholesome lives according to the noble conduct of householders. So do not entertain any anxiety on that account. It may be you are worried that I will neglect attending on the Buddha and the Sangha. Please do not think so. I will be more devoted to the Buddha and the Sangha after your death. Perhaps you are worried that I will neglect keeping to the precepts. Please do not have any doubts on that account. I am one of those who fully practice the moral habits declared for the laity, and if you wish please ask the Buddha about this matter. Perhaps you fear that I have not gained inner mental composure. Please do not think so. I am one of those who have gained inner mental composure as much

as a householder could gain. If you have any doubts about this, the Buddha is at Bhesakalavana, ask him. Perhaps it occurs to you that I have not attained proficiency in the Buddha's dispensation, which I have not gone beyond doubt and perplexity without depending on another. If you wish to have these matters clarified ask the Buddha. But please do not face death with anxiety, for it is painful and censured by the Buddha." It is reported that after Nakulapita was thus admonished by Nakulamata, he regained his health, and gone was that illness never to recur. Later on this whole incident was narrated to the Buddha, who commended Nakulamata for her sagacious advice.

First "parama" means "ultimate" or "prominent". By the way, the word "pada parama" above means the interpretation that makes the "conventional meaning of a word prominent"; "pada" is "word". Now let us look at the other words in the verse. "Rōga" means "disease", o arögya means not subject to disease. The bodies of all beings below the *Deva lokas* (human and below) are subject to disease. We cannot remove the possibility of disease until we remove causes for us to be reborn in the human realm or the lowest four realms, i.e., attain the *Sakadagami* stage of *Nibbana*. "Lābha" is "profit". The ultimate profit (better than any amount of wealth) of "disease free" status is attained at the *Sakadagami stage of Nibbana*. Actually "arogya" is a Sanskrit word that has become standard. The actual line is, "Aröga parama lābha". "Santutthi" comes from "san" + "tutthi" or removing "san". Santutthi and the more common Sinhala word "santhosa" means happy. When one removes "san", one gains the *niramisa sukha* of *Nibbana* or "cooling down". "Dhanan" means "wealth"; Sinhala word is "dhanaya". Thus ultimate wealth is achieved by getting rid of "san" or defilements of greed, hate, and ignorance; see, "What is "San"?" "Vissasa" comes from "vis" + "āsā", where "āsā" means "āsava" or cravings. Thus it means getting rid of cravings that makes one bound to the *samsara* (round of rebirths). "Nātha" means "refuge"; the opposite of that is "anātha" in Sinhala means "helpless". "Nātha" is also another word for the Buddha. Thus ultimate refuge is reached via giving up the cravings for worldly things. The last one, *Nibbanan paramam sukhan*, or "Nibbāna is the ultimate bliss" is the only one that has the same meaning as

the conventional or “*pada parama*” version in above. Therefore, when one embarks on the *Sotapanna magga*, one should be trying to adhere to the correct version. The “*Santuṭṭha Sutta (SN 16.1)*<sup>3</sup>” clearly illustrate that “*santuttha*” is with one who lives a simple life, without minimal cravings.

The Buddha has been known as the Peerless Healer because of his deep concern with mental health, his discovery of the root causes of illness, and the *dhamma* he prescribed for its cure, comparable to medicine in its protective, preventive, and restorative powers. This paper is a discussion of the Buddhist contribution to the concept of health, disease, and healing and the difference it makes to our approaches to the questions of what constitutes health and what actions are needed to promote genuine healing. The discussion is confined to the teaching and practices of Theravada Buddhism prevalent in many countries of Southeast Asia, such as Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar.

Physical health is viewed by Buddhism as constituted by the normal functioning of the body and its interrelated organs. When one of them fails to function, debility and disease set in. The normal function of the bodily organs is the result of the harmony and equilibrium of the four primary elements (*dhatu*) in the body: earth (*pathavi*), water (*apo*), wind (*vayo*), and fire (*tejo*). If the balance is disturbed, the normal function is disrupted and a state of disease appears.

Curing is the restoration of this balance, that is, the putting of the entire physical being, and not just the pathologically afflicted part, into good condition. Since each part of the human body is organically related to all other parts, for good health the entire body must be in good condition. In view of the fact that the body, like all phenomena, is always in a state of change, decline, and decay, physical health cannot last long. It is impossible for the body to be perfectly healthy and free from all diseases at all times. Human life is vulnerable to disease at every stage. Disease is a reminder of human fragility. This implies that complete health is not a totally attainable state. Human wholeness or well-being, therefore, does not mean

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3. *Santuṭṭha Sutta (SN 16.1)*

the absence of all pain and suffering in life but entails learning how to deal with pain and suffering and discovering how to use it and transcend it for the sake of personal growth and the sympathetic understanding of others.

## 2. THE MIND AND MENTAL HEALTH

Physical health is important because Buddhism regards it as the means to intellectual enlightenment. Buddhism does not want people to spend a large part of their lives in poor health, for then they would not be able to devote themselves to the highest purposes. Although Buddhism views the mind and the body as existing in interdependence, its teaching gives special attention to the mind and its power. It is stated in the very first verse of the Dhammapada that what we are is the result of our thoughts. The source of our lives and hence of our happiness or unhappiness lies within us--within our power. No one can harm us but ourselves. It is the kinds of thoughts we entertain that improve or weaken our physical well-being and that also enoble or degrade us. This is the reason that Buddhism designates thought as the cause of both physical and verbal actions with their *kammic* results, considers mental health as being of the utmost importance, and stresses the training of the mind to attain the highest stage of health as its sole concern. This preoccupation with mental health is also regarded as the true vocation of Buddhist monks. The training is based on the belief that both the body and the mind are prone to sickness. But since the mind is able to detach itself from the body, it is possible to have a healthy mind within a sick body. The advice given by the Buddha to his disciple who was suffering from old age was to keep the mind sound in the sick body.

According to Buddhism, for the mind to be healthy, first of all it is necessary for us to develop a correct view (*sammaditthi*) of the world and ourselves, that is, a realistic acceptance of *tilakkhana*, the three traits of existence: impermanence (*anicca*); un substantiality, or not-self (*anatta*); and suffering, or un satisfactoriness (*dukkha*). The adoption of the distorted view makes us see the transitory as permanent, the painful as happy, the impure as pure, and what is not-self as self.

Consequently we crave and struggle for something that does not seem to change, that is, the illusory permanent and identical self and the permanent object of desire--and we always suffer disappointment. By accepting things as they really are, the self is seen as nothing more than a name for the complex of psychophysical elements (*nama-rupa*), which are *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anatta*, as in other beings, and the mind no longer craves the satisfaction of ego desires (*tanha*) nor clings to any object, be it wealth or power. Freed from these ego desires and attachments to the material world, the mind is at rest, and thereby psychological suffering is eliminated, which leads to improved mental health.

Apart from changing our distorted thought (*miccha-ditthi*) by the adoption of this correct view and by developing an attitude of detachment toward the world and ourselves, our mental health is dependent on our power to rein in our appetites and to restrain and/or eradicate negative mental states (*akusala-citta*) such as greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*), as well as possessive and aggressive tendencies. All of these unwholesome states (*akusala-citta*) can act as the cause of mental and physical illness. Such control can be achieved through the practice of morality (*sila*) and meditation (*bhavana*). All Buddhist precepts and all kinds of meditation are aimed at controlling the senses, impulses, and instincts and at easing the tension and eliminating the unwholesomeness of thoughts that tend to make the mind sick.

Buddhist perspective of health is greatly defined and now focuses to the sick and elderly care. Buddha mentioned that “Yo gilanan upatteti, so man upatteti” He who attends on the sick attends on me,” This has given great examples to all human being in the world. Many Buddhist people in many countries doing different kinds of offering for the Buddha, as example may be fruits or food items. But Buddha’s main advice was to this concept. “He who attends on the sick attends on me,” Prof. Lily de Siva in her article ‘Ministering to the sick and the terminally ill’ given very prominent idea in this relate.

“He who attends on the sick attends on me,” declared the Buddha, exhorting his disciples on the importance of ministering to the sick. This famous statement was made by the Blessed One when he discovered a monk lying in his soiled robes, desperately

ill with an acute attack of dysentery. With the help of Ananda, the Buddha washed and cleaned the sick monk in warm water. On this occasion he reminded the monks that they have neither parents nor relatives to look after them, so they must look after one another. If the teacher is ill, it is the bounden duty of the pupil to look after him, and if the pupil is ill it is the teacher's duty to look after the sick pupil. If a teacher or a pupil is not available it is the responsibility of the community to look after the sick.<sup>4</sup>

The Buddha has enumerated the qualities that should be present in a good nurse. He should be competent to administer the medicine, he should know what is agreeable to the patient and what is not. He should keep away what is disagreeable and give only what is agreeable to the patient. He should be benevolent and kind-hearted, he should perform his duties out of a sense of service and not just for the sake of remuneration (*mettacitto gilanam upatthati no amisantaro*). He should not feel repulsion towards saliva, phlegm, urine, stools, sores, etc. He should be capable of exhorting and stimulating the patient with noble ideas, with Dhamma talk.<sup>5</sup>

Thus the Buddha not only advocated the importance of looking after the sick, he also set a noble example by himself ministering to those who were so ill that they were even considered repulsive by others.

In the Anguttara Nikaya the Buddha describes three types of patients. There are patients who do not recover whether or not they get proper medical attention and nursing care; there are others who recover irrespective of whether or not they get medical attention and nursing care; there are others who recover only with appropriate medical treatment and care. Because there is this third type of patient, all those who are ill should be given the best medical treatment available, agreeable food and proper nursing care. So long as a patient is alive, everything possible should be done for his recovery.<sup>6</sup>

When imposing rules and regulation to the monks Buddha relaxed a number of minor disciplinary rules to except for the sick monks. Buddha mostly focuses about the Vinaya but shown great

4. Lily de Silva-article- Ministering to the sick and the terminally ill'

5. (A.iii,144).

6. (A.i,120).

sympathy towards needy people in the society.<sup>7</sup>

The Buddha mentioned that patient should be always cooperating with the doctor and the nurse in order to get well and that will lead recover soon.

Once the Buddha heard that a newly ordained monk who was not very well known among his fellow monks was very ill (S.iv,46). The Buddha visited him. When he saw the Buddha approaching him he stirred in his bed and tried to get up, but the Buddha cautioned him not to rise. Having taken a seat, the Buddha inquired after his health, whether the pains are decreasing and not increasing. The monk replied that he is feeling very ill and weak, that his pains are increasing and not decreasing. The Buddha then inquired whether he had any misgiving or remorse. The monk replied that he had plenty of misgiving and remorse. The Buddha then asked whether he reproached himself for breach of virtue. He said no. Then the Buddha asked why he felt remorseful if he was not guilty of any breach of virtue. The monk replied that the Buddha does not preach the doctrine for purity of virtue, but for detachment from lust (*ragaviragatthaya*). Greatly pleased, the Buddha exclaimed *Sadhu Sadhu* in approbation.<sup>8</sup>

Buddhist Perspectives on Heath with special reference to the Sick and Elderly care, as is evident from the canonical texts cited above, and also focuses to the mind of the patient to wholesome thoughts. In the case of the Buddha and arahants the recitation of the *bojjhangas* has restored normal health. In the case of the monk Girimananda, who was probably not an arahant at the time of his illness, it was a discourse on the ten perceptions that restored his good health.

As human we always thinking about the ill patients and feeling really upset when we visited ill persons. Our normal attitude should be strong and should not worry about the persons. That is the reality of the world and should understand the suffering of the world. Every religion upholds health as the highest value and provides its adherents with insights and practical means to promote health

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7. (Vin.i,199ff)

8. Lily de Silva-article- Ministering to the sick and the terminally ill'

and healing and to deal with human vulnerability to disease and suffering. In this matter, the religious understanding of health and healing goes beyond the secular views to the realm of spirituality. This concern with man's spiritual dimension is the unique religious contribution that broadens the secular perspectives. It encourages us to care for spiritual health along with physical and mental health, which are already emphasized in the secular view. This religious approach underlines the importance of the role of spiritual power in healing the mind, making it tranquil, joyful, and detached from emotional and physical sensations.

## CONCLUSION

Buddhism gives great examples when we discussed about the concept of Health. Our great religious leader he himself attains one ill monks and attention paid to ill person and shown the same to his disciples. Buddha advice to the monks to be examples to others for treating elderly ill persons. There are many suttas related to the Health, mental disorders and how to treat ill persons. Therefore, in the past in Sri Lanka there were no elderly home or child orphanage. All Buddhist devotees believe that one day they also to face the similar experience. Buddhist perspective on health is well balance and leads to happy family life. The family members will have to gain happiness to do good product. Elderly care is the lesson our children learn from the childhood. There are many problems related to the health and elderly care at present in Sri Lanka. We need more research and should focuses about family health. The communication is one of the good weapon to reestablished family equilibrium and mental health will always leads to Physical health. In conclusion Buddhist health concept is very rich and the always focuses to pay attention to elderly persons and sick people.

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# BUDDHIST APPROACH TO HARMONIOUS FAMILY AND STRONGER SOCIAL BOND

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by Niharika Labh\*

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## ABSTRACT

Formation of family, unification of families and progress of society depends on mutual understanding among their members.

Human civilizations have grown on the basis of principles like mutual cooperation, faith, respect, concern, commitment for one other and so on.

Family is the smallest unit of group living which beings with wife-husband, father, mother, brothers-sisters and offspring extendable up to cousins, uncle-aunts etc. Being social by nature, man obviously wishes to live in groups whether it is family, society, region or even the nation for mutual cooperation, safety, security and progress.

Through every teaching of the Buddha reflects, his concern for the well-being of individual, family and even the entire human race; his pragmatic approach forwards them provides a sound moral base for sustainable family and social life. Sigālovadasutta of Dīghanikāya goes deeper and talks of its pragmatic vision, its execution and strengthening of harmonious bondage among people. How parents should behave with their offspring and offspring with his parents, how a husband should behave with his wife and wife her husband, teacher with his students and students with their teachers, master with his servants and servants with their master and so on, are described and discussed in detail.

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\*Assistant Professor, Doctor, Dept. of Buddhist Studies University of Delhi, Delhi-110007, India

In this context, some of fundamentals may be cited as love, faith or mutual trust, help or mutual cooperation, respect and affection, compassion towards their members who are weaker and in distress and so on so forth. Further, despite preaching for discipline, Buddhism provides sufficient space for expression of one's dissent, conviction not through coercion but through patient exchange of views etc.

The proposed paper aims to discuss and analyze the said concepts helpful in generating and strengthening mutual understanding and harmonious relation among the members in a family and through them in the whole society and nation aiming at the entire harmonious human race.

'Individual' is the smallest unit of a group whether it is family, society, trade organization/union, state, nation or even the globe. Obviously formation of such groups (let us begin with a family), their integrity, unification, bond and even progress depend on mutual understanding and concern for each other. Human civilization in different parts of the globe have grown on the basis of principles like internal understanding and cooperation, mutual faith, respect, concern, commitment and so on.

Coming to the main theme of the present paper, it is a humble attempt to understand the factors that lead to formation of and cordiality in the family or any other constructive group. Family as we know is the smallest unit of group living which begins with wife-husband, mother-father, brothers-sisters and other members extendable upto cousins, uncle-aunts etc. Being social by nature, man obviously wishes to live in groups whether it is family, society, trade unions, nation and even the entire humanity for mutual cooperation, safety, peace and progress.

Family is obviously bound by mutual love, care, concern, sacrifice, deep commitment etc. for one another. Being so close and intimate in nature, a sincere and sensible member realizes that family time is a top priority for each one. If paves the way for plenty of constructive communications among them. Because of such an intimacy there is usually a sense of belongingness and the members express frequent and sincere appreciation for various actions performed by them. The members look out and take care of one

another in case of their need. They think for other members too and not for themselves only. It is not that there are no differences or clash of interest. Such things happen time to time, but are finally resolved promptly and constructively, and thus is paved the way for peace and harmony and even for shared spiritual commitment.

So far as Buddhism is concerned, the Buddha sacrificed his wealthy princely life with an objective to find out the permanent solution of the problem of suffering, so that more and more people could take benefit from that.

Once he began his spiritual sojourn, he did not stop or look back. By overcoming ignorance, he attained the supreme Enlightenment at Bodhgaya and delivered his first sermon before the five monks at Isipatanamigadāya (Modern Sarnath, Varanasi). Later when the number of his disciples more up to 60 and all became 'arahata', the Buddha instructed them to spread his teachings meant for the well-being of more and more people.<sup>1</sup> This message contains the seed formula of humanistic consideration for good of oneself as well as of others and paves the way for formation of harmonious family and healthier society, a society wherein people could live peacefully with mutual respect, trust and concern.

## 1. PROBLEMS AND CURE IN THE FAMILY

A family consists of many persons/members with multiple thoughts, visions and interests, and there may be clashes also sometimes on certain issues. However, senior and experienced members intervene and bring necessary solutions and discord converts into accord, congest into resolution.

Buddhist Saṅgha too was like a family or group of families and ran on the basis of mutual understanding, faith, respect, peaceful co-existence, care for elderly recluses and loving kindness towards younger generation, sense of sacrifice and tolerance in case of mishappenings and behavioural lapses on the part of others. Vinaya texts in general and Pātimokkha in particular speak volumes on the Buddha's pragmatic approach on such issues of difference and

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1. "Caratha, bhikkhave, cārikām bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam . . . ." Mahāvaggapāli, Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, p. 23.

discord among the recluses as well as towards common society including kings and other rulers. Seven rules of *Addhikaraṇasamatha* present a fine glimpse of the Buddha's suggestions and rulings which prepare a wide base for restoring peace and accord in the family and the society.<sup>2</sup>

Once peace and harmony is restored in the family, an atmosphere may be created to develop cordiality, understanding each other's sentiments, faith, harmony and peace. Needless to repeat, it helps in fighting unitedly against all odds whether social, economic, political and even religious spiritual. Peace externally helps to prepare a proper background for internal peace as well.

The Buddha talks of various angles and methods in *Sigālovādasutta*<sup>3</sup> to work for harmony and cordiality in family, which further help in bringing and strengthening social bond. *Sigālovādasutta* is popularly called 'Gihīsutta' also, as it is devoted to highlight social relation and dynamism based on mutual understanding, concern towards one another, love and care.

Normally in our day to day life, we observe that relationship between two or more individuals exists and functions through the give and take consideration. Parents rear their offspring, of course out of unconditional love, but later on they expect to get the same love and care when they get older and children become grown up and start earning for their own livelihood. Wife expects love and care from husband and vice versa. Till these feelings are expressed and exhibited through actions trustfully and honestly from both the sides, things continue and get stronger and stronger, but if there is lacuna from either side, situation gets worsened and as we find in these days most of the time they are broken. The same situation may be witnessed in other types of relationship as well, whether it is between two individual, individual vs. group, master and servant, teacher and students and so on.

This is the reason, taking a rational and practical approach,

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2. The seven *Adhikaraṇasamathas* are : *Uppannuppannānaṁ adhikaraṇānaṁ samathāya vūpasamāya*: i) *Sammukhāvinayo dātabbo*, ii) *Sativinayo dātabbo*, iii) *Amūlhavinayo dātabbo*, iv) *Patiññāya Kāretabbam*, v) *Yebhuyyasikā*, vi) *Tassapāpiyyasikā*, and vii) *Tiṇavatthārako'ti*.

3. *Dīghanikāya*.

the Buddha teaches Sigāla, a householder's son how to worship the six directions. Sigāla of course, worships these directions as per the instructions received from his dying father, but does not understand the real meaning of his father's message. So, despite having a sense of reciprocation, a person should worship the six cardinal directions taking into account the help, favour and services he gets from different members in his family and even in the society. Accordingly, the six directions should be looked upon in the following manner:

'The parents should be looked upon as east, teacher as south, wife and children as west, friends and associates as north, servants and employees as the Nadir (down) and ascetics and brāhmaṇas as the Zenith (up).'<sup>4</sup>

Rhys Davids interprets and justifies the symbolical significance of these directions saying that 'These directions have deliberately been chosen, as the day in the east, so life begins with parents' care; teachers' fees and South are the same word 'dakkhiṇa'; domestic care follows when the youth becomes a grown up man, as the west holds the later daylight; North is 'beyond' (uttara), so by help of friends etc., he gets beyond troubles.

As the mental state of selflessness and non-expectation is very difficult to develop, the Buddha suggests even with the mentality of expectation of reciprocation on the part of the doer that one should do good to his parents and others in his family and beyond. According, a young householder or a child should minister good to his parents as the east: i) Having supported me I shall support them, ii) I shall do their duties, iii) I shall keep and uphold the family tradition, iv) I shall make myself worthy of my inheritance, and v) furthermore I shall offer alms in the honour of my parents even after their departure.<sup>5</sup>

It may be mentioned here that in the Indian culture especially in the Sanātana fold (including Buddhism) we never forget our deceased forefathers. We observe ceremonies on each death anniversary in their memory by offering alms and gifts to the priestly

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4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

people. This tradition is also in vogue in Sri Lanka where people make ceremonial offerings of alms to the monks on the eighth day in the third month, and on each death anniversary of their parents. Merit of these good actions is offered to the departed individuals after such ceremony. Moreover, after every puññakamma (meritorious actions), a Buddhist never fails to remember his parents and offer merit. Such is the sense of loyalty and reverential gratitude shown towards alive as well as deceased parents, as advised by the great Indian seers including the Buddha.

## 2. PERSON IN THE FAMILY

As family is the first and elementary unit of social life; its unity, integrity and strength depend upon their mutual relations and cordiality. Sigālovāda sutta further draws an outline why and how a person ought to behave with one another inside the family as well without.

### 2.1. Behaviour with parents:

As already discussed a person should behave with his parents as the East. In response, he gets from his parents back in five ways i) Parents restrain the youngsters from evil, ii) encourage them to perform good action, iii) train them skill for a profession, iv) arrange a suitable bride for them, and v) hand over their inheritance to the youngsters at proper time.

### 2.2. Behaviour between a husband and wife as the west direction:

An ideal husband should minister to his wife in five ways, i) by being courteous to her, ii) by not despising her, iii) by being faithful to her, iv) by handing over authority to her, and v) by providing her with ornaments.

Ministered thus by her husband as the west direction, an ideal wife reciprocates to her husband in five ways, such as i) by performing her duties well, ii) by exhibiting warm and cordial hospitality to his relations and other guests; iii) by remaining faithful, iv) by protecting and up keeping what the husband brings home, and v) by discharging her duties skillfully.

Thus is protected the west direction by posing unflinching faith by husband and wife towards each other.

### 2.3 Mutual behaviour between brother-sister, brother-brother and other family members:

Though *Sigālovāda sutta* does not speak separately on these relations; it may easily be understood that there must be mutual love and trust, concern for each other's interest, provision for space for sharing one another's thinking, sentiments ambitions, aspirations and plan of execution.

## 3. PERSON OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

As already said in the beginning of this paper, individual is the smallest constituent of the group whether it is family or any other larger groups like educational institutions such as school, college, university etc.; factory, office, society, state, nation or even the entire globe. So, his role is significant in whichever group he/she lives or functions. As a building is made with bricks, similarly a group, family or society is made of individual members. Therefore, every individual ought to understand his own position in the social arena (outside the family) and also his responsibility towards its making and strengthening.

According to the suggestion given by the Buddha to *Sigāla*, the following points should be kept into consideration:

### 3.1. Behaviour with friends and associates:

The Buddha explains with the instance of worshipping North direction, ideal behavior with friends and associates, such as, i) by liberal attitude and behavior ii) by soft, friendly and courteous speech, iii) by extending helping hands, iv) by showing impartiality, and v) by sincerity.

In return friends and associates show sympathetic and compassionate behaviour. Their reciprocation gets manifestation in five ways, namely i) they protect him when he is heedless, ii) they protect his property when he is influenced by heedlessness, iii) they provide a shelter or refuge in case he is in danger, iv) they do not forsake him in trouble, and v) they show consideration to his family.

If a person behaves with his friends and associates in such a manner, they reciprocate compassionately and favourably.

### 3.2. Behaviour with servants and employees:

Taking the instance of nadir or lower direction, the Buddha teaches for one's behavior towards servants and other employees in five ways- i) by assigning them duty or task according to their ability, ii) by supplying them with proper food and wages, iii) by treating them with proper care and medicine in case of his sickness, iv) by sharing delicacy with them, v) by granting them necessary leave at times. In response to their master's warm and humanistic behaviour, the servants and employees too show favourable and compassionate behaviour to the former in five ways: i) they get up before he gets up, ii) they go to sleep after he goes to bed, iii) they feel satisfied with what is given to them by the master, iv) they discharge their duties sincerely as well as efficiently, and v) they uphold his good name and fame.

### 3.3. Behaviour with ascetics (samaṇas) and brāhmaṇas:

The Buddha cites the instance of Zenith or upper directions for showing respect to ascetics and brāhmaṇas in the following five ways, namely, i) by pleasant physical action, ii) by pleasant and soothing speech, iii) by pleasant and positive thoughts, iv) by welcoming them in his house with open heart, v) by supplying and fulfilling their worldly or material needs.

The ascetics and brāhmaṇas thus shown respect by a household-er respond with their love, affection and compassion in the following six ways, viz., i) they restrain him from resorting to evil deeds, ii) they persuade him to perform good or moral action, iii) they love him with kind heart, iv) they make him listen to what he has not listened earlier, v) they explain and clarify what he has already heard but not comprehended properly, and vi) they point out the path to spiritual upliftment and heavenly state.

## 4. IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

One can enjoy life and feel happy if the mutual relationship among the members of a family is cordial and cooperative. However, good family relationship is important for many other reasons also, such as:

- (i) It makes children secured, cared and loved, which generates

a congenial atmosphere for proper development of their brain;

(ii) It can help to overcome difficulties with children's food habit, sleeping, learning and behaviour;

(iii) It makes easier for the family to solve problems and resolve conflicts amicably;

(iv) It helps members especially children to respect differences of opinion as our children develop more independence;

(v) It gives children the skills they need to build healthy relationships of their own.<sup>6</sup>

This is the reason it is always desirable to have a look at the relationship we establish and maintain with our children and other family members, and think about how we can improve them. So, besides, the above points it is always better to focus on these aspects of moral teachings which could function as guiding principles for leading day to day quality life, and also controlling and disciplining over all life pattern.

Harmonious and close relationship in the family and over all social set up may be developed through love, security, communication, connection and few more rules and routines.

Quality family life can be built up anywhere, provided there is strong sense of togetherness, spending of more and more time for each other. It can be practiced by living, talking, laughing, eating, sharing feelings of joy and sorrow, sharing with children their sentiments including their stupidity and funny activities before going to bed etc. Going to picnic, viewing good movies and playing indoor/outdoor games at the weekends, making decisions together about what to do for special events like birthdays, marriage anniversaries, visiting religious places like monasteries, temples, churches, gurudwara etc. according to one's respective faith can develop the sense of stronger family bondage as well as social and cultural strength based on moral values. Needless to repeat, Buddhism provides a sound moral basic for developing such

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6.<https://risingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/routines-rituals-relationships/good-family-relationship>, p. 1/5

qualities in and outside family.

When we look at the various factors leading to creation of strong and harmonious family and stronger social bond, they overlap, interact and reinforce each other. For instance, if a person spares sufficient time for his family, that enhances the communication process facilitating expression of appreciation, when he is committed making a relationship functional, he will see the need to forgive and resolve conflicts.

Being a positive and constructive philosophy with pragmatic approach, Buddhism teaches 'never say die' approach. So, if a person's family falls short in any of these days, nothing to get disheartened or disappointed. He should realize that nobody is a perfect individual whether acting as father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, son, daughter or child. What matters most is that he should keep on striving from good to better and better to the best. That way only, better understanding could be generated among the members of a family or of the society.<sup>7</sup>

*"Akkodhena jine kodham, asādhūm sādhunā jine,*

*Jine kadariyam dānena, saccena alikavādinam"<sup>8</sup>*

Dhammapada characterizes a virtuous person and suggests how to handle evil doers. It suggests that a virtuous person whether in the family or elsewhere, should overcome anger through politeness by not getting angry, wicked by goodness, stingy by generosity and a liar by truthfulness.<sup>9</sup>

## 5. PERSON TO THE MAKING OF STRONGER SOCIAL TIE UP

As discussed in the beginning, individual is the fundamental unit of a family and society. Being so, his role in the family or outside in the society, becomes significant. Therefore he should personally be virtuous. PA Payutto has emphasized on developing the personal qualities like constructive approach towards each action.

### 5.1. He has the divine abiding:

7. <https://lifehopeandtruth.com/relationships/family/7-charatersistics-of-healthy-families/> p. 6/6

8. Dhammapada, verse no. 223.

There are the four mental attributes or state of sublime living which a sensible member of any group whether a family or a society must have. They are:

(i) **Mettā** (friendliness or loving kindness) - An ideal member of society always thinks and acts upon with a view to help others without expecting any reciprocation- 'Sabbe sattā sukhino hontu'.

(ii) **Karuṇā** (Compassion)- It is a feeling of sharing others' problems, sorrow and other types of suffering. A compassionate person always thinks of taking out others from trouble.

(iii) **Muditā** (Selfness joy or appreciative pleasure)- When on seeing others joyful or victorious a person starts feeling selfless and appreciative pleasure, that is the sign of Muditā.

(iv) **Upekkhā** (equanimity)- When a person thinks and acts without caring for gain or loss, fame or blame, favourable or unfavourable, the stage of equanimity is developed. An equanimous person simply discharges his duty whether for his family, classroom, club or society as whole; his contributions yield tremendous impact on life making the whole atmosphere trustworthy and harmonious.

Having established these four brahmavihāras (sublime states of living) as a foundation, he may express them outwardly also in the following manner:

## 5.2. He contributes to social harmony:

Such a virtuous, sensible and responsible person acts upon the following guidelines which help in bringing stronger unity and integrity in the society, known as Saṅgahavatthu. These are, namely:

(i) **Dāna** (charity)- Being kind hearted and generous, he shares his wealth with needy persons and contributes meaningfully to the persons seriously in need of help but are not themselves capable enough to sort out their problems.

(ii) **Piyavācā** (amicable speech)- A sensible person in the society speaks amicable, polite and pleasant words which could leave a soothing impact on the listeners and make them calm, encouraging and enthusiastic for taking up their unfulfilled tasks and even new projects. He speaks in such a manner that lead to understanding and

not to misunderstanding, harmony and not to disharmony, mutual love and not to hatred or enmity, respect and not to disrespect or humiliation and so on.

(iii) **Atthacariyā** (helpful action)- As a responsible and sensible member of the society, he helps others through physical service, making efforts to lend a hand to others in their activities. He performs actions which could be helpful to the society, including help to resolve problems and promote harmony.

(iv) **Samānattatā** (Participation)- He puts himself in communion with others, behaves consistently and impartially, behaves equally towards all the members of society, does not take undue or unjust advantage of them, shares in their joy and sorrow, success and failure, acknowledges problems and participates in resolving them for common good.

These are some of the fundamental principles or guidelines which restrain from resorting to evil, promote good and moral actions, teach how to create a conducive atmosphere in the family and finally to create and bring stronger bond in the social life.

# BUDDHIST APPROACH TO INCLUSIVENESS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR SOCIAL HARMONY

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by Anita Meena\*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to discuss about the Buddhist vision of sustainable development and social harmony in the light of nonviolence culture which is valuable tulle for humanity. It will be explore the potentiality of the Buddhist contributions to the peace-making efforts and the promotion of a culture of social harmony which is really valuable for the Today's Scenario. This research will be focused on the Buddhist worldview which is surprisingly in accordance with the insight of peace studies in its process oriented paradigm. Social harmony means will lead the holistic framework of peace, which would be enabling its contributions. The paradigm of Buddhism laced with peace teaches that how one can tackle the global war and disturbances coming upon the humanity at every moment. It's well known that the ultimate goal of Buddhism is peace and social harmony; it will generate not only peace in this world but also harmony for each and every person. According to Buddha at firstly one should try to know the cause of social peace and harmony, because without knowing the cause one cannot take any action in one's quest for peace.

Wherever Buddhism has carried out it reshaped its host culture and introduced a doctrine of nonviolence, compassion, love and peace. Buddha prescribed some basic moral precepts for monks,

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\* Doctor, Assistant professor

Ramjas College (Delhi University) New Delhi, India

nuns and householders to maintain the harmony in the Society; these are called as “pañch-śīla” (five sheelas) which is route of the harmony and peace in this context:

- To abstain from taking the life of breathing beings (*Paññatipāta virati*).
- To abstain from stealing (*adinnādāna virati*).
- To abstain from sexual misconduct (*kāmesumicchācāra virati*).
- To abstain from telling lie (*mūsāvāda virati*).
- To abstain from taking intoxicants (*surāmeraymajjappāmādatṭānā virati*).

In this paper also elaborated the teachings of the Buddha, which taught us the peaceful condition of the mind which leads to peaceful speech and peaceful actions for sustainable social development.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A great deal has been spoken and written about the Buddha's concern for the all living beings and humankind in particular. Buddhism has been long celebrated as a religion of peace and non-violence. With its increasing vitality in region around the world, many people today turn to Buddhism for relief and guidance at the time when peace seems to be a deferred dream more than ever, with the wars between many countries, and also the terrorist activities into the different parts of the world. Yet this is never a better time to re-examine the position of Buddhism, among those of other world religions. Buddha's teachings are rich in imparting valuable education and social behaviour. The values sermonized by Buddha are relevant and significant in many aspects. These values guide as well as instruct the people how to live and behave in society.

Social harmony means will lead the holistic framework of peace, which would be enabling its contributions. The paradigm of Buddhism laced with peace teaches that how one can tackle the global war and disturbances coming upon the humanity at every moment. It's well known that the ultimate goal of Buddhism is peace and social harmony; it will generate not only peace in this

world but also harmony for each and every person. According to Buddha at firstly one should try to know the cause of social peace and harmony, because without knowing the cause one cannot take any action in one's quest for peace.

Beside the sutras, there are of course the numerous stories and legends recorded in the Dhammapada and the Jataka which again emphasise the factors which promote social harmony and universal peace. The question now remains to be asked, how practical are these admonitions in modern times? It has often been suggested that the Buddhist formulae for social well being are rather idealistic. They may have worked when governments exerted far more power over their subjects in ancient India than they do today. Today's citizens are too independent and selfish to be ruled with gloved hands. This need not be so. People can still be treated humanely and we can still follow the principle that if you treat people well, they will behave well. Part of the reason why governments are so harsh today is that they operate from a point of view that the world is finite and that everything is real. We must remember that all the Buddha's advice was given against a world view which is totally different from the world view of a vast majority of humans today. If we want to effectively make use of the Buddha's Teaching to promote social harmony and universal peace we must begin to see the world as the Buddha did. We must "see the world as it really is". We must use all our efforts to give an understanding of the three characteristics of Anicca (impermanence), Dukkha (unsatisfactoriness) and Anattā (non self). Admittedly this is a huge task. We have to overcome two millennia of propaganda which spread the false notion that the world and its creatures were specially created for the selfish pleasure of man. We have to counter the Renaissance notion that "man is the measure of all things."

Surely it is a difficult task, but certainly it is not impossible. More and more people in developed countries are waking up to the obvious fact that the world was NOT made for man's pleasure, and that it was not created in one glorious moment but that everything that exists is an illusion and dependent on everything else, that man's ultimate happiness lies in his working not for himself alone but for the safety and happiness of others. This is exactly the Buddha's view and a large number of people, weary of past excesses and fearful of

impending disaster are ready to give heed to the Buddha's advice on peaceful coexistence where duties and responsibilities take precedence over rights.

## 2. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

- A lead in that helps ensure the reader will maintain interest over the study.
- A declaration of originality.
- An indication of the central focus of the study.
- An explanation of the study's significance or the benefit to be derived from an investigating the problem.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Theoretical
- Critical
- Analytical

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Holistic and sustainable worldview in Buddhism

Sustainable society is a high thinking for the safe of future generation, "a sustainable society is one that satisfies its needs without diminishing the prospects of future generation".<sup>1</sup> It means the limited use of the nature is sustainability. In a sustainable society every person must use the things less than their needs.

Today the view of the holistic or deep ecological, which we seeing through the modern science, that can be recall from Buddhism. The Buddhist view of human life in the universe originates from insights from Shakyamuni's enlightenment. He set in meditation under the Bodhi tree and explored the "universe within." He was able to recognize in the depths of his own life, the inseparability of the source of life and the universe in which it was conceived. This inner journey led him beyond the realm of the individual to the transpersonal. This allows one to feel ties beyond relationship

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1. The Web of Life, page- 4

of family or community, beyond ties of race or nationality. Even beyond that of humanity, outward to the ties with nature and biosphere. And finally become one with the universe itself. That can be seen also through the *pratityasamutpāda*, there is a network of causes and effects and all are interdependent. Everything in the universe is connected by a thread of dependent origination. The universal life force, which carries out actions of compassion, exists in a complex network of causes and effects. Through the process of evolution of life and the physical world, including the working of nature's ecosystem, an intelligent form of life called humanity came into existence. Through the holistic world view the whole world is observed like a cycle. In this holistic worldview, there is no dominating view point rather it is a view of co-operation.

Through the Buddhist perspective true happiness cannot be found through mundane activities alone. Only the noble path to enlightenment is a path from suffering, enlightenment in this sense is not a mere liberation from the oppression of a particular ideology, but liberation from cyclic existence. So finally, from the base point of Buddhism, religion is not an obstacle to enlightenment, but is instead the only vehicle to enlightenment and holistic world view.

#### 4.2 The concept of peace in the Buddhist worldview

Every spiritual tradition has a history of its contribution to peace in society. Peace or non-violence is much important to protect the social balance and social harmony. Buddhism as it did in the past can play an important role in developing a peaceful culture with its message of love<sup>2</sup>. This role will never be exercised through conversion, but always through a change of heart and the psyche. In *Dhammapada* this form of peace, which can be achieved by love (*maitri*) :

*yassa sabbamahorattam, ahimsāya rato mano |  
mettamso sabbabhūteṣu, veram tassa na kenacīti ||  
mettañca sabbalokasmi, mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam |*

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2. *Na hi veren verāni sammntīdh kudāchanañ | averen cha sammanti esa dhammo sanantano|| dhammapada, yamakvaggo. 5*

*uddham adho cha tiriyañca, asambādham averamasapattm ||*

Buddha always said that it is fundamentally wrong to believe that hatred can be solved by hatred, as it is commonly believed. Instead he argued. It can only be overcome by love and compassion, which are its antidotes.

Buddhist believes that the Buddha (meaning “the awakened”) awakened to the laws of the universe, which are said to be operating eternally, whether the Buddha discovered them or not. The most fundamental among these laws is the law of karma, or in Buddhist terminology dependent origination, which explains the genuine condition of things that exist in the universe. In Buddhist tradition there is a huge number of teachings about the global peace. In *yamak vaggo* said that: “foolish people don’t know that we don’t stay for a long time in this world, if they know this reality, they automatically got the peace”<sup>3</sup>. Buddha said the form of peace is related with the inclusiveness<sup>4</sup>.

He accounted that negative mental forces are the element responsible for all destructive actions, which in turn brings suffering. Ordinary people do not see this truth, instead they preparative afflictions in an attempt to avoid suffering. Consequently they suffer all the more.

Buddha also said that the positive mental forces are developed through rejecting the self-centered attitude and through cherishing others, which makes a strong living tradition. Nonviolence, according to Buddhism is not merely the absence of violence, rather it is active and passive action generated from awareness of human suffering and motivated by love and compassion. So the practice of nonviolence is not oriented for self-protection but constitutes an active engagement motivated by deeper concern for others.

#### 4.3 Social Harmony in Buddhism

Since a long time intellectual world have been engaged in two major dialogues with non-Buddhist traditions, including

3. *Pare cha na vijānanti, mayamethth yamāmase | ye cha tath vijānanti, tattoo sammanti med-hagā|| dhammapada, yamakvaggo. 6*

4. *Sukhā saṅghasa sāmaggī, samaggānām tapo sukho|| dhammapada, buddhavaggo. 194*

interchanges with western philosophers or scholars and interchanges with scholars representing non-Buddhist Indian schools with which Buddhism had been historically in dialogue. These have been valuable for human beings, and have thereby enriched understanding about eastern knowledge and tradition. Most Buddhist communities in Asia have been, and continue to be in regular interaction with western scholars and cultural institutions. It is high time that this level of interaction takes place among Asian Buddhist culture and institutions themselves.

Buddha gave his teachings addressing the suffering of sentient beings in general and human beings in particular. He underlined that in order to get rid of suffering we need to go through its root causes, and that through the understanding of the causes of suffering and the understanding that the cause can be removed. We can look forward to its cessation through a path leading to the ending of suffering. This is the fundamental ground or principle of the stereological system of Buddha's teachings. This principal gives us a deeper understanding of all human situations, whether individual, social or global, and hence makes possible achieving solutions to those situations.

Buddha always gave more importance to society than self. He demonstrated in a reasoned way that all destructive mental forces are rooted in self-grasping, which cherishes the "I". This is then extended to the grasping and cherishing of that which "mine" is encompassing everything that falls within the domain of the "mine". Thus arises attachment towards the world of "I" and "mine", which invariably develops a sense of indifference or disgust towards other who do not fall within the world of "mine". However the Buddha says that these negative elements are temporary growths in the mind and hence they can be removed through taking proper measures.

The focus of the Buddha's teachings was to generate higher and higher level of self-growth and self-development which would lead to social growth and social development further leading to nation-growth and nation-development ultimately leading to peace progress and happiness for all. Only for self-survival development was never the prime motive of the Buddha. He always focused on the 'dhamma' based as moral behavior. This behavior called "*āchāro*

*paramo dhammo”.*

The concept of ‘Bodhisattva’ in Buddhism is deals with the term ‘social harmony’. When the attitude of love and compassion is cultivated with great intensity of unconditional altruism follows to lead the person to devote him or herself entirely to the benefit of all human beings. In Buddhism this particular spiritual practice is known as the practice of the ‘Bodhisattva’. It means the one whose sole objective is to free sentient beings from the bondage of suffering. There is an extensive corpus of literature providing detailed accounts of this practice, which makes for a strong living tradition and social harmony.

Buddha prescribed some basic moral precepts for monks and householders to maintain the harmony in society. These are technically known as ‘*sīla*’. These are the foundation of moral life.

Generosity is not only practiced towards the *saṅgha*, but as a pervading value of Buddhist societies, is also practiced towards family, friends, work people, guests, the poor and homeless.<sup>5</sup>

*Pañca-sīla- pañcaśīla* is the basic assumption of moral activities for both householders as well as enunciates. On a basis of developing *dāna*, the Buddhist goes on to develop his or her ethical virtue or *sīla* by observing the self-discipline of keeping certain precepts. Self-control is much emphasized as means of protecting others and purifying one’s own characters.<sup>6</sup>

The precepts are classified as physical ( *kāyika* ), vocal ( *vācika* ) and mental ( *mānasika* ). It consists of the following five precepts-

1 to abstain from taking the life of breathing beings ( *Pāṇātipāta virati* )

2 to abstain from stealing ( *adinnādāna virati* )

3 to abstain from sexual misconduct ( *kāmesumicchācāra virati* )

4 to abstain from telling lie ( *mūsāvāda virati* )

5 to abstain from taking intoxicants (

5. *Anguttara Nikāya* II.

6. *Dhammapada* 80, 103

*surāmerayamajjappāmādaṭṭhānā virati)*

The first precept is related to the non-injury that called *ahimsā*. In Buddhist religion *ahimsā* implies causing no pain to all beings.<sup>7</sup> This precept rules out the intentional killing of any living being human or otherwise. This precept is not only important for the individual human point of view but also from the ten existing social and economic point of view of an agrarian society.

The second precept is related to the abstaining from theft and cheating.

*Idha socati pecca, pāpakāri ubhayattha socati |*

*Sa socati, sa vihaññati, disvā kammakilittham attangu ||<sup>8</sup>*

The third precept is describes to avoiding sexual misconduct or lustful attachment. This precept is basically relates to the avoidance of causing suffering by one's sexual behavior.<sup>9</sup> This precept has a vital role for developing peace, harmony and family feeling in the society.

The fourth precept is about avoiding lying and other forms of wrong speech. This is vocal precept, which is the path-factor of right-speech.

The fifth precept deals with the abstaining from taking fermented intoxicant, liquor and alcohol.

The view of sustainable development also can be seeing through the Buddhism. A sustainable development always makes balance between two extreme conditions, which useful for a healthy environment and balanced society.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.4 Social values

Buddhism by no means, neglects the area of the lay interpersonal and social relationship. It greatly values social harmony and cohesion. Buddha always supported to the social equality. He criticized the four social classes (*varṇas*). There certain people were superior

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7. *Sāmaññaphala sutta*.

8. *Samyutta Nikāya* 119

9. *Anguttar Nikāya*. 189

10. *Attattham paratthena, bahunāpi na hāpaye| attadathamabhinjāya, sadatthapasuto siyā ||*  
dhammapad, attavaggo. 166

and inferior by birth in that class system. On ordination, difference of social background is to be ignored. Just as waters entering the sea from different rivers all equally become sea-water. The Buddha often criticized the Brahmins claims to inherent superiority.<sup>11</sup> He argued that the human race was one species, not four.<sup>12</sup>

The Buddha's teachings tell us about the communication between the parent and children, pupils and teachers, husband and wife, friends and companions, masters and servants etc.

Buddha's concept of "*bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya*" was spiritual or ethical. He sought to achieve the *hita* of the common masses being spiritual. But he also showed that for the betterment of the individuals in particular and the society at large. Thus his was the 'dhamma' with relevance to the social harmony. The Buddha's mission was to establish a path to spiritual perfection, to full enlightenment. He did this by propounding a teaching that acknowledged our capacity for attaining spiritual perfection yet which also remained fully respectful of the intelligence and autonomy of human beings.

Buddhism after its encounter with the west and its civilization is attracting millions of spiritual seekers and intellectuals working in various disciplines including social science and environmental science. Buddhist interaction with these intellectuals is taking place at an intensive and sophisticated level. This interaction is predictively going to make remarkable impact on human civilization.

In the present scenario the world is shrinking but its problems are expanding. Technological development has brought us material achievements that our ancestors could never have imagined. But when we compare the degree of happiness and social integration, we see a dramatic and alarming decline. Also we see severe economic disparity in the world today, between nations both within and without. The consumerist culture exploits the people, turning them into insatiable consumption addicts, and thereby leading to the unsustainable exploitation of nature as well. The ecological imbalance and environmental degradation we currently witness are

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11. *Majjhima Nikāya* I. 83-90

12. *Samyutta Nikāya* 612

the most striking example of the disastrous consequence of these cultural and social developments. Every year we see an increase in temperature because of global warming. Buddhism always stands with environmental and social cares.

## 5. CONCLUSION

So after the above discussion we can say that life has two faces, spiritual and material. A balance between the two is imperative. No one can deny the importance of spiritual progress and similarly economic growth is also necessary for life. Development is necessary but it should be sustainable development. Social values cannot be avoided for any of development. So it is important neither to neglect materialistic development nor to social and ethical values that are coupled and accessible to human beings and which give our lives meaning.

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# THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND BUDDHIST NUNS TO HARMONIOUS FAMILIES HEALTHCARE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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by Tran Thi Dieu Huong\*

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## INTRODUCTION

In modern society, the position of women in any circumstance, religion or no religion, is affirmed and enhanced. Today, women play an important role in both the family and society. However, women are still housewives of families, take care of the quality of meals, ensure food hygiene and hygienic routines and teach children, care for spiritual, material life for members of the family and always aim: prosperity, progress and happiness. But, their works, which are sometimes not aware of the problem, is also part of the pollutants and environmental degradation. Therefore, women are the object and also an important subject of environmental protection. So what's the environment? How is its importance to people? And how is the role of Buddhist nuns in particular and women in general in protecting the environment?

### 1. WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENT?

Environmental including natural and artificial material factors have closely relation to each other, surrounds humans, affects the life, production, the existence and development of humans and nature.

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\* Doctor. School of Buddhist Studies & Civilization  
Gautama Buddha University, Greater Noida, U.P – 201306, India

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO HUMANS

Environment is the living space of humans and species.

Environment is the place to provide the necessary resources for living and production activities of humans.

Environment is the place to contain the waste created by humans in life and their production activities.

Environment is the place to mitigate the impact of nature on humans and other living organisms on Earth.

Environment is a place to keep and provide information to people.

## 3. THE EMERGENCY STATUS OF ENVIRONMENT IN CURRENT WORLD

Pollution of air, water and soil; Overpopulation; Depletion of natural resources; Waste treatment; Climate Change; Loss of biodiversity: human activities are leading to the extinction of species and habitats; Deforest; Ocean Acidification: that is a direct impaction on production too much CO<sub>2</sub>. 25% of CO<sub>2</sub> by humans; Depletion of the ozone layer; Acid rain: occur due to the presence of certain contaminants in the atmosphere; the expansion of urban refers to population migration; the public health problems; Genetic modification of foods by using biotechnology.

From the above issues, we recognized that it is necessary for us to protect the environment. Along with the environmental protection organizations...Women also contribute an important part in protecting the environment. Because they linked with the environment very much: direct close to nature and the environment in daily activities; are the sensitive subjects directly affected by pollutants in living and production; is the sensitive subjects directly affected by the pollution and degradation of natural resources: water, air, forests, animals etc... Thus, what should women do in the current situation?

## 4. THE ROLE OF WOMEN TO HARMONIOUS FAMILIES HEALTHCARE AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

With the role of women, I will show three fact sectors that every woman depending on it. That is the food, fashion issues and living environment in family (eating - living- wearing)

## Food: vegetarian food to protect the environment

There are many ways to live “green”. In the ways of environmental protection, the vegetarian food is a top method.

Vegetarian food is replacement daily food derived from animals (cattle, poultry) into the plant foods (beans, vegetables, fruit, mushrooms...). If you are a housewife in the family, do the “green” lifestyle through each daily “no meat” meal of the family. According to scientists’ research, vegetarian food will ensure the health, longevity. In addition, it also helps people limit dangerous, incurable diseases such as cardiovascular, cancer, arthritis, high blood pressure... It is also the best way that human can do right away to protect the environment, and reduce the emissions of greenhouse.

According to the calculation of the scientists, the livestock sector has caused much harm and enormous waste, for example, to produce 1 kg of meat, need to consume 10kg of food, 15,000 liters of water. For 1 liter of milk, 990 liters of water needed. Energy to produce 1kg of meat can be used for one 100kWbulb burning for 3 weeks. Producing 1kg of meat will release 36,4kg of CO<sub>2</sub>; it is equal to emissions of 1 car running 155km. On the other hand, according to the study, manure, sewage, animal waste products are sources causing the pollution of water, air the most. The amount of these emissions is many times greater than the emissions from other sources from industrial activities. These substances cause environmental pollution and the greenhouse effect very large. Therefore, we should reduce the livestock and poultry. Mr. Henning Steinfeld, a senior official of the International Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said that butcher livestock industry is one of the most important factors leading to crisis of modern ecology. Thus, be fasting to protect the “green” lifestyle and for your health, family, future children and life ...

## Living environment: against indoor pollution

We often think that the local air pollution is a problem caused by industry or traffic - and that’s true - but what about the problem of pollution indoor? Indoor pollution can many times higher than outdoor pollution. *The air pollutants may be found indoor such as:*

- Cigarette smoke
- Equipment for cooking and heating
- Dust of pets indoor
- Air Conditioning
- Musty, fungi and bacteria
- Gas formaldehyde (Formalin)
- Dust
- Toxic chemicals
- Noble gas
- Asbestos

Therefore, the woman is always the direct person and obligation to protect the living space to avoid contamination indoor to ensure the health of family members is the most important issues. The most effective way to control indoor air pollution is to remove the source of pollution. That is:

- *Cleanup*: eliminate the source generating dust, musty, fungi, for example, switch heating systems with forced hot air into heating system with forced hot water. Weekly vacuuming or cleaning curtains; sweeping or vacuuming the house daily. Washing stuffed animals every two weeks; using plastic sheet to cover the bed during the day.
- *Equipped air filter with good quality*: air filter system and chimney filters will high effect will remove dust particles from 1-10 microns in size. Adequate ventilation is an effective way to maintain indoor air quality to be good.
- *Oxidizing*: ozone gas at low concentrations kills odors caused by pollutants such as musty, tobacco smoke, Formalin (formaldehyde), Ben-zen or acetone..
- *Dilution*: open window and let the fresh air mixing with pollutants, and thus, having effect to dilute these pollutants.
- *Absorption*: solutions of using activated charcoal in the air filter to absorb toxic compounds (such as formaldehyde,

Ben-zen and acetone)

- *Irradiation:* Ultraviolet (UV-ultraviolet) destroys pollutants indoor. Note that UV light is only effective for pollutants in a certain distance from the light source.

### Fashion: beauty and act of evil

Besides the issues of environmental protection in food and living space hygienic in the family, fashion is also a hot issue need to be attended. The more modern human life is, the higher human demand is. Outside fashion is an indispensable need for women. They become beautiful, confident and more perfect. Therefore, the fashion, garment more and more develop bringing to human many benefits, joy, creative inspiration. However, the development of fashion industry is also the time the big brands become “the environmental destruction”.

The upper class thinks that animal fur and skin is considered one of the most powerful materials of the fashion industry. It not only has the high value but also delivers the luxurious, regal for the wearer. With demand – supply rules, major fashion brands such as Fendi, Marc Jacobs, Celine, Hermes, Yves Saint Laurent, Gucci, Zac Posen etc ... consecutively showed the Autumn - Winter collection with leather, fur materials. Kind of fur which is the most current favorite is animals with beautiful coat color such as rabbit, fox, mink, and leopard, squirrel... the people who love fashion will be willing to spend thousands, ten thousands, hundred thousand dollars for that fur luxury dress. However, few people know that in order to have that pride, they led make how many animals bleeding and even in danger of extinction. Behind the graceful beauty are bitterly cries from green forest!

Each year, there is about 50 million fur animals are killed for fashion industry. Wild animals are raised for fur are often locked in a small and cramped cage that they cannot move, and so they will not be able to own inherent instinct such as mink cannot swim, fox never knows run and rabbits cannot know how to jump. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) confirmed: “Wearing costume made from fur or using leather items means you are unwittingly bloodbath of innocent animals and indirectly destroy the earth”.

According to estimates, the cost and energy to produce a fur coat is often costly. The process of drying and sun exposure consumes a significant amount of energy and release many chemicals into the environment. So, we had a big question that it is *"High Class" fashion* or *"regresses awareness"*?

### Need to change mindset

Although humans are the greatest threat of wild animals, but from curbing demand for products made from wild animals we are also the only hope of them. Around the world, individuals and small groups as well as large organizations, corporations and governments are contributing to the conservation of wildlife and help to protect the endangered species, ensure a safer future for wild animals and for all of us.

No action to protect wild animals is too small, every action has meaning. We cannot recover the lost species, but there are many species are on the verge of extinction; they need attention and immediate action of every human being. Do not abet this problem but solve it - Be attention and protect wildlife on Earth.

## 5. THE ROLE OF BUDDHIST NUNS TO HEALTHCARE AND ENVIRONMENT

The environment is held by Buddhism to respond to the state of human morality. It is not a neutral stage on which humans merely flounce or a sterile container unaffected by human actions. Thus the relationship of all thing, which includes humans and their environment is inter-dependent, nothing can exists by itself, but makes its own contribution to the whole.

The Buddhist ideal for humanity's relationship with animals, plants and landscape is one of complimentary and harmonious co-operation. Forest represents the ideal place for meditation for monks. The ideal of forest-dwelling has an important place in Buddhist thinking and the forest was employed as a meditational device. The famous Indian Buddhist king Asoka is known to have prohibited the burning of forests without reason. The Buddhist values mean that environment should not be over-exploited. The Buddhist ideal in fact, is co-operation with nature, not domination. The interdependent of

human and all other forms of life in a finely balanced chain of being has always been a fundamental Buddhist belief.

The economist E.F Sshumacher says that: "Man is a child of nature and not the master of nature". He describes Buddhist attitude with reference to ecology as follows: "The teaching of the Buddha... enjoins a reverent and non-violent attitude not only to all sentient beings but also with great emphasis to trees..."

In the Vinaya Pitaka, a monk may not cut down a tree or dig the earth because that would destroy small life forms and he must not empty a vessel of water containing. Say, fish onto the ground. In Buddhism, killing or injuring living beings is regarded as both unwholesome and fundamentally immoral. Killing or injuring that is the bad karma, leading to bad evil for the present as well as future. Buddhism sees egoism and greed as the main causes of misery and harm. There is no doubt that environmental disaster is to a great extent due to the insatiable greed of humans.

For Buddhist nuns, they have many differences with women in everyday life, although it is a necessity for every human being, but they simplify the problem foods and clothing in the temple, this is shown through in their lifestyle, which is the 'having few wishes' or 'disinterestedness' (*alobha*) and 'contentment' or 'being satisfied enough' (*santutthi*)". What is the 'having few wishes' and 'contentment'?

In *The Buddha's Last Bequest* sutra, he teaches: "O Bhikkhus, you should know that those having many desires, by reason of their desire for selfish profit, experience much dukkha. Those with few desires, neither desiring nor seeking anything, do not therefore experience such dukkha. Straight-away lessen your desires! Further, in order to obtain all kinds of merit you should practice 'fewness' of desires. Those who desire little, do not indulge in flattery so as to sway another's mind, nor are they led by their desires. Those who practice the diminishing of desires thus achieve a mind of contentment having no cause for either grief or fear, and finding the things they receive are sufficient, never suffer from want. From this cause indeed, (comes) Nibbāna. Such is the meaning of 'having few wishes'.

"O Bhikkhus, if you wish to escape from all kinds of dukkha, you

must see that you are contented. The virtue of contentment is the basis of abundance, happiness, peace and seclusion. Those who are contented are happy even though they have to sleep on the ground. Those who are not contented would not be so though they lived in celestial mansions. Such people feel poor even though they are rich, while those who are contented are rich even in poverty. The former are constantly led by their five desires and are greatly pitied by the contented. Such is the meaning of 'contentment'<sup>1</sup>.

The Buddha did not intend to tighten the aspirations and needs of others. However, the disinterestedness - contentment as a principle to help us to balance life, it is not so crazy passion to satisfy our lust instincts, nor too harsh ascetic. These two kinds of extremes, they are not beneficial but only bring about insecurity and suffering. It is a psychological nuance of life. As the first time the Buddha took the path of libration, which he passed and when renounced these two extremes he became enlightened and recognized the path of "Middle Way". The Middle Way is expounded by the Buddha in the Nikāya sūtta:

"By avoiding these two extremes the Tathāgata has gained knowledge of that middle path which giveth vision, which giveth knowledge, which causeth calm, special knowledge, enlightenment, Nibbāna. And what, monks, is that middle path which giveth vision... Nibbāna? Verily it is the eightfold way, to wit: Right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This, monks, is that middle path which giveth vision, which giveth knowledge, which causeth calm, special knowledge, enlightenment, Nibbāna."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the disinterestedness - contentment principles are as a psychological therapy rather than a dogmatic policy and imposed.

When the Buddha time, the problem of eating and wearing and staying was very concerned by the Buddha, the Saṅgha only went begging once a day to eat, so they had no choice of delicious or bad. This food is considered as a remedy to cure hunger and thirst every

<sup>1</sup> Bhikkhu Khantipālo (trans.), *The Buddha's Last Bequest*, Buddhist Publication Society Kandy, Sri Lanka The Wheel, 2008, p.9.

<sup>2</sup> F. L. Woodward, *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, Vol. V, PTS, London, 1990, p.357.

day. Besides, clothing of each monk did not have a fussy dress or a flashy color, but only three dresses, according to the lay-down of the Buddha. For the residence, most of the monks used to stay in the forest and under the trees for meditation practice, but later the blessings of the Buddhists, many temples were built, but there is not much material for personal enjoyment. Therefore, we can see that the life of the Buddha disciples in general and nuns in particular is so simple in everyday life: eating - wearing - staying. Thus, this is a method to help the monks and nuns to avoid attachment and desire in the world, in other to, it is a message for 'happy life'.

A Buddhist nuns, they do not honor their beauty by exposing themselves to splendid clothes, using cosmetics, or living in luxury villas, but their beauty is exemplified by their simplicity and noble-mind of a person who practices the good deeds through the three fold training: moral, concentration and wisdom (*sīla - samādhi - pañña*) to attain enlightenment, the liberation. However, to achieve this, every monks who always practice and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path (Ariyo aṭṭhanikiko maggo) or 'Middle Way' which is the way-only to free all the defilements or afflictions and bring happiness not only in the present life but also from the suffering of *saṃsāra*.

All the moderation in the daily activities of Buddhist nuns is enough to prove that they are capable of not only ensuring a good environment but also bringing happy and peaceful life for themselves and all beings

I, in position of a Buddhist nun, earnestly call on all women around the world - because you are an important person in the family and society - do every little act from the simple job in ways "eat - live - wear" consciously to contribute humanitarian to avoid pollution and environmental degradation as today, as well as the way you can protect your health, your family, your future child, your life, the ecosystem, the water you use, the air you breathe, the our Earth mother.

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## Endnotes

# FILIAL PIETY IN BUDDHISM AT THE TIME OF GLOBALIZATION: HOW BUDDHISM CAN SAVE THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY?

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by Ludovic Corsini\*

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## INTRODUCTION

At the time of globalization, the concept of family has lost his values. Especially in western countries, for instance more and more family are separated. Also there is lack of interest from people about Christian church which was a pillar regarding the concept of family before. What Buddhism can say about the concept of family? First of all, there is a kind of misconception, due to a lack of understanding of the teaching of Buddha. Actually, many people don't know that the teaching of Buddha focus also about the question of family, relationship and even economy. Buddha didn't teach only the four noble truths. The Buddha's teaching is meant not only for monks in monasteries, but also for ordinary men and women living at home with their families. If we analyze the family concept through Buddhism, we can get some interesting results. This survey aim to demonstrate that Buddhism like other religion as Christian for instance, has also the opportunity to save the concept of family which has been hurt by the globalization. For that, one need a better understanding about the Buddha's teaching. We will observe the concept of filial piety through chinese buddhism first and the relationship between parents and children. What Buddha said about that? Also, we will wondering if the concept of filial piety was only a reality within chinese buddhism or if it was also the case in Indian buddhism?

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\*MA in buddhist studies, International Buddhist College of Thailand

## BUDDHISM AND FILIAL PIETY IN CHINA

Traditional Chinese focus on the family and filial piety. For instance, Wang Hsiang in the Chin era reclined on ice without any clothing so that his bodily warmth would melt a hole in the ice through which he could catch fish for his mother. There are several stories which talk about filial piety, like the one of Wu Meng who slept naked in order to draw the mosquitoes away from his parents. However Buddhism in India, encourages the virtues of the celibate life and it magnified the misery and suffering inherent in family life with its attachment to wife and children. So because of this opposition of characters, when Buddhism was introduced into China where filial piety was the dominant virtue, it was inevitable that opposition would arise. Actually, since the beginning Buddhism was attacked by Chinese as being unfilial. For instance in the chapter 117 of the Taoist work *T'ai-p'ing ching* probably compiled by Yu Chi in the latter half of the Hou Han dynasty, there are four types of nefarious conduct which defile the divine way: 1) unfilial conduct 2) celibacy, resulting in no descendants 3) eating faeces and drinking urine as medicine 4) mendicancy. The Buddhists were the objects of this attack since they were guilty of all the practices enumerated. Also, in the treatise on the settling of doubts, several passage reflecting critics which charged the fact that Buddhists were unfilial because they shaved their heads, and violated the teaching of the *Hsia Ching* or classic on filial piety which stressed the duty to return our body, skin and hair intact to our ancestors<sup>1</sup>. In this way, Buddhists realized that they have to adopt a positive approach and emphasize their own idea about piety to get a favorable hearing among the Chinese. In fact, the goal was to impress the Chinese to demonstrate that they were filial. How? By focusing about sutras in the canon which stress about filial piety and by contending that Buddhism had developed a concept of piety that was superior to that of the Confucians<sup>2</sup>.

There is an example of filial piety in the sutra *Shan-Tzu*. In this sutra, there is a blind couple who had no children and wanted to go live in the forest. But, a Bodhisattva saw a danger and decide to be

1. *Ibid.* p.82.

2. *Ibid.* p.83.

reborn as son in order to serve them. So they decided to go to the forest and Shan-Tzu served them. One day, he was shot by a king. Shan-Tzu said to the king that he killed three persons because the parents were blind. The king was very emotional about his piety and he promised to look after the old couple. As we can see through this sutra, Buddhists try to impress Chinese about their filial piety.<sup>3</sup>

In the sutra Mu-Lien we can also observe the topic of filial piety. Mu-Lien after attaining arhatship wished to repay his parents. He found that his mother reborn as hungry ghost. To do that all monks gathered to express virtues. After the monks asked the Buddha whether or not it was permissible for pious and filial sons in the future to hold such events for the purpose of saving parents and ancestors. The Blessed one answered in the affirmative and urged his followers to celebrate such a festival on the fifteenth days of the seventh month.<sup>4</sup> Buddha said: *“thoses disciples of the Buddha who are filial and obedient to their parents should constantly remember their parents in their thoughts and make offerings to them back to the seventh generation.”* Because of that, this sutra was welcomed by the Chinese and became very popular not only among the Buddhists but also among the common people. We have to notice that such popular story have been preserved in a style of literature known as pien-wen or texts of marvellous events, samples of which have been discovered among the Tun-Huang manuscripts. The presence of such pien-wen as the Mu-Lien pien wen attests to the popularity of this story among the masses. Beside, the popularity of the Yu-lan-p'en ching was accentuated by the commentary of the famous Hua-yen master, Tsung-mi: *“Prince Siddharta did not assume the kingship, but left family and country because he wished to cultivate the way and become enlightened so as to repay the love and benefactions of his parents”*. In this way, Siddharta became a filial son entirely acceptable to the Chinese.<sup>5</sup>

The second contention of the buddhist is that their conception of piety is superior to that of the Confucians. First of all, the Buddhists contended that the Buddha taught the filial son not just

3. *Ibid.* p.85.

4. *Ibid.* p.90.

5. *Ibid.* p.92.

to attend and serve his parents as the Confucians stressed but also to convert the parents to buddhism, so that they would enjoy all the benefits that come from being followers of the Buddha. The chinese buddhist pursued this line of argument further by contending that Buddhists monks aimed not merely at salvation of their parents but at universal salvation for all living creatures. In this role they would be fulfilling what is designated as the ta-hsiao or great filial piety, to be considered for superior of the Confucian piety which is confined to one family and limited to serving only one's parents whereas the Buddhist piety is universal and all-inclusive in that it embraces all living beings. The Confucians according Buddhists think of filial piety entirely in terms of human relations on this earthly level, between parents and children. The Buddhists on the other hand consider piety in terms of something spiritual which extends into the future. When the faithful buddhist converts his parents, he makes it possible for them to attain rebirth in a happy state of existence in one of the buddhist heavens or in nirvana. So they claim, lies the superiority of the buddhist piety over that of the Confucians.<sup>6</sup>

### FILIAL PIETY, UNIQUE FEATURE OF CHINESE BUDDHISM?

Scholars like Gregory Schopen and John Strong pointed out that filial was important to Indian Buddhists as well and therefore could not be regarded as a unique feature of chinese buddhism. We can rely on sutta found in the Pali Nikayas to demonstrate that, especially the *Katannu Sutta* of the *Anguttaranikaya*:

*‘‘Monks one can never repay two persons, I declare. What two? Mother and father. Even if one should carry about his mother on one shoulder and his carry about his father on the other and so doing should live a hundred years, attain a hundred years and if he should support them, anointing them with unguents, kneading, bathing and rubbing their limbs and they meanwhile should even void their excrements upon him, even so could he not repay his parents. Moreover monks, if he should establish his parents in supreme authority, in the absolute rule over this mighty earth abounding in the seven treasures, not even this could he repay his parents. What is the cause for that? Monks parents*

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6. *Ibid.* p.97.

*do much for their children: they bring them up, they nourish them, they introduce them to this world*''.<sup>7</sup>

As we can see with this passage, it's quite explicit that the Buddha taught filial piety. We have to notice that this sutta is also found in the chinese translation of the Ekottagama with the same message but the wording is slightly changed. This suggests that the passage must come from a very old source before the split of buddhism into different schools since it is common to both Theravada and Mahayana. Actually, the chinese translation of the sutra stop here but the Pali version continues with the Buddha's advice on how to repay parents debt.

*''Moreover monks whose incite his unbelieving parents, settles and establishes them in the faith whoso incite his immoral parents, settles and establishes them in morality, whoso incite his stingy parents, settles and establishes them in liberality, whoso incite his foolish parents, settles and establishes them in wisdom, such an one, just by so doing, does repay, does more than repay what is due to his parents''.*<sup>8</sup>

In this passage the Buddha recommend four ways of requiting for the debts to one's parents which are all for spiritual progress: faith, morality, liberality and wisdom. Apart from this suttas, filial piety is also mentioned in many different places in the pali canon. In the *Samyuttanikaya* it says: *''Mother is the good friend dwelling in the home''*.<sup>9</sup>

The Buddha says in *Anguttaranikaya* that there are three duties that have been praised by the wise and good, one of them is supporting parents.

*''Monks, these three things have been enjoined by the wise and good. What three? Charity, going forth (from the home to the homeless life), supporting of mother and father. These are the three duties.''*<sup>10</sup>

Parents are sacred to their children. The Buddha says: *''Parents are called Brahma''* The term denotes the highest and most sacred

7. Guan Xing. (2005). *Filial piety in early buddhism*. Journal of buddhist ethics, volume 12. p.4. <https://hub.hku.hk/bitstream/10722/44176/1/content.pdf>

8. *Ibid.* p.5.

9. *Ibid.* p.7.

10. *Ibid.* p.8.

conception in Indian thought and in it the Buddha include parents. Actually, in good buddhist families at the present time children worship their parents every day, morning and evening. They have to perform certain duties towards their parents according to the noble discipline. They should look after their parents in their old age, should do whatever they have to do on their behalf, should maintain the honour of the family and continue the family tradition, should protect the wealth earned by their parents and perform their funeral rites after their death. Parents in their turn have certain responsibilities towards their children. For instance, they should keep their children away from evil course, should engage them in good and profitable activities, should give them a good education, should marry them into good families and should hand over the property to them in due course.<sup>11</sup>

So the above observation brings us to the fact that filial piety is not a special and particular feature of chinese buddhism. It has also been taught and practiced in Indian buddhism as an important virtue together with other ethical teachings from its very inception. What is special with regard to filial piety in chinese buddhism perhaps is that the chinese Buddhists singled out the Buddhists teachings on filial piety as a special group taught and practiced one generation after the other with a strong emphasis. This is due to the obvious reason: the influence of Confucian emphasis on filial piety which is considered the supreme virtue. On the other hand, it was also to show that buddhism also teach filial piety in order to response to the Confucian accusation of buddhist monks being not filial. As a result of this the *Sutra about the deep kindness of parents and the difficulty of repaying it* and the *Ullambana Sutra* became very popular and were painted and carved in caves such as Dunhuang, Dazhu and other place.<sup>12</sup>

It is quite clear that Buddhism can also delivery a teaching to the family through the concept of filial piety. However, the most important thing is to understand very well the teaching of the Buddha. As we can see through chinese buddhism and Indian

11. Walpola Rahula . *What the Buddha taught*, <http://www.quangduc.com/English/basic/68whatbuddhataught.html>. p.52.

12. Guan Xing *op.cit*.p.16.

buddhism, the Buddha raised the question of the family. Also, there is the relation between husband and wife. Love between husband and wife is considered almost religious or sacred. It is called *sadara-brahmacariya* which means sacred family life. Here too, the significance of the term Brahma should be noted: the highest respect is given to this relationship. Wives and husband should be faithful, respectful and devoted to each other and also they have certain duties towards each other. In this way, the husband should always honour his wife and never wanting in respect to her, he should love her and be faithful to her, should secure her position and comfort, and should please her by presenting her with clothing and jewellery.

The wife in her turn should entertain guests, visitors, friends, relatives and employees, should love and be faithful to her husband, should protect his earnings, should be clever and energetic in all activities.

As we can observe, the lay life with its family and social relations is included in the noble discipline and is within the frame work of the buddhist way of life as the Buddha envisaged it.<sup>13</sup>

## CONCLUSION

As we saw in this essay, Buddhism can say something about the concept of family. The Buddha gave teaching about the concept of filial piety and its quite relevant today. Because of the Globalization, the concept of family has lost his values, especially in western countries. In addition, the Christian church nowadays is not so popular. Formerly, the Christian church was the pillar regarding the concept of the family. In that situation, Buddhism as we saw through chinese buddhism or Indian buddhism is able to teach and save the concept of family through the topic of filial piety. However, it is important to understand very well the teaching of the Buddha, as he taught also about family, relationship and even economy and not only about the question of the mind.

In addition, we have to notice that buddhism made a kind of accommodation to chinese ethics. Actually, it's probably one of the chief reasons why the foreign religion was so reddily accepted by

13. Walpola Rahula, *op.cit*, p.52.

the Chinese despite many features that we were opposed to Chinese culture. To be accepted, the goal was to demonstrate that Buddhism was concerned about filial piety and they did it through the scriptures as we saw with different sutras. In addition, this essay demonstrated through some sutras that filial piety was not only a topic for Chinese but it was also the case in Indian Buddhism. Some scholars have been misunderstood as Dr Guang Xin noticed. Like the way to be accepted by the Chinese society, Buddhism relied on sutras to prove their filial piety and it was the same to prove that filial piety was also a concern for Indian Buddhism. In this way, the sutras as we saw above demonstrated that this question about filial piety has been raised by the Buddha. The difference between the two societies which are Chinese and Indian is that the Chinese society focuses on filial piety generation after generation due to the influence of Confucianism because filial piety is considered as a supreme virtue.

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# BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGICAL TEACHINGS FOR A HARMONIOUS FAMILY IN A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY.

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by H. M. Mahinda Herath

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In the Buddha's teachings, the doctrinal points to monastic as well as household life. Hence, Buddhist teachings are directed towards building a mentally and physically strong family life to sustain the family unit. In this study, the data has been collected from the Sutta Piṭaka and the relevant books and articles related to this field. The method followed for this paper will be to draw a narrative by interpreting the primary source and then to relate it with the secondary sources. The purpose of this paper is to examine the philosophical and ethical teaching on harmonious family life as depicted in Early Buddhism.

In practice Buddhism accommodates and guides the family in multiple and diverse ways by directing them to cultivate and develop the conduct of familial life, and providing a set of moral guidelines to help them make the right moral decision and to refrain from moral transgressions. It also promotes rituals and practices supportive of fertility, procreation, and the productivity and success of the family, helps build strong relationships between husband and wife, parents and children and between living families. Husbands and wives are to cultivate respect, honor, and faithfulness towards one another and parents are also responsible for the Buddhist ethics and practices in their children. Divorce is uncommon for Buddhists and it is not prohibited. Buddhist teachings are directed towards peace, harmony, and a life lived mutuality with one another to avoid woeful circumstances. The canon contain many discourses on sustainable family life: for example, *Siṅgālasutta*

of the *Dīghanikāya*, *Nakulapitusutta* and *Dīghajāṇusutta* of the *Ānguttaranikāya*, *Maṅgalasutta*, *Parābhavasuttam* and *Mettasutta* of the *Khuddakanikāya*, the *Dhammapada* etc. The doctrinal points founded in these discourses guide to the moral and harmonious life of the family members by cultivating good qualities in their minds, such as, loving kindness, compassion, goodwill, tolerance, trustworthiness. These discourses direct to eradicate bad qualities which destroy the harmonious life of the family members, such as, greed, aversion, delusion, anger, hatred. In fact, the mental concomitant of *dhamma*-authority are moral shame (*hiri*) and moral dread (*ottappa*) where these two are lacking, there is no civilization. Hence, the Buddha aptly introduces them as “guardians of the world” (*lokapāladhammā*).

## INTRODUCTION

Buddhist teachings direct the people to spend their lives without suffering, pain, and any negative thoughts and feelings. It means that Buddhist teachings guide to human beings to spend lives with happiness in this life and beyond this life. In this paper, Buddhist psychological teachings for a harmonious family in a sustainable society is going to be discussed.

### Materials and Method:

The data for this study has been collected from the *Sutta Piṭaka* and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* and the relevant books and articles related to this field. The method followed for this paper will be to draw a narrative by interpreting the primary source and then to relate it with the secondary sources.

### Result:

The Buddhist teachings on a harmonious family in a sustainable society leads to solve the problems related to the mental and physical behavior of the human beings in this society.

### DISCUSSION:

The function of mind of the human beings are discussed in the Buddha's teachings with regard to the cultivation of psychological foundation among the family members. Therefore, In practice

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“And how, young man, does the noble disciple protect the six directions? These six directions should be known: mother and father as the east, teachers as the south, spouse and family as the west, friends and colleagues as the north, workers and servants as the lower direction, and ascetics and Brahmans as the upper direction.

“In five ways should a mother and father as the eastern direction be respected by a child: ‘I will support them who supported me; I will do my duty to them; I will maintain the family lineage and tradition; I will be worthy of my inheritance; and I will make donations on behalf of dead ancestors.’

“And, the mother and father so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: by restraining you from wrongdoing, guiding you towards good actions, training you in a profession, supporting the choice of a suitable spouse, and in due time, handing over the inheritance.

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1. Dāghanikāya III. *Sigālovāda Sutta*. London: Pali Text Society. 1911. p 180.

“In this way, the eastern direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.”

Divorce is uncommon for Buddhists and it is not prohibited. Buddhist teachings are directed towards peace, harmony, and a life lived mutuality with one another to avoid woeful circumstances. The canon contain many discourses on sustainable family life: for example, *Singālasutta* of the *Dīghanikāya*, *Nakulapitusutta* and *Dīghajāṇusutta* of the *Anguttaranikāya*, *Maṅgalasutta*, *Parābhavasuttam* and *Mettasutta* of the *Khuddakanikāya*, the *Dhammapada* etc. The doctrinal points founded in these discourses guide to the moral and harmonious life of the family members by cultivating good qualities in their minds, such as, loving kindness, compassion, goodwill, tolerance, trustworthiness. These discourses direct to eradicate bad qualities which destroy the harmonious life of the family members, such as, greed, aversion, delusion, anger, hatred. In fact, the mental concomitant of *dhamma*-authority are moral shame (*hiri*) and moral dread (*ottappa*) where these two are lacking, there is no civilization. Hence, the Buddha aptly introduces them as “guardians of the world” (*lokapāladhammā*).

In this paper, I am going to discuss the one Buddhist teaching in detail with regard to the harmonious family in a sustainable society.

Attachment is common to all human beings and non human beings. Buddhist Teachings lead all beings to a life of peace without conflicts. Although people think that it is possible to live without anger, hatred, and non-violence, they cannot prevent those defilement from arising. But evil and clinging are not overcome by such defilement. There are many psychological tendencies which cause conflict such as

- Attachment to material and non material things,
- Wanting things that give happiness,
- Rejecting things that cause unhappiness,
- Protecting what one has,
- Seeing others enjoying benefits one wishes to have but does not have on account of limited resources,

- Holding on tenaciously to one's views.

In this situation the teachings of the Buddha are very useful to understand the environment around one and to spend one's life peacefully. Not only are those teachings useful but there are teachings that are related to attachment and that are most relevant to living a peaceful life without conflict.

It is mentioned in the *suttas* that victory was by means of the *Dhamma* which is the real victory. Hate is not overcome by hate; by Love (*Metta*) alone is hate appeased and the highest goal of the Buddhist ethical path, is mental peace.

There are two kinds of non human beings that Buddhist myths and legends about Gods present. Gods that are supportive of the Doctrine and those who do not support it. The asurās symbolise evil. In the past there was a fight between the gods and the Titans (asurās). Then Vepacitti, the chief of the Titans, addressed the Titans: 'Sirs, in this battle between the gods and Titans, if the Titans win and the gods are defeated, seize Sakka the king of gods by his neck and binding him with the fivefold bond bring him to my presence, to the city of the Titans.' Sakka the king of gods too addressed the gods: 'Sirs, in this battle between the gods and Titans if the gods win and the Titans are defeated, seize Vepacitti the king of Titans by his neck and binding him with the fivefold bond bring him to my presence, to the Sudhamma assembly. The gods won that battle and the Titans were defeated. Then the gods of the thirty three heavenly abode, binding the neck of Vepacitti, the king of the Titans with the fivefold bond, took him to the presence of Sakka the king of gods, in the Sudhamma assembly. Vepacitti the king of the Titans from the time he was brought to the Sudhamma assembly, his neck bound with the fivefold bond, until he left the hall, was scolding and reviling them. Then Mātali the charioteer said this stanza to Sakka the king of gods: 'Is it out of fear that Sakka was silent, or did you endure the weak one's abusive words? Why did you listen to those humiliating words spoken to your face by Vepacitti?' Sakka replied, 'The foolish make others angry by not restraining their anger. Therefore enduring with patience, the wise protect themselves from the foolish. When you know the other is angry and you restrain yourself mindfully, then you protect yourself from the foolish.'

The *suttas* reveals the characteristics of anger and two occasions for tolerance.

1. The weak one endures sufferings all the time.
2. If a powerful one practices forbearance for the sake of the weaker, then that is the highest tolerance.

People think weakness is strength, when a fool tries to show off his so called strength. But the strong one, protected by the Teachings, does not change his path. He knows that it is evil to make someone react in anger. The person who does not arouse anger in the one who made him angry, wins the battle. He conducts himself for the welfare of both, his own and the others. If someone conducts himself mindfully, knowing the other is angry, he heals the wounds of both his own and the others'. People who are not wise in understanding the teaching will say they are foolish.

Tolerance is greater than fighting with others. It is spiritually and physically more beneficial to overcome the harmful effects of anger, defilements, and stress. Normally the weak puts up with anything all the time because it is difficult for them to get involved in fighting. To practice tolerance is greater than fighting. But it is far nobler to control oneself and practice forbearance for the sake of the weaker. That is the highest restraint. The wise man always controls himself and endures for the sake of the weaker. So his mind and body are very strong. Therefore enduring with patience, the wise keep away from the foolish. The following are a few qualities that are highlighted in the Buddhist teachings.

The wise man does not get into a conflict with the weaker. He behaves mindfully in front of the foolish one who is angry. Whatever the weaker thinks of him, he tolerates because of his principles. In the wise man there is power and strength of the Dhamma, It makes him strong. No one can say that forbearance is not powerful. It is a very most powerful spiritual quality. The wise man behaves for the welfare of both himself and the other. Therefore his unwholesome roots diminish and wholesome thought processes develop. It helps him to attain Nibbàna. So he becomes well and happy and a most pleasing personality. Considering in most powerful spiritual quality, there are a few bad qualities that appear in the teachings of

the Buddha regarding weaker person as follows.

- The foolish man makes others angry, not controlling his anger.
- The fool thinks the other is patient because he is frightened of him.
- He scolds using harsh words when he meets his enemies.
- The foolish one rises into the air as if to overcome the wise one and people say such weakness is strength, when a fool tries to show off his strength in this way but the wise do not say so.

The Buddhist Suttas make the point that we have conflict with others due to anger. This is harmful to oneself. Therefore a quality of a Noble One is not to get angry with those who are angry, not to have hatred towards them or harm them. These are the qualities that help to build a peaceful ethical society.

These qualities are more helpful to build for a harmonious family in a sustainable society. In the same way it is very important fact for a harmonious family in a sustainable society that everyone should act in unity and with common sense. It is obvious from the following points that everyone should look at others with pleasure, compassion and kindness.

1. Unite
2. Enjoy together
3. No arguments
4. Act together just like milk and water
5. Be pleased with each other<sup>2</sup>

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2. V iv. PTS: London. p 351.

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# THE FAMILY FUNCTION IN THE MODERN SOCIETY

## (ACCORDING TO THE THEORY OF FUNCTIONALISM AND BUDDHIST TEACHING)

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by Mahakachchakodiye Pangngasekara

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### INTRODUCTION

In the modern technological era, the human being tries to get all his work done through technological means. As a result, the human qualities have deteriorated and they try to achieve their targets by any means. In such a society, the human relations exist in a very low level and as a result broken social integrity is visible in the present society. Specially, today the evidences of broken relationships are visible in the family unit. Therefore according to functionalist sociology theory and the philosophical teachings of Buddhism, it is believed that the integrity in the society depends on the smooth functioning of the family unit.

Today, the Theory of Functionalism plays a prominent role among all the theories of sociology. It is not only a sociological theory but it is also a strategy to understand the social events and social interactions. So in a functionalist society such social elements help maintain its stability. In understanding the theory of functionalism one has to understand the term functionalism under four headings.

A behavior or an action that might come up in a casual meeting, a ceremony or in a gathering.

The result or the value that might come up as a result of the connection between two or more social variables.

Function as a social responsibility of a person or the professional actions of a person.

Function can be identified as identified actions that may help the existence of the whole.

Hence, a function can be identified as diverse social actions. In short, function means the results of the relationships within the active period of a whole.

In the modern world, Buddhism has a prominent place among other philosophies. Buddhist teachings not only aim at Nibbana as a vehicle for getting rid of *Sansāra* but also it shows humans to initiate and maintain human actions and human relationships in a proper way. Therefore it has its parallels in understanding human relationships and human actions according to functionalism.

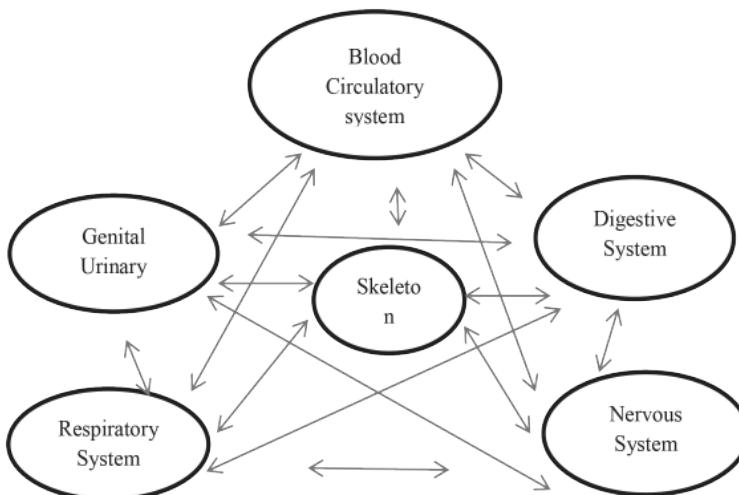
The aim of this study is to understand the teachings of Buddha through functionalist point of view and to see how to get the light of Buddhist teachings to minimize the weaknesses of functionalist theory.

## **THE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FUNCTIONALISM.**

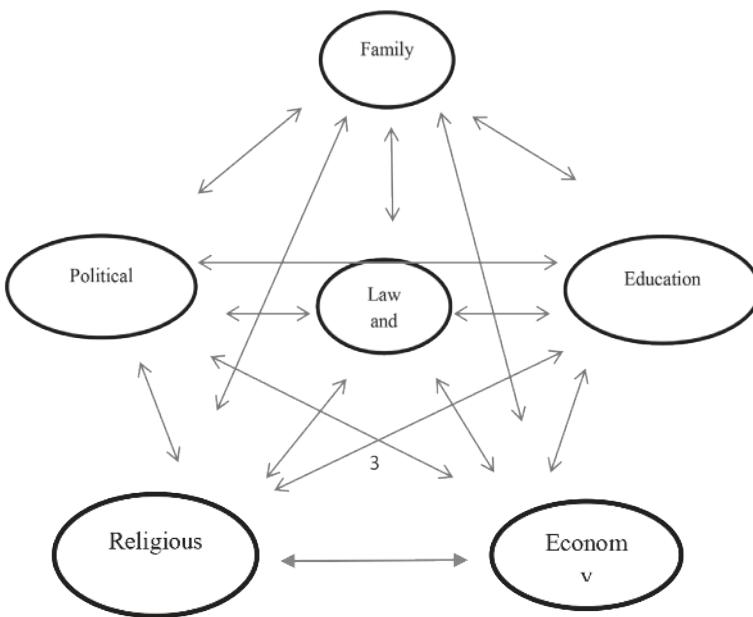
First, functionalism has contributed to the theoretical interpretations of Biology. It has introduced how the elements of the society come together in making of a live mechanism. This idea helped anthropology and sociology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Anthropology has a long lasting relationship with functionalism. Bronislaw Malinowski and A.R. Radcliff Brown, who are considered as two pioneering functionalists in anthropology, have pointed out that social relationships can be understood in the functionalist point of view. Malinowski concentrated on the individualistic functionalism. He believes that a person uses cultural elements for the existence of social culture. This helps unity in the society. The unity in the society results in social existence. In other words, the physical needs like hunger and sex drives can be fulfilled in a socially acceptable way.

The first anthropologists to introduce functionalism is Radcliff

Brown. He refused the individualistic functionalism put forward by Emil Durkheim. His research was based upon pre-individualistic society. His belief was that the social actions are important for the existence of the society. This concept was discussed through organic analogy. This analysis has references to the concept of organic analogy that was put forward by the British Sociologist, Herbert Spencer. According to him organic analogy could be explained through Biological Organic Analogy. The theory explains that human organism is built through cells, organs, systems and actions.



The above system together makes a whole person and such a person is an active person. If one of the systems doesn't function properly, the person will die. In the same way the idea can be applied to society. A person is like a cell in the organism of society. A group of persons can be identified as a part of the body. Such parts get together and make a whole society. The following diagram explains the concept very clearly.



In the diagram above, it is clear that the sub parts of the society are very important for the organizations and the existence of the society. Organic analogy explains that the society is functionally organized. The sociologists have tried to define these issues related to society.

1. How many types of societies are there?
2. How do such society types function?
3. How do new social types emerge?

Although Radcliff Brown has introduced different approaches, they seem to have stood apart from functionalism.

Herbert Spencer, Wilfredo Pareto, Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons are very important figures in sociology. Herbert Spencer emphasized on Organic Analogy. He explained about biological living organisms and sociological living organisms. At the same time Wilfred Pareto believed that society depends on social balance. This concept is still valid even today

Even modern day sociologists accept the concept. Emile Durkheim looked at functionalism in a different point of view. He pointed out that a society has its own social reality and the

members of the society are a part of the social reality. The people in the society are influenced by social elements in their attitudes and feelings. He introduces two ways of defining such social elements.

1. To identify the sources and the causes that determines a social element.
2. To analyze how social elements contribute in building up social actions.

Hence it is clear that social elements help very much in the smooth functioning of the society. It is clear that the theory of functionalism has developed through Biology, Anthropology and Sociology.

Sociology has provided a very strong basis for the development and expansion of functionalism. In sociology, the society is considered as one whole and it concentrates on social balance and social integration. Structural Functionalism can be understood in three ways.

1. What type of structure is available in the society and can it be identified?
2. What functions develop in the society?
3. What functions are active in the social structure?

The functionalists have attempted to define function in many ways. Among them Marian Lewis has defined functionalism in two different ways.

1. Eufunction.
2. Dysfunction.

Eufunction refers to the actions and practices that are accepted by the society. They help smooth functioning of the society. Dysfunctions are those actions that should be eliminated from the society. These are negative social actions. The actions result in malfunctioning of the society.

Robert K Merton's classification is important in trying to define the development of functionalism. According to his theory function can be categorized in two major ways.

1. Manifest function
2. Latent function.

Manifest functions mean the results of the actions that are achieved through proper means while latent functions are situations where the results are not visible as a result of social functions. Therefore functionalism has developed as a theory of sociology, a scientific method and a reflection. Functionalist viewpoints have been utilized in studying social events. Here it was possible to identify several social functions.

1. Family and functional reflection
2. Marriage and functional reflection
3. Social stratification and functional reflection
4. Mental behavior and functional reflection

The above social actions and related functionalist ideas were interpreted through Buddhist philosophy. Accordingly special attention was made in studying Buddhist teachings in related to functionalism.

## **BUDDHIST TEACHING AND FAMILY FUNCTION**

Family is an institution that is under research in the subject of sociology. Family is the main economic unit of the society at the same time. Family is the smallest unit in the society. The word “Family” has been derived to from the Latin term “Famulus” which means servant. The family consists of a Husband, wife and children. They serve each other but today there are many definitions to the term family.

According to Murdock the family means, “The Family is a group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and one or more children own or adopted of the sexually cohabitating adults”

According to the definition ‘Family means a social group with common living, economic corporation, and reproduction.’ This includes two adults (parents) who maintain socially acceptable

sexual relationships and having their own or adopted children.

Earnest Bergs and Henry Locks define the family as follows. "Family is a group of persons united by ties of marriage blood or adoption constituting a single household interacting and intercommunicating with each other in their respective social roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister creating a common culture".

Both the above definitions share some common characteristics in family.

1. Common living
2. Economic corporation
3. Reproduction
4. Education (Socialization)

So it is clear that family is a very important unit. According to functionalism family is a result of social actions. So the functions of family are a very essential in the existence of the social system. Functionalists believe that society will not exist without a family. A society without family unit is not an organized society.

The Buddhist teachings on family match with the ideas of the functionalists family is a result of the human evolutions. Somewhere in the process of evolution there had been a need for a family. According to *Aggañña Sutta* family was established to spend civilized living away from the wild beasts. This family developed gradually by itself. There are instances where members belong to three generations living together at the same time.

The husband, wife, husband's father and mother and the children belong to three generations. This is called extended family system according to sociology.

In *Uggaha Sutta*, the close relations and daughters- in -law are mentioned. Buddhist teachings emphasize that the family servants also should be considered as family members because the family is the smallest social unit. The good existence of the family in the society results in the good existence of the society at large.

According to functionalism, the performances of the family are

very important for the existence of the social system. The members of the family must be aware about their duties and responsibilities of the family. *Dhīgha Nikāya* in *Singālowāda Sutta* identifies the duties and responsibilities of the husband towards wife. The responsibilities of the husband to wife are listed under five headings.

1. Respect (sammānanāya)
2. Non humiliation (anavamānanāya)
3. Noninvolvement of extramarital relationships (anicarīyāya)
4. Management of the family (issariyavossaggena)
5. Provision of ornaments and dresses (alaṅkārānuppadānena)

If the members of a family is aware and perform as mentioned above the family bonds will strengthen. The females should not be discriminated based on gender in a progressive society. Some instances of gender discrimination against women can be seen seven in the modern society. They are insulted as weak personalities. This should be kept away from the society.

Lord Buddha has pointed out in His teachings that the husband should respect the wife. Also Buddhism has imposed restrictions on extra marital relationships. Also, the women should be allowed to play the management role of the family and she should be facilitated.

In the modern society, the woman is as busy and involved as the husband. So both wife and husband should share responsibilities of the family. Naturally, the woman prefers beauty and she likes beautiful clothes and ornaments. So the husband has to make her happy to make the family bonds strong.

Buddhist teachings emphasize some duties of a wife towards the husband in *Singālowāda Sutta*. They are:

1. Proper management of the family (susamvihitakammantā)
2. Treating the guests (saṅgahitaparijanā)
3. No extra marital relationships (anicarīnī)
4. Protecting the wealth (sambhatañca anurakkhati)
5. To be industrious in all occasions (dakkhā ca hoti analasā sabbakiccesu)

The above facts emphasize that proper fulfilling of duties of the wife help smooth running of the family and society. The above five duties of the wife are very important. Then the full attention of the husband can be paid in the development of the family. So, it is clear that the functioning of the family is an important aspect of social existence. In the study it was possible to identify the functions of the family in the light of Buddhist teachings.

When the family relationships are analyzed in the functionalist point of view the parent children relationships are as important as husband wife relationships. Anybody is born to this world as a member of the family. Child has a right to be fed by parents. The parents are bound to feed the child. *Singālowāda Sutta* has emphasized five important responsibilities of parents towards children.

1. To keep children away from sin (Pāpā nivārenti)
2. To send children on the correct path (kalyāṇe nivesenti)
3. To educate children (sippaṁ sikkhāpenti)
4. To give them in marriage at right time (patirūpena dārena saṁyojenti)
5. To give properties at the right time (samaye dāyajjam niyyādenti)

The first two factors emphasize education and cultural behaviors. Basically, the children get knowledge and understanding for existence and the ethics to behave as a good human being from the parents. The third one refers to the professional education for future living. The fourth factor emphasizes reproduction and indulging in proper sexual behaviors. The fifth factor lays the foundation for economic stability in the family.

The children also have some duties towards their parents. According to *Singālowāda Sutta*, five duties have been highlighted as duties of children towards their parents.

1. Feeding the parents (bhato nesaṁ bharissāmi)
2. Assisting the parents in their occupations (kiccaṁ nesaṁ karissāmi)
3. Proper behavior (kulavamsaṁ ṭhapessāmi)

4. Utilizing dowry usefully (dāyajjam paṭipajjāmi)
5. Offering alms to invoke blessings on the dead (atha ca pana petānam kālaṅkatānam dakkhiṇam anuppadassāmīti)

The children can perform the above duties to make parents happy. By doing these things the children cannot meet the expectations of the parents. When the parents are happy they bless the children.

According to *Singālowāda Sutta*, there are some other institutions that strengthen the social existence. Friends and clergy are two such institutions. Friendship is a very wide concept in Buddhism. The society can be made cultural by understanding the friends and the enemy. *Chakkawatti Sihanāda Sutta* emphasizes the responsibilities of the government for the development of the family.

Because of the unequal distribution of wealth some poor people start staling. The robbers informed the king that they involved in robberies as they had no way for living. This means that the unemployment results in social deterioration. The king provides wealth to the robber to start any enterprises for living. This proves that when the economy of the family is strong, there are no barriers for social development.

It is now clear that the human interactions are very important for the existence of the society. Specially the functions among people directly connect with the social integrity. The functions of the family as a unit of the society are very important for the development of the society. The broken family relationships and unorganized families have resulted in the rising crime rate in the society today. It is clear that the number of divorces is on the increase in the present society. The sociologists after research have expressed that functions of the family are very important for strengthening family bonds. At the same time the Buddhist teachings have similar points of view regarding the functions of the family. The responsibilities towards each other in the family should be performed correctly. So in this study it is made clear that physical and spiritual development can be achieved by following the guidance that is given in Buddhist teachings.

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# FOOD CONSUMPTION TECHNIQUES REVEALED IN BUDDHISM AS A PARADIGM FOR SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE

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by Ven. Panahaduwe Yasassi Thera\*

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## ABSTRACT

Failures and shortages of food consumption has become a globally recognized challenge in the present scenario. Dictionary of Nutrition and Food Technology defines food as—any substance taken into the body for the purpose of providing nourishment. However, factors such as satisfying social needs, achieving psychological ends, and satisfying hunger, more than nutritional needs, govern the selection and consumption of food. When food is selected carefully, they can provide all of the essential nutrients needed for overall functioning of the human body. In this context, food is essential to provide energy to provide structural components for building and repairing body tissues, and to regulate body processes. This modern idea of food consumption is accepted even in Buddhism concerning food as the first factor in the world (Sabbe sattā āharaṭṭhitikā). The Buddha also points out that hunger is the most serious sickness in the world (Jighacchāparamā rogā). Even though food consumption is considered a main requirement of human, it has created many problems throughout the world due to over and senseless consumption. While certain people are over consuming food certain individuals are facing the problem of mal-nutrition. The most considerable problem that has emerged due

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\* Doctor, Senior Lecturer

Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka

to over consumption and improper nutrition is the increasing of deadly diseases such as diabetes, cancers, heart issues, excessive fat etc. Therefore, the main objective of this research paper is to study the Buddhist techniques of food consumption to overcome health problems that emerges due to improper food consumption by introducing sustainable healthcare. Four types of food such as *Kabalinkārāhara*, *Phassāhāra*, *Manosañcetanāhāra* and *Viññāhāra* elaborated in *Āhāra* sutta (AN), food as *asitha* (eatable food), *pita* (drinkable food), *chayata* (absorbable food) and *sayitha* (tastily food), the advice by the Buddha to king Kosala who consumed too much rice per portion, the value of proper consuming of food in *Dronapana* sutta (SN), the importance of mindful food consumption by identifying its proper quantity (*bhōjane mattaññutā*) are emphasized in Buddhism. *Araka* sutta (AN) states that one who lives hundred years should consume only seventy two thousand food portions which consist of neglected portions in certain circumstances such as sickness, babyhood, anger, feeling sad, retreat days and scarcity of food. *Bhesajjhakkhandaka* states that ten types of flesh should not be consumed while *Sekhiya* precepts illustrate eleven techniques that should be practiced in consuming food with mindful consumption. All the above factors emphasize that only either one or maximum two portions of food should be consumed per day to maintain sustainable healthcare.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Health problems have become a globally threatened issue throughout the modern world. The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 2001). Hence, health includes mental, physical and social functioning, which are closely associated and interdependent. There is evidence that mental and physical illnesses may accompany, follow or precede one another as well as evidence indicating that mental disorders increase the risk of physical illness and vice versa. This clearly emphasizes the nature of sustainable healthcare which covers physical wellbeing as well as mental or psychological wellbeing.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

General objective of the research is to examine the utility of Buddhist teachings on food consumption for sustainable healthcare and the specific objectives are to identify inter-relationship between physical and mental health, to apply Buddhist teachings for sustainable healthcare and to study Buddhist techniques for consumption of food.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

Extraction of data from the primary and secondary sources written on relevant field is the methodology adopted in this research.

## 4. CLASSIFICATION OF HEALTH

According to the reports of WHO, health is divided into two as (i) Mental Health and (ii) Physical Health. Although the meaning of illness is primarily associated with the physical body, there is evidence in the Pāli Canon that the Buddha clearly distinguished two kinds of illness: physical illness (*kāyiko rogo*) and mental illness (*cetasiko rogo*) (AN. 4.157 WPB. p. 522). While physical illness is classified and attributed to different causes. There is a list of eight physical diseases according to their causes: (1) caused by bile (*pittasamutthānā*), (2) caused by phlegm (*semhasamutthānā*), (3) caused by wind (*vātasamutthānā*), (4) caused by an imbalance of the humors (*sannipātikā*), (5) caused by the change of weather, seasons (*utupariṇāmajā*), (6) caused by a lack of care of the body (*visamaparihārajā*), (7) external, sudden attack (*opakkamika*) and (8) caused by the result of kamma (*kammavipākajā*). (Mahaniddesa Pāli\_i 10, 13-14, 281, pages.) The Buddha seems to attribute mental illness to just one cause. That is the manifestation of mental defilements in the mind of beings. This is emphasized in *Anguttara Nikāya* as follows. “*Bhikkhūs, those beings who admit to be freed from mental illness even for a moment are difficult to find in the world except those who have destroyed the contaminants*” (AN. 4.157 WPB. p. 522).

According to Buddhist Psychotherapy, the most influential fact is the mental and spiritual health. Apart from that, Buddhism emphasizes that the other influential factors for the existence of

the individual are physical, environmental, economic, political and social situations. These factors directly influence both mental and physical health.

## 5. INTRODUCTION TO DISEASES

Many synonyms have been used to denote the diseases such as ill, ill health, sickness, malady, ailment, ail and disorders. Each and every individual of the world has been affected by any diseases from birth. Although some diseases can be cured, it is difficult to prevent some sicknesses. In the *Pāli* Canon there are various words used to describe what in English is called “illness,” “disease,” “sickness.” (The following seven words are canonical: *roga* (D. i 10), *ābādha* (D. ii 84), *ātaṅka* (Sn. 427), *byādhi* (D. ii 245), *gelaññā* (D. ii 84), *rujā* (Ap. ii 138), *akalla* (T. ii 428). Also found in the Pali literature are *amaya*, *gada*; see (Sad. ii 11) Among these, the most commonly used words are *roga*, *byādhi* and *ābādha*. Since there is a discourse where the Buddha utilizes the word *roga* is used to describe different kinds of illnesses. The word *roga*, which is derived from a root that has the meaning of breaking up and dissolution, is explained as that which afflicts either the major or minor constituents of the body.

### 5.1 Hunger: The Most Dangerous Disease

It is mentioned in the *Dhammapada*, that good health is the greatest wealth that one could possess. (Ārogya Paramā Lābhā., 76 p.) In most of the Buddha’s teachings, it is clearly mentioned that health plays an important role in one’s life. Buddha points out in the *Dhammapada* that hunger is the most serious illness. (*Jigcā paramā rōgā - samkārā paramā dukhā -Etan Katvā yathā Bhūtam - Nibbānam paramam sukham...*, *Dhammapada*, *Sukha Vagga*, 7<sup>th</sup> stanza). Therefore it has further pointed out in Buddhism that it should be cured first and foremost before any other things. That is why the Buddha advised that the first thing in the world is food and all beings depend on food. (*Sabbe sattā āhāratthitikā*, *Khuddhaka Nikāya I*, *Khuddaka Patha*, 4 p.) Therefore it is obvious that firstly we should get treatment to that illness. The following statement also points out the importance of curing the first illness. “This body depends on food. It is unable to live without food.” (*Ayam kāyo āhāratthitiko*, *āhāram patīcca titthati*, *anāhāro no titthati*; SN

5-1, Bojjanga samyutta, p. 204). There is no burning fire equal to hunger (*Natti khudāsamāñ aggi*) and there is no pain equal to hunger (*Khudāsamāñ natthi narassa aññāñ*). Not only the Buddha advised his disciples in such a way but also showed that quality through experience and example in his life. One day when a poor man who was in hungry was searching his lost bull since morning to the mid-day arrived at the monastery to listen to *Dhamma*. By knowing the situation of the poor person with divine power, the Buddha advised the *Bhikkhūs* to give him food. *Girimānanda Sutta* also states a number of physical sicknesses suffered by the human beings in their life. According to the sutta, this body is the source of much pain and many dangers; for all sorts of afflictions arise in this body, that is to say, eye-disease, ear-disease, nose-disease, tongue-disease, body-disease, headache, mumps, mouth-disease, tooth-ache, coughs, asthma, colds, heart-burn, fever, stomach-ache, fainting, bloody-flux, gripes, cholera, leprosy, boils, plague, consumption, falling-sickness, itch, ringworm, small-pox, scab, pustule, jaundice, diabetes, piles, cancer, fistula; and afflictions due to bile, due to phlegm, due to wind, consisting in conflict of the humours, reduced by change of climate, by unaccustomed activity, by violence, by Kamma-result; and by cold, by heat, by hunger, by thirst, by excrement, and urine. Out of these hunger and thirst are also considered the diseases (AN. 10.60 WPB. p.1411) (... *pittasamuñṭhānā ābādhā semhasamuñṭhānā ābādhā vātasamuñṭhānā ābādhā sannipātikā ābādhā utupariñāmajā ābādhā visamaparihārajā ābādhā opakkamikā ābādhā kammavipākajā ābādhā sītam uñham jighacchā pipāsā uccāro passāvo'ti).*

Brahmaṇa Dhammika Sutta of Sutta Nipāta points out those three types of diseases that existed in ancient time such as the greediness (icca), the hunger (anasana) and getting old age (Jarā). ( tayo roga pure ahu..icca anasanam jara, pashunanca samarambha, atthanautu magamu.. Sutta Nipata, Brahmana Dhammika Sutta, 86 P). Furthermore Araka sutta of Aṅguttara Nikāya too states hunger and thirst as two major diseases that existed in the period of the ascetic Araka. AN 7, Araka Sutta, 476 p.) Moreover, Milindapañha states that seven factors cause untimely death of the individual as hunger, thirsty, bitten by snakes, having poisoning, affecting fire,

water and weapons. (Milindapañha p.59 )

## 5.2 Remedies for Eliminating Hunger

According to Buddhism, in order to cure the disease of hunger one must consume food. The Pali term which refers to food, nutriment and support is Āhāra. The term āhāra derives from the Sanskrit root ā-har, to fetch, to bring, near to convey to oneself which action is followed by absorption and assimilation. Furthermore, food is defined in the Dictionary of Nutrition and Food Technology as follows.

*“Any substance taken into the body for the purpose of providing nourishment. However, factors such as satisfying social needs, achieving psychological/ ends, and satisfying hunger, more than nutritional needs, govern the selection and consumption of foods. When food is selected carefully, they can provide all of the essential nutrients needed for normal functioning of all human body. In this content, foods necessary to provide energy to provide structural components for building and repairing body tissues and to regulate body processes”* ( Bender E Arnold, 1960. 93 p).

In Buddhism food is considered the first requirement for the subsistence of the being. (kathamo eka dhammo). The reply to that question is all the lives subsist on food (*sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*). It is one thing that must be thoroughly understood (*eko dhammo abhiññeyyo*), right kind of disgust (*eka dhamme sammā nibbindamāno*), the right kind of fading interest in the world (*sammā virajjamāno*), be rightly releases (*sammā vimuccamāno*), rightly see the limit and restrictions (*sammā pariyantadassāvī*) and rightly comprehend the meaning of the things (*sammadattham abhisamecca*), in this very existence he would make end to all conflicts (dittevadhamme dukkhassa antakaro hoti). In a nutshell, the answer to all above questions and statements is “all that lives subsists on food (*sabbe sattā aharaṭṭhitikā*).

According to Buddhism food conveys the energy for subsistence at all levels, material, biological, volitional and intellectual. It is mentioned few objectives of the consumption of food.

- for the maintenance of beings (*bhūtanaṁ va sattānaṁ thitiya*)
- for the assistance of those seeking birth (*sambhavesinam va*

*anuggahaya) S II, 11.*

- In the Puttamamsa sutta (SN II 98-100) the Buddha taught his disciples how to regard the four kinds of nutriment. Material food should be taken concerning following objectives.
  - not for pleasure (*davaya*)
  - not for indulgence (*madaya*)
  - not for personal charm (*mandanaya*)
  - not for comeliness (*vibhusanaya*).

Accordingly, the Buddha emphasized that one must always introspect the above objectives before taking meal as found in Patimokkha.

### 5.3 Classification of Food

Buddhism points out three types of food as follows.

*Kabalinkārāhāra* – material food which sustains the body. It means either solid and grass food.

The commentator Dhammapala classifies the edible food into four as follows.

Asita – eatable food

Pita – drinkable food

Chayata – absorbable food

Sayita food – testable food

*Manosāñcetanāhāra* – volitional food which sustains the three forms of becoming.

1. Action (*kamma*) is formed
2. Consciousness (*viññāna*) which foods and supports.
3. Supports and conditions both mind and body (*viññāna paccayā nāma rūpa*). For all the three it is said that craving is the base (*tañhā nidāna*), craving the origin (*tañhā samudaya*), craving the producer (*tañhā jatika*), craving the source (*tañhā pabhava*)

*Viññāṇāhāra* – consciousness sustenance. It means the condition to renewed becoming, to rebirth in the future.

*Phassāhāra* – The nutriment on which the senses thrive should be, regarded as a cow with a sore hide would regard all contact when contact is regarded in this way, three kinds of feelings would come into existence due to this food.

*Sukha vedanā* – pleasurable feelings

*Dukkha vedanā* – painful feelings

*Adukkhamasukha vedanā* – indifferent feelings

Here the Buddha declared that “*tisu vedanasu parinnatasu ariyasāvakassa natthi kinci uttarim karaniyanti vadāmi...* Further, Buddhism mentions that out of the four types of nutriments the most important is the food which is will of mind (*manosancetanāhāra*).

#### 5.4 Consumption of Immaterial Food

Food is not only a material phenomenon but also an active process. It is also a condition of support of two kinds of food. The relation of edible food to the body and the relation of immaterial support co-existing states of mind and body. Buddhism points out that food is also essential to the attainment of Nibbāna. (*āhāra samudaya rūpa samudayo āhara nirodha rupanirodho, ayam eva ariyo attāngikomaggo rūpa nirodhagāmini patipadā...* (SN III 59 p)

Once the Buddha pointed out that proper food consumption would lead even to the attainment of emancipation. “*bhojane mattaññutā hoti*” knowing quantity of food consumed causes to the emancipation.

#### 5.5 Balance of Food Consumption for Sustainable Healthcare

Due to the immoderateness of food consumption, a number of social issues in the present context has emerged. Some people are suffering due to the mal-nutrition while certain individuals are suffered due to the over-nutrition. It is recorded that many people die due to starvation because of poverty which has become a major challenge in undeveloped and under-developing countries. On the other hand, some people are affected by many diseases such as high fat, cholesterol, diabetic, etc. due to the over consumption.

It is clear that both mal-nutrition and over-nutrition have become social issues which challenge to the sustainable healthcare. Therefore, Buddhism points out many strategies that can be utilized to maintain sustainable healthcare overcoming such issues through the consumption of food. The ideal monk is described as controlled in deed and word restrained in food for the stomach. (*Kāyagutto vacigutto āhare udare yatho...*) S I 172) with small tight stomach, moderate in food, easily satisfied and undisturbed (*unudaro mitaharo appicchassa alolupo...* (Ibid 707) A point of some interest which has been pointed out by ven. Buddhaghosa in Visuddhismagga is that nutriment (ahara) taken on one day gives sustenance lasting for seven days. Also the nutritive essence (dibba oja) sustains for one or two months.

The Buddhist attitude on the consumption of the food is clearly depicted in the Araka sutta of Anguttara Nikaya. In the sutta Buddha pointed out that “for today, monks, he who lives long lives but a hundred years or a little or more. One who lives hundred years will live three hundred seasons including hundred for each season winter, summer and rain. These three hundred seasons consist of one thousand and two hundred months, two thousand and four hundred fortnights, and thirty six thousand days. Then the Buddha says one who lives such number of days will consume seventy two thousand meals each twenty four thousand each season. Also He pointed out that this includes period of mothers’ milk and foodless times. Here by foodless times is meant due to agitation, grieve, ill, fasting and not getting any food.. etc.

Accordingly, it is obvious that by the time of the Buddha there was a norm among the people that they had taken maximum two meals a day, sometimes one meal a day. This emphasizes the Buddhist perspective on the consumption of food. (AN 7, Mahavagga, Araka Sutta, 92-94 pages PTS)

According to Dronapana Sutta of Saṃyutta Nikāya once king Kosala had eaten a bucket measure of rice and curries. Then while still full huffing and puffing the king approached the Buddha who understood the situation advised the king informing the most appropriate way of having food. “When a man is always mindful, knowing moderation in the food he eats diminish the ailments

and he digests foods slowly guarding his life. manussa yo sada sathimato – mattam janato laddha bhojane, tanu tassa bhavanti vedanam – sanikam jeerati ayu halayanti.. (SN I, 176 p) Accordingly, it is clear how Buddha advised disciples to consume food knowing its limitations or quantity. If anyone consumes by practising such strategies, he definitely will continue a simply life without any physical or mental issue.

Buddhism as a moderate religion neither accepted nor rejected the consumption of meat. In certain circumstances, the Buddha has pointed out that one should refrain from having ten types of meat or flesh such as human flesh, elephant flesh, cat flesh, dog flesh, snake flesh, lion flesh, leopards or panthers flesh, tiger flesh, bear and hyenas flesh. (Mahāvagga Pali, Bhesajjhakkhandaka, 230 p PTS). The reason may be the consumption of these flesh may cause the arising of deadly diseases.

Furthermore, Buddhism which persuades individual to have one or two meal a day advises to have not only heavy food but also light food. Once the Buddha advised the monks to consume eight kinds of drinks such as mango drink, rose apple drink, plantain drink, banana drink, Pharusaka drink, juice of all fruits except corn, juice of all leaves except vegetable, juice of all flowers except liquorice, sugar-cane juice, etc. (Mahāvagga Pali, Bhesajjhakkhandaka, 339 p PTS) That is very useful to maintain a light body which leads to sustainable healthcare.

Consuming of gruel or conjey also permitted by the Buddha which leads to maintain a healthy life for the sake of having a sustainable healthcare. He has allowed monks to drink gruel for stomach ache and related diseases. Bhesajjhakkhandaka of Mahāvagga Pali points out ten advantages that can be gained through the consumption of gruel. Increasing life span, increasing beauty, maintaining an easy life, upgrading physical strength, increasing intelligence, ceasing hunger, keeping off thirsty, regulating winds, cleansing the bladder, digesting raw remnants of food are some of the advantages of consuming gruel. “*Dasa ime brahma, anisamsa yaguyo yagum dento ayum deti. vannam deti. sukham deti. balam deti. patibhanam deti. yagu pita khudam ppatahanti. pipasam pativiranti. vatham anulometi. vatthim soveti, amavasesam paceti* (Ibid, 302p).

It is mentioned in the Alabbaniyathana sutta of Anguttara Nikāya that the reasons for not digesting food. The king Munda whose dear and beloved queen Badra died, he neither bathed nor anointed himself, nor partook of any food, nor engaged in any affairs but day and night clung in grief to her body as though a swoon. After the king who approached venerable Narada, he taught him the discourse preached by the Buddha saying that due to weeping, lamenting, crying, grief and pain food that takes would not be digested. (*Bhattampi nacchadeyya*) (A.N 5, 50 p, PTS).

## 5.6 Ethical Behavior & Sustainable Healthcare

According to Sekhiya, the way and the ethical behavior related to the consumption of food leads to sustainable healthcare. Ethical basis of the consumption of food has become a crucial situation in the present scenario. Improper behavior of the consumption of food leads even to deadly diseases. Therefore, it is recommended in Sekhiya to carry out certain strategies that can be applied to overcome such issues.

- Should not open the mouth before reaching food.
- Should not insert palm into the mouth when taking meal.
- Should not talk while keeping food in the mouth.
- Should not throw food into the mouth.
- Should not eat the portions of rice by breaking from the mouth.
- Should not take food by throwing the hand.
- Should not take food by putting the tongue out of the mouth.
- Should not eat food by making sounds.
- Should not eat food by lapping the palm.
- Should not take food by lapping the bowl or plate.
- Should not take food by lapping lips.
- Should not take cup or glass with the impure hand with leavings.
- Should not eat food by keeping inside the jaw just as monkeys.

- Should not take food by walking.
- Should not look at the others plates.
- Should not eat food from upper side of the plate.
- Should not cover curries from rice.

## CONCLUSION

Food consumption has become a globally recognized challenge in the present scenario. Food is essential to provide energy to provide structural components for building and repairing body tissues, and to regulate body processes. This modern idea of food consumption is accepted even in Buddhism concerning food as the first factor in the world (*Sabbe sattā āharatthiṭikā*). The Buddha also emphasizes that hunger is the most serious sickness in the world (*Jighacchāparamā rogā*). Food consumption has created many problems throughout the world due to over and senseless consumption. While certain people are over consuming food certain individuals are facing the problem of mal-nutrition. The most considerable problem that has emerged due to over consumption and improper nutrition is the increase of deadly diseases. Buddhist techniques of food consumption to overcome health problems should be adopted to maintain sustainable healthcare. Mindful food consumption, proper quantity (*bhojane mattaññutā*), moderateness in consumption and sensible and proper techniques in food consumption are emphasized in Buddhism to maintain sustainable healthcare.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AN:	Aṅguttara Nikāya
SN:	Samyutta Nikaya
DP:	Dhammapada
P:	page
PTS:	Pali Text Society
WPB:	Wisdom Publication, Boston

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# RELEVANCE OF PADMA AND BUDDHA IN MANAGEMENT OF MODERN LIFE STYLE DISEASES

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by **Kishor Bapu Londhe, Dr. Pandurang Tukaram Gaikwad**

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## ABSTRACT

With life style changes in rapidly moving industrialized world, many life style related disease incidences are increasing like diabetes, obesity and hypertension. We explored the Buddha's teaching and references to the medical conditions from Buddhist literature in the context of modern medical lifestyle disease. We found "Eat half, walk double, laugh triple and love without measures" is just not a proverb but a key teaching of Buddha for management of lifestyle disease. Also the scared flower "Lotus (Nelumbo Nucifera)" symbolizing Buddha enlightenment is having many medicinal properties. Lotus (Nelumbo Nucifera) is considered sacred in many religions and its various parts are consumed as food in many parts of the world. Its medicinal properties are described in various literature but evidence in human for medicinal benefit as not been described yet. Combining the Buddha's teachings and medicinal properties of Lotus (Nelumbo Nucifera) we devised medical therapy and herein presenting case series of two patients benefited for diabetes mellitus and hypertension each. Low calorie intake and exercise along with daily ingestion of lotus flower concoction with other ayurvedic herbs reduced hypertension medication by half and showed better sugar control. Medicinal uses of Lotus and its parts should be explored further in humans for the management of lifestyle disease.

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\* Doctor, Gaikwad Hospital, Pune, India. 411028

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Lotus (*Nelumbo Nucifera* Gaertn) is revered as a sacred religious flower in Buddhism and Hindu religion. Lotus flower is legendary in folklore and religious mythology. Lotus is the national flower of India and in Japan, Moriyama City's official flower is the sacred lotus. The lotus flower is also the national flower of Vietnam and Vietnam's Airline has golden lotus logo.

The sacred lotus belongs to the family Nymphaeaceae that consists of 5 genera and 50 species of aquatic rhizomatous herbs, which are cosmopolitan in distribution. The leaves arise directly from the rhizome, alternate, long petiolate, hastate, or peltate and floating. The flowers are solitary, axillary, and often showy. The fruits are spongy, often conical, and full of seeds, which are small and scanty. Nymphaeaceae are known for sesquiterpene alkaloids content. The following species found in the Asia-Pacific are considered to be medicinal: *Brasenia schreberi* J.F. Gmel., *Euryale ferox* Salisb., *Nelumbo nucifera* Gaertn., *Nuphar japonicum* DC., *Nymphaea sellata* Willd., and *Nymphaea pubescens* Willd.

The sacred lotus has scientific name as *Nelumbo Nucifera* Gaertn. which is derived from Sri Lankan nelumbu (*Nelumbo*) and Latin *nucifera* (nut-bearing). *Nelumbo Nucifera* Gaertn is an aquatic herb that grows in ponds, pools, rivers, and lakes in China, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Burma, Nepal, New Guinea, Pakistan, India, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, and the Pacific Islands. It is called with different names in different regions and different languages like Karambeulma in Arebic, Padung Ma in Burmese, Lian in Chinese, Fève d'Egypte in French, Indische Lotosblume in German, Patma in Indonesia, Kamalin Hindi, Padam in Sanskrit, Hasu in Japanese, Yeongeon in Korean, Bunga Padam in Malaysia, Liñgaling in Philippines, Nelum in Sri Lanka, Lian in Taiwan, Bua-Luang in Thailand, Pa Dma Dkar Po in Tibetan and Hoa Sen in Vietnam. It grows wild and is cultivated in the mud of shallow, sheltered waters of lakes, ponds and inundated rice fields in the tropics and subtropics. *Nelumbo nucifera* is a perennial, rhizomatous, aquatic herb with the horizontal creeping rhizomes and roots buried in the mud.

Here we first review the chemical and medicinal properties of the lotus to better understand the medicinal effects we found in our patients.

## 2. CHEMICAL PROPERTIES OF LOTUS

The evidence currently available suggests the family Nymphaeaceae to be an exciting source of cytotoxic, antiviral, and immunomodulating quinolizidine alkaloids. Many researcher have done detail study of different parts of lotus to explore different medicinal properties associated with them. The extracts of lotus rhizomes, seeds, flowers and leaves had been reported to have varied therapeutic potential. Several bioactive compounds had been derived from these plant parts belonging to different chemical groups, including alkaloids, flavonoids, glycosides, triterpenoid, vitamins, etc., which all imparting their own therapeutic impact.

Total flavonoid content was highest in the leaves 2.06 E3mg/100 g FW, followed by flower petals, stamens, plumule 402.9–496 mg/100 g FW and seed kernel the lowest 0.67 mg/100 g FW (Li et al. 2014). Thirty-three flavonoids were found in lotus flowers, seeds and leaves: myricetin 3-O-galactoside (f1), luteolin 8-C- $\beta$ -dglucopyranoside (orientin) (f2), luteolin 6-C- $\beta$ -dglucopyranoside (isoorientin) (f3), myricetin 3-O-glucuronide (f4), myricetin 3-O-glucoside (f5), quercetin 3-O-arabinopyranosyl-(1  $\rightarrow$  2) galactopyranoside (f6), apigenin 8-C- $\beta$ -dglucopyranoside (vitexin) (f7), quercetin 3-O- $\alpha$ -l-rhamnopyranosyl-(1  $\rightarrow$  6)- $\beta$ -d-glucopyranoside (rutin) (f8), apigenin 6-C- $\beta$ -d-glucopyranoside (isovitexin) (f9), quercetin 3-O- $\beta$ -d-galactopyranoside (hyperoside) (f10), quercetin 3-Oglucuronide (f11), quercetin 3-O- $\beta$ -d-glucopyranoside (isoquercitrin) (f12), kaempferol 3-O-galactoside (f13), kaempferol 3-O-robinobioside (f14), isorhamnetin 3-O-rutinoside (f15), kaempferol 3-O- $\beta$ -d-glucopyranoside (f16), kaempferol 3-O-glucuronide (f17), isorhamnetin 3-O- $\beta$ -dglucopyranoside (f18), isorhamnetin 3-O-glucuronide (f19), syringetin 3-O-glucuronide (f20), apigenin di-C-glucoside (f21), 6-C-glucosyl-8-Cpentosyl luteolin (f22), 6-C-pentosyl-8-C-glucosyl luteolin (f23), 6-C-glucosyl-8-C-xylosyl apigenin (f24), 6-C-xylosyl-8-C-glucosyl apigenin (f25), 6-C-glucosyl-8-C-arabinosyl apigenin (schaftoside)

(f26), 6-C-arabinosyl-8-Cglucosyl apigenin (isoschaftoside) (f27), quercetin 3-O-neohesperidoside (f28), 6-C-glucosyl-8-C-rhamnosyl apigenin (f29), luteolin 7-O-rutinoside (f30), 6-C-rhamnosyl-8-C-glucosyl apigenin (f31), isorhamnetin 3-O-neohesperidoside (f32) and diosmetin 7-O-rutinoside (f33). Flower petals and stamens possessed the highest amounts of kaempferol glycoside, specially f11 and f17. Additionally f14 and f16 were the predominant compounds in petals. The petals contained f1, f4, f5, f7, f8, f10, f11, f14, f15, f16, f17, f18 and f19. The stamens contained f1, f4, f5, f7, f8, f10, f11, f12, f14, f15, f16, f17, f18 and f19. The pistil and tori contained f1, f4, f6, f8, f14, f15, f16, f17, f18 and f19. The flower stalks contained f1, f4, f6, f8, f10, f15, f18 and f19; the leaves contained f1, f4, f6, f11, f15, f16, f18 and f20. Lotus seed pods contained f4, f6, f10, f11, f14, f15, f16, f17, f18 and f19; seed coats contained f2, f3, f4, f7, f9, f11, f12, f13, f14, f15, f16, f17, f18 and f19. The seed kernels contained f9, f11, f12, f15, f16 and f18. Thirteen C-glycosyl flavones (newly isolated C-glycosides, f7, f9, f21, f22, f23, f24, f25, f26, f27, f29 and f31) and six O-glycosides (newly isolated O-glycosides, f20, f28, f30, f32 and f33) within plumules were detected.

Alkaloids were found in the leaves, petiole and cotyledons in the fruit but not in the edible rhizome (Tomita et al. 1961). All the alkaloids found were in a free state. Roemerine and nuciferine were isolated as the tertiary, non-phenolic bases, and a new base, nornuciferine, as the tertiary phenolic base, from the leaves. Roemerine and nornuciferine were isolated from the petiole but not nuciferine. After methanolic extraction, the phenolic content of each part of the plant, determined in terms of gallic acid equivalents per g of dried extract (GAE, mg/g extract), was found to follow the order of leaves (177.7) > deembryonated seeds (92.7) > stamens (83.4) > embryos (41.0) > rhizomes (21.6). For the flavonoid contents, determined as mg of (+)-catechin equivalent per g of dried extract (CE, mg/g extract), the order was leaves (125.6) > deembryonated seeds (82.9) > stamens (50.3) > embryos (18.9) > rhizomes (8.5) (Jung et al. 2008). Bisbenzylisoquinoline alkaloids liensinine (Chao et al. 1962) and isoliensinine were isolated from lotus embryo (Tomita et al. 1964). Pronuciferin is a benzylisoquinoline was isolated

from lotus cotyledons (Bernauer 1964). Isoliensinine alkaloid, was isolated from Formosan “Lien Tze Hsin,” lotus seed embryo (Tomita et al. 1965). Liensinine was found to be the main alkaloid in Japanese lotus embryo, besides a small amount of neferine (Furukawa 1965). Astragalin, rutin, isoquercetin, nuciferine, dauricine, isoliensinine and neferine were identified in lotus rhizomes (Zhao et al. 2014). The ethanol extracts of seeds from China (Hubei), raw rhizomes from Japan (Nigata) and dried rhizomes from Korea (Siheung) had the greatest specific alkaloid content. The first alkaloid isolated from lotus leaves was nuciferine (Arthur and Cheung 1959). The following major alkaloids nuciferine, nornuciferine, caaverine, armepavine, norarmepavine, isoliensinine and pronuciferine were found in *Nelumbo nucifera* leaves (Do et al. 2013). N-methylasimilobine, a potent acetylcholinesterase (AChE) inhibitor, along with two weakly active aporphine alkaloids, nuciferine and nornuciferine, was isolated from *Nelumbo nucifera* leaves (Yang et al. 2012). Major anti-inflammatory compounds identified from lotus leaves were nuciferine, O-nornuciferine, hirsutrin, hyperin, luteoloside and roemerine (Zhou et al. 2013a). Polyphenols found in Korean traditional lotus liquor (Yunyupju) made from lotus blossom and leaves were identified as catechin, rutin, quercitrin, myricetin and quercetin (Lee et al. 2005).

### 3. PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF LOTUS

Pharmacological studies have demonstrated that lotus herb exhibits various pharmacological effects, such as anti-hyperlipidaemia, antiobesity, antioxidant, anti-HIV, antimicrobial and antihypoglycaemic activities.

The antioxidant property has been demonstrated with various in vitro experiments of lotus seeds (Wu et al. 2003), leaf (Anitha and Arunkumar 2012, Kim et al. 2011), rhizome (Khattak et al. 2009), flower (Jung et al. 2003, Hyun et al. 2006, Phonkot et al. 2008), lotus liquor (Lee et al. 2005). The anticancer activity of lotus has been demonstrated in vitro with various experiments. Oxoushinsunine, a cytotoxic alkaloid isolated from lotus receptacle, showed tumour inhibitory activity against nasopharynx carcinoma (Yang et al. 1972). Luteolin, alphitolic acid, maslinic acid and N-methylasimilobine,

isolated from lotus leaves, exhibited considerable cytotoxicity against four human cancer A549 (non-small cell lung adenocarcinoma), SK-OV-3 (ovarian cancer), SK-MEL-2 (skin melanoma) and HCT15 (colon cancer) cell lines in-vitro (Kim et al. 2009). Neferine demonstrated a potent growth-inhibitory effect on human osteosarcoma cells, but not on nonneoplastic human osteoblast cells (Zhang et al. 2012). Neferine, from lotus embryo, induced autophagy in A549 human lung adenocarcinoma epithelial cells by inhibiting PI3K/Akt/mTOR pathway and reactive oxygen species hypergeneration (Poornima et al. 2013b); also exert cytotoxicity on liver cancer cells HepG2 (Poornima et al. 2013a). Compounds liriodenine, nuciferine, nornuciferine, armepavine, N-norarmepavine and N-methylcoclaurine, from lotus rhizome, showed significant cytotoxic activities against HL-60 carcinoma cell line (Duan et al. 2013).

The antihyperlipidemic, anticholesterolemic and antiobesity activity of various parts of lotus has been proved in vitro and in vivo. Nuciferine, from lotus leaves, dose-dependently inhibited the synthesis of cholesterol and cholesterol esterase activity in Bel-7402 cells and augmented low-density lipoprotein receptor expression to reduce blood lipid levels (Han et al. 2008). Studies showed that incubation of preadipocytes with lotus leaf extract solution significantly decreased triglyceride accumulation during adipogenesis without affecting cell viability. Compared to controls, adipocytes incubated with lotus leaf extract solution exhibited a significant increase in lipolysis activity (Siegner et al. 2010). Lotus petals also has an effect on inhibition of lipid storage in adipocytes and on increasing lipolysis (Velusami et al. 2013). Lotus leaf extracts which contained abundant amounts of quercetin glycosides significantly elevated plasma high density lipoprotein-cholesterol (HDLC) in mice (Ohara et al. 2013). A decoction of *Nelumbo nucifera* was tested and found to cause a reduction of triglyceride and cholesterol in mice (La Cour et al. 1995) in hamsters (Kim et al. 2005), in rabbit (Lee et al. 2010) and in rats (Lee and Lee 2011), (Xie et al. 2011). Liu et al. (2013) demonstrated that lotus leaf flavonoids (NLF) could effectively ameliorate hyperlipidaemia and inhibit the key enzymes related to type 2 diabetes mellitus in high-

fat diet-induced hyperlipidaemic rats. In-vitro treatment with lotus ethanol seed extract resulted in inhibition of lipid accumulation and decreased expression of peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma (PPAR $\gamma$ ), glucose transporter 4 (GLUT4) and leptin in cultured human adipocytes (You et al. 2014a). In addition, the extract had a beneficial effect, reducing adipose tissue weights, ameliorating blood lipid profile and modulating serum leptin level in rats fed a high-fat diet. Administration of ethanol lotus rhizome extract resulted in a significant decrease in relative weights of adipose tissues in rats fed a high-fat diet (You et al. 2014b).

The antidiabetic activity of various parts of lotus has been found in vitro and in vivo. Lotus rhizome extract exhibited hypoglycaemic effect in streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats (Mukherjee et al. 1995). The extract (300 mg/kg and 600 mg/kg, orally) caused a reduction of blood glucose levels in streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats by 53 % and 55 %, respectively, at the end of 12 h. The crude protein of lotus seeds caused a significant decrease (44.80 %) in the blood glucose level of diabetic albino rats after 2 weeks of treatment (Ibrahim and El-Eraqy 1996). Oral administration of lotus rhizome ethanolic extract significantly markedly reduced the blood sugar level of normal, glucose-fed hyperglycaemic and streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats, when compared with control animals (Mukherjee et al. 1997). The extract improved glucose tolerance and potentiated the action of exogenously injected insulin in normal rats. Streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats treated with lotus seed ash at a concentration of 200 mg/kg body weight orally for 30 days exhibited significant hypoglycaemic activity (Mani et al. 2010). Studies by Pan et al. (2009) demonstrated that neferine, from lotus embryo, had effects similar to rosiglitazone in significantly decreasing fasting blood glucose, insulin, triglycerides and tumour necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ) and enhancing insulin sensitivity in insulin-resistant rats. In-vivo studies showed that Lotus leaf methanolic extract possessed the ability to regulate blood glucose levels in fasted normal mice and high-fat diet-induced diabetic mice. Of its active constituents, quercetin did not affect insulin secretion, but catechin significantly and dose dependently enhanced insulin secretion. Orally administered catechin significantly reversed the

glucose intolerance in high-fat diet-induced diabetic mice (Huang et al. 2011).

Among several compounds extracted from antidiabetic plants, nuciferine from *N. nucifera* was found to stimulate insulin secretion in isolated beta INS-1E cells by blocking potassium-adenosine triphosphate channels, thus contributing to the antidiabetic effects of *Nelumbo nucifera* (Nguyen et al. 2012). Studies showed that lotus plumule polysaccharide (LPPS) administration on non-obese diabetic (NOD) female mice for 15 weeks significantly increased pancreatic islet cell numbers and slightly enhanced the basal insulin secretion ability compared to the control group (Liao and Lin 2013). LPPS administration improved serum lipid profiles in the diabetic mice via relatively increasing serum high-density lipoprotein-cholesterol, but decreasing low-density lipoprotein-cholesterol and total cholesterol levels. All four lotus leaf compounds, 2-hydroxy-1-methoxyaporphine, pronuciferine, nuciferine and roemerine, showed the effects of improving insulin-stimulated glucose consumption in differentiated 3T3-L1 adipocytes compared with the control group (Ma et al. 2014). 2-hydroxy-1-methoxyaporphine and pronuciferine exhibited the most potent glucose consumption-stimulatory activity at the concentration of 2 µg/mL.

The lotus imparts its neurological effects by anxiolytic property and cognitive enhancing activities. Neferine and diazepam showed anti-anxiety effects in the elevated plus maze test. The results suggested that neferine had several central nervous system effects and that neferine may participate in the efficacy of the sedative effects of embryos of *N. nucifera* seeds. Results of studies showed that lotus seed extract ameliorated scopolamine-induced amnesia in rats by inhibiting acetylcholinesterase activity and inducing choline acetyltransferase expression (Oh et al. 2009). The antidepressant effect was found to be mediated by serotonin1A (5-HT1A) receptor and was likely to be linked to serotonergic neurotransmission (Sugimoto et al. 2010). The data suggested that *N. nucifera* stamen-derived compounds could potentially exert their primary anti-Alzheimer effects as AChE inhibitors rather than BACE1 inhibitors (Jung et al. 2010b). The methanol extract of *N. nucifera* rhizome elicited in significant improvements of memory functions and

neurogenesis in the dentate gyrus of Wistar rats (Yang et al. 2008). Neferine, from lotus embryo, exerted significant improvement in cognitive impairment in scopolamine-induced amnesia animal models and moderate inhibitory activities in cholinesterases (ChEs) and  $\beta$ -site. APP cleaving enzyme 1 (BACE1) assays (Jung et al. 2010a).

#### 4. BUDDHISM MEDITATION AND MEDICINE

According to history, Buddha first taught medicine to his sangha and group of followers. As described in the 'Dulwa-smangzhi', 'Vinaya sutra on medicine' Buddha asked monks to visit physicians and to carry medicines with them. Buddha later taught the 'Gyud-shi', which are the four medical tantras at the foundation of the Tibetan medical system. The focus of the Tibetan medical system on the direct healing of the patient's body/mind with the help of the appropriate medicines, diet, behavior and therapies in order to pacify the result of mental negative passions. "Eat half, walk double, laugh triple and love without measures" is a famous tibetian proverb which implicates the importance of therapies aside medicine. Somatic medicine is not enough to uproot the causes of disease; therefore Buddha taught the method to become aware of and to pacify negative emotions. In Buddhism, when the mind is liberated from the cage of ignorance and delusion, it is considered to be 'free from disease'. Buddha laid down the foundation of the wisdom which can be developed through concentration meditation and moral discipline based on love and compassion. Various stories about methods of healings are described in the Jataka tales and in the Vinaya sutra of the Buddhist tripitaka.

Mediation also plays a important role as part of medicine in Buddhism.  $\bar{A}n\bar{a}p\bar{a}nasati$ , meaning "mindfulness of breathing" is a form of Buddhist meditation originally taught by Gautama Buddha in several suttas including the  $\bar{A}n\bar{a}p\bar{a}nasati$  Sutta. Anapanasati is to feel the sensations caused by the movements of the breath in the body as is practiced in the context of mindfulness meditation. The  $\bar{A}n\bar{a}p\bar{a}nasati$  Sutta specifically describes mindfulness of inhalation and exhalation, as a part of paying attention to one's body in quietude, and recommends the practice of anapanasati meditation

as a means of cultivating the Seven Factors of Enlightenment: sati (mindfulness), dhamma vicaya (analysis), viriya (persistence), which leads to pīti (rapture), then to passaddhi (serenity), which in turn leads to samadhi (concentration) and then to upekkhā (equanimity).

Maitri bhavana or cultivation of a mind of unconditional love and benevolence for all sentient beings constitutes an important spiritual practice in Buddhism which ultimately culminates in identification of oneself with all beings. While mindful meditation develops observation of awareness, maitri bhavana cultivates empathetic awareness of all beings. Empathy is the ability to share others' emotions, thoughts or feelings by imaginatively stepping into their world. In doing so, we realise their concerns, fears, anger, hopes and passions as our own, thereby changing our attitude and behaviour towards them. This transforms our negative emotions into positive ones suffused with loving care, concern, benevolence and well-wishing. It is easier to develop maître bhavana for self, friends or a neutral person. However, the real challenge lies in developing this for an enemy, with whom we are in conflict. We need to probe and ponder over their good qualities and analyse why they do what they do. We should be ready to ask for an apology, if it is called for, or forgive.

## 1. CASES

### Case 1:

A 47 year old man suffering type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) for last 8 years on oral hypoglycemic medication Metformin 2,500 mg, Glimepiride 4 mg, and recently started Sitagliptin 100 mg per day visited clinic in July 2015 with uncontrolled blood sugar, HbA1C 8.9%. His height is 150cm, and weight was 64 kg with BMI 28.4. He had central obesity with thinning of limbs. His complaints were depression, irritation, lack of concentration and uncontrolled hunger. On physical examination, blood pressure was 120/80mm Hg, no significant findings in cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal system, respiratory system, central nervous system and peripheral nervous system.

As the patient was on medication with maximum dose of

metformin per day i.e. 2,500 mg per day as per standard treatment protocol injectable insulin should be initiated. But patient was not willing to initiate the injectable insulin therapy. Patient was having sedentary office work style with lack of exercise, so we advised him to change his life style by adding exercise and change in eating habits. At first he was advised to start walking and later progressively start resistance exercise. In the daily meals we asked him to increase the amount of crunchy cruciferous vegetables, which will help in filling the stomach and reducing the calorie intake. He taught him the techniques of Anapanasati and maitri bhavana and asked him to follow it daily. As additional medication, we asked him to take a dry powder mixture (1 gm twice a day) of lotus plant, Aegle marmelos (Bael), Rose, Basil (Tulsi), Cinnamomum, cardamomum, indian gooseberry (amala), moringa, java plum (jamun).

The patient's blood sugar were regularly monitored and it was significantly controlled. Following table 1 shows the HbA1C levels in the patient. Patient weight has reduced to 58 kg in Dec 2016 and is constant after that with decreased central obesity.

Table 1. HbA1C of the patient

No.	Date (MM/YYYY)	HbA1C (%)
1.	07/2015	8.9%
2.	10/2015	5.6%
3.	03/2016	5.9%
4.	06/2016	6.1%
5.	12/2016	6.1%
6.	12/2017	5.8%

### Case 2:

A 68 yrs old lady with known case of hypertension came to the clinic with puffy face, fatigue and breathlessness during climbing stairs. She was medication Telmisartan 40mg once per day. The lady lives on 5<sup>th</sup> floor of building with no lift, hence no physical activity.

On examination, blood pressure was 138/86 mm of Hg, heart sounds normal, respiratory normal.

To the current medication Hydrochlorothiazide 12.5 mg was

added once per day. She was encouraged to start in room exercise with physiotherapy rubber band. She was taught the techniques of Anapanasati and maitri bhavana and asked her to follow it daily. As additional medication, we asked her to take a dry powder mixture (1 gm twice a day) of lotus plant, Aegle marmelos (Bael), Rose, Basil (Tulsi), Cinnamomum, cardamomum, indian gooseberry (amala), moringa, java plum (jamun).

After one month treatment her face swelling was completely disappeared and she was able to get down her building stairs without any fatigue. Then she was advised to do regular walking exercise and slowly start climbing the stairs with breaks. Within 3 months she can climb the 5<sup>th</sup> floor stairs daily without any fatigue or breathlessness. Her blood pressure was 100/74 mm Hg. With continuous daily blood pressure monitoring the blood pressure was with same range. She was advised to reduce the dose of Telmisartan to 20 mg and Hydrochlorothiazide 6.25 mg once per day. Her blood pressure daily monitored and it was average 110/74 mm Hg.

## 5. DISCUSSION

In case 1 the blood sugar was significantly controlled and the HbA1C was below 6 within 3 months intervention with low calorie intake, exercise, mixture lotus and other herbs and meditation. In case 2 the blood pressure was well controlled and the general wellbeing of patient improved. Stress plays major role in developing hypertension and meditation helps relieving it. As we discussed the properties of lotus it has high amount of flavonoids and antidiabetic effect. It also has anti-obesity effect with reduced central obesity of the patient. Mental stress is one of the major factor in developing the life style disease like diabetes, obesity and hypertension. Clinically significant depression is present in one of every four people with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). Depression increases the risk of the development of T2DM and the subsequent risks of hyperglycemia, insulin resistance, and micro- and macrovascular complications (Semenkovich K, et al, 2015). The prevalence rate of depression is nearly twice as high in people with type 2 diabetes (19.1%, range 6.5-33% vs. 10.7%, range 3.8-19.4%) compared to those without. Women with diabetes and also women without

diabetes experience a higher prevalence of depression than men (Roy T and Lloyd CE, 2012).

Anapanasati and maitri bhavana are powerful tool to control mind to over depression. Maitri bhavana makes us harmonious with the world, transcending hatred and intolerance. It makes us magnetic and radiant with love, benevolence, serenity, warmth and calmness, developing concentration, contentment, insight and joy of self-expansion in meditation and life. It is indeed a panacea for all major world problems today.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The medicinal properties of lotus should be explored in large human population as controlled clinical trials, as currently no data from clinical trial is available.

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# BUDDHIST APPROACH TO HARMONIOUS FAMILIES, HEALTH CARE AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

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by Nilima Chawhan\*

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## ABSTRACT

Buddhism is an eastern religion that is both spiritual and philosophical. Its core tenets offer universal insight into the human condition and suggest ways in which we might achieve balance and tranquility in our own life, several Buddhist practices promote physical and mental health. Today's society is complicated with many problems as health, disputes of families and another social issues etc. Every family's need to know how to maintain the relationship between parents and children, Husband and wives, friends and friends, owners and servants etc. If we look after their affairs and we maintain the lineage and tradition of our family, according to 'Singālovāda Sutta' Buddha focus on all relationship who cultivate our societies. Buddha also gave ten kinds of human duties which bring happiness to the community. Also he gave ten elements of the Buddhist faith that we believe promote a healthy and happy life.

Now a days as long as people do not follow their respective social ethical practices, there will not become the best society. Peoples health as well as family's important part of our society. If the peoples are dealt with other peoples to good intention, then society become a healthy and sustain. To grow and to be valuable society, everyone has individual responsibility to apply the Buddhist social ethics.

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\*Associate Professor, Doctor. Samrat Ashok Subharti School of Buddhist Studies, Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut (U.P.), India

It provides the whole society to develop mental as well as social requirement. Buddha's some of ethical doctrines concerning with society and it is applicable and harmonious in this modern era with regard to the social problems etc. In my paper I will elaborate on how to solve all these social problems, how to spared and develop the harmony into the families as well as to the societies through Buddha's teaching for their sustainability.

**2500** years ago Buddha said about equality, freedom, justice and peace. The concept of peace is a central idea of Buddhism. Buddhism teaches how to achieve a good and happy life by reaching the essence of his doctrine. Leading a Buddhist way of life is to maintain harmonious, untroubled good life, which consists of harmonious life and peaceful way of living for all.

Both, women and men collectively take on the responsibility of their family. If the women are the backbone of the household and handle all domestic work, the men take care of the financial needs and provisions for the family. If this responsibility towards their family, is not understood by either of them then domestic conflict arises which escalates with time. The creation of such situations damages not just, marital harmony and family health, but is instrumental in harming the social image of the family in society and bringing disrepute. So it becomes imperative to avoid family conflict and to try to increase happiness and peace in family values.

Buddha states and explains how to develop relationship between man to man, family to family and society to society. If every person's understand their responsibilities towards families, then society become a peaceful and healthy. Buddha gave several sermons to householders how to maintain the harmony and peace in the family. If family lives in peace then society become a peaceful too. In the families the husband and the wife's relationship plays a central role. If both gives respect to each other than several problems are solved. Buddha says on the relationship about husbands and wives to the householders as follows:-

The Buddha explained in the Sigala Sutta that one should respect one's wife in the following ways.

Praise her and pay due respect to her;

Do not despise or look down upon her;  
 Be faithful to her;  
 Honor her and share household affair  
 Present her with dresses and ornaments, if possible.

## 1. THE WIFE RESPECTS HER HUSBAND BY

Performing household duties to the best of her ability;  
 Providing hospitality to relatives and friends of her husband;  
 Being faithful to her husband;  
 Paying full attention to all her duties and responsibility;  
 Looking after valuables and property of the family<sup>1</sup>.

This is a very famous discourse in Buddhist cultural tradition that Lord Buddha taught to Sigala a wealthy young man at Rajgruha. Social principles and guide lines are specified in this sutta. It also describes how to live happily not only in this life but after life also.

## 2. DUTIES OF HOUSEHOLDERS

Buddha says that there are four ways for a husband and wife, of living together. A vile man lives with a vile woman, a vile man lives with a goddess, a god lives with a vile woman and a god lives with a goddess. If one kills, steals, commits impurity, lies and indulges in fermented liquor, one is wicked and sinful, with his/her heart possessed by avarice he/she lives the life of a householder and abuses and reviles virtuous people. This is the qualities of vile man and women. He/She abstains from killing, thieving, impurity, lying and indulgence in fermented liquor, is virtuous and good behavior, with mind freed from taints of avarice they live the family life and abuse not nor revile virtuous people<sup>2</sup>. This is quality of god and goddess (good man and women). If god lives with a goddess family will be peaceful and happy. This is success of their married life and next generation would follow this good conduct for their happy life. This is very easily known as who one is progressive or declining. Because this is a basic foundation of healthy relationship between men and women.

Once Anathpindika a disciple of Lord Buddha asked to him happiness of householders. He asked the Lord to explain the secret of the householder's happiness. The Lord said that the first is the happiness of possession. A householder is possessed of wealth, justly and righteously of the arm, and earned by sweat (of the brow). At the thought 'I am possessed of wealth justly gained' he gains happiness. Second is the happiness of enjoyment. A householder is possessed of wealth justly and righteously acquired by great industry amassed by strength of the arm, and earned by sweat (of the brow), enjoys his wealth and performs acts of merit. Thus at the thought 'I am doing meritorious deeds with my wealth which was justly gained' and so forth he gains happiness. Third is the happiness of freedom from debt. A householder owes no one any debt great or small, thus he gains happiness, thus he at the thought of 'I owe no men anything' and so forth, gains happiness. Fourth is the happiness of blamelessness. A householder, who is endowed with blameless action of body, blameless speech and blameless thinking, gains happiness of blamelessness<sup>3</sup>. These four kinds of happiness are constantly obtainable by the householder, if he strives for them. So householders need to make good resolutions for a pure and happy life.

Anathapindika, Jeevaka and Sinha Senapati they all was disciples of Lord Buddha. These three persons was very useful for the societies. They provides their services to the society a to make it happy and peaceful. Anathpindika was a businessman, jeevaka was a doctor and sinhasenapati was disciple of Nigantha . They all wanted to become bhikkhus but Buddha did not make them bhikkhu as they wanted. Buddha wanted they remain free to the service for society as well as patients who was sick and wounded. Here Buddhas intention is very clear. He feels that they are the pillars of the society and if they are free to perform their duties then they can be more useful for the society.

Harmony, friendship and compassion Buddha says, are part of the ten duties and bring peace and happiness to the family and thus the society.

### 3. TEN KINDS OF HUMAN DUTIES WHICH BRING HAPPINESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Minister to the need of parents;

Attend to the welfare of children;

Cherish and look after wives;

Maintain mutual understanding and strengthen married life;

Attend to the needs of relatives;

Respect elders;

Remember religious and spiritual people, inviting them to the home and making offering to generate good merit for happiness now and in the future.

Remember departed friends and relatives by performing meritorious deeds and transferring the merit to them.

Live by the civil and moral codes of the society.

10 Lead a righteous way of life.

Buddha gave the example of vajjins about their equality, democracy and brotherhood. He says that whenever vajjins hold true to the seven conditions and observe them they may be expected not to decline but to prosper. The vajjins could not be overcome by the king of Magadha because they believed in democracy and giving honor and esteem to elders, they protected their women and girls, they were accepting a righteous way of life, they were giving respect and following religion so the vajjins prospered<sup>4</sup>. Based on these qualities social system on which depends family as well as social strength develops. This is all related to our life and society so we need to maintain the relationship with each other and to create less of conflict. We as a human being observe these virtues, peaceful family life and happiness will be achieved.

Today's people are too independent and selfish to be ruled with gloved hands. This need not be so. A great deal has been spoken and written about the Buddha's concern for the wellbeing of all living beings and humankind in particular. While the greater part of his ministry was devoted to the edification of those who

renounced the worldly life, he was most free with his advice to uplift the condition of the householder. Some of the best known sutras are devoted to the development of social harmony and are addressed to royalty as well as common folk. In the *AggannaSutta*<sup>5</sup> for example the Buddha speaks in mythical terms about the origin of society and the causes of inequality; in the *Kasibharadvaja Sutta*<sup>6</sup> he distinguishes between labour for spiritual progress and labour to gain material wealth . Here Buddha's intention is very clear. We have already explained about duties of labour and duties of householders. He said very clearly if everyone do their duties then they can bring peace of family life when Buddha explain that if everyone understand individuals duties towards society after that Kasibharadvaja understand the importance of peace and harmony. In the *SigalovadaSutta* he explains the duties and responsibilities of the different groups which comprise society –parents, children, husbands, wives, employers, employees ,teachers and religious person. He speaks of the benefits to be derived when every member of a community knows what is expected of him or her and sincerely fulfills his or her duties. In the *Vyagghapajja Sutta*<sup>7</sup> he describe the benefits that can be gained by the householder even without going forth. In one section of the *Mahaparinibbanasutta* the Buddha explains the factors which are necessary for good government and national unity. In the *Mangala Sutta*<sup>8</sup> he enumerates good social behavior which obstructs misery and woe to the individual and thereby the community. It is clearly mentioned that abstinence and avoidance of bad deeds and having respect , being humble, being satisfied and greatful of everyone . If he is not satisfaction then domestic violence and conflict is increases. So only the dialogue can ends the misunderstanding between families and peoples. If the people reduce their unlimited desires, hatred and ignorance we can maintain peaceful negotiations between two families.

#### 4. HEALTHY BUDDHIST TEACHINGS FOR EVERYONE

Everyone, no matter their religious beliefs or lifestyle, can achieve a positive change in their life by contemplating the advice offered by Buddhism. At health Fitness Revolution we believe that a balanced spiritual life is crucial to good living. Here are 10 elements of the Buddhist faith that we believe promote a healthy and happy life.

Respect for themselves, people, and nature: The Buddhist 'Path of Life' offers prescriptions for the ethical and spiritual well-being of each individual urges them to develop wisdom and have compassion for all life forms.

Weave healthy behavior into life patterns, meditate: the Path is Eightfold and defined as Right View, Thought, Speech, Actions, Livelihood, Meditation, Effort and Mindfulness. Suffering with a practical and realistic Path involving meditation, practice and study leading to Enlightenment or Realized Buddhahood, are all intrinsic to Buddhism. The health benefits of meditation are consistently proven by science-making this ritual a fundamental health aspect within the Buddhist traditions.

**Diet:** Some Buddhists are vegetarian or vegan due to the 1st precept and respect for other sentient beings. Some may have taken a precept which involves eating only one main meal a day. This is usually eaten before midday. However, it is not uncommon to find non-vegetarian Buddhists as the Buddha asked his monks to eat whatever they got.

**Fasting:** An individual's health allowing, in all schools and traditions a one-day fast is recommended on New Moon and Full Moon days. There are also other festival days such as Buddha's birthday, death day, his enlightenment, the first Sermon and others.

**Caution when using medication and drugs:** Some Buddhists will be wary, and will wish to know the effects, of any drug which alters their emotional state or clarity of mind due to the 5th precept. However, the idea of the 5th precept is so that individuals do not perform harmful acts whilst intoxicated.

**Be physical:** There is no question - scientifically or energetically - that a healthy, fit, flexible body is a great complement and support to the pursuit of a healthy, fit flexible mind. In Tibetan Buddhism one of the main meditation practices involves doing physical prostrations. In Vajrayana traditions all practitioners - monks and lay ones - need to complete at least 100,000 prostrations as a part of preliminary practices. According to his website, the Dalai Lama takes daily exercise, including walking on a treadmill if it's too wet to walk outside.

Buddha taught the importance of a strong body: saying “To keep the body in good health is a duty... otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.”

Living in the now, decreasing stress in your life: Buddha preaches “Do not dwell on the past; do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.”

You set your own limitations, break them: According to Buddha “The mind is everything. What you think, you become.”

Realize that nothing is accomplished instantly, so persevere to accomplish goals: “A jug fills drop by drop” - Buddha. This is entirely applicable to health and fitness goals that improve and happen over time. Stay consistent and steadfast to accomplish your goals.

## 5. BUDDHIST APPROACH FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

The mind is the origin of all this is, the mind is a master, the mind is the cause. All good and bad thoughts arose in the mind. The Buddhist approach to health and healing is its emphasis on spiritual practice. Buddhism asserts that spiritual practice makes it possible for an individual not only to see opportunity for practice in the face of adversity, including sickness and injury, but use the opportunity for personal transformation and transcendence.

Buddhist practice allows for a deep awareness of cause and consequence, and insight into the nature of conditioned interdependence. As a result of precept practice, meditation practice and skillful choice, the Buddhist person suffers less and has a greater sense of confidence and well-being. The society would have less problem if people can have mind level of happiness, which can be generated from inner sprite, not from material acquisition for themselves. One can be happy from goodness, kindness towards others or helping others to be happy. This is mind based happiness from being useful for the society if seeing others to be happy. Therefore, instead of taking advantage or Accumulate materials for themselves, they are happy to share it to others or allocated to the needy of the society. Natural resources can be saved from less wants. The societal happiness as a whole would be increased.

Materialistic possessions are short lived, but family love and

affection never die down. This is the reason why families are treasured and so much effort goes into preserving it. Have you ever carefully observed a pearl necklace? All the pearls are finely interwoven in a string ,which looks beautiful and to be able to maintain its beauty, one needs to be careful while using it because a rough use can break the entire piece and the pearls can come falling down. Likewise, even a family needs to be carefully preserved because emotions and feelings of your closed ones are attached to it and any gross negligence on your part can make you lose your dear ones. That is why Buddhist system with simplicity makes sense. Buddhist's middle way of life also eases life for less pressures and conflicts. Buddhist concept of not killing and not taking intoxicants reverence for life.

Householders life is limited for family. But universal welfare it is related to the societies. Without family we can not imagine the survival of society and nation. If the family have support to the nation then their identity will survive, without it family can not live in proper livelihood. That means family and nation both are dependent upon each others that's why we need to understand the limitations of householders life and universal social life. Several things are similar between them so we can imagine that the characteristics of householders assures the nations life. One's conditions of success applies to the other . So we should take care about our internal affairs and relationship without conflict because of that we can take care our nation.If the person is happy his family will be happy , if the family will be happy society will be happy, if the society will be happy nation would have no conflict, hatred and war . It promotes equality between man and man, society and society and nation and nation.So if everyone lives peacefully, in loving kindness and brotherhood then the nation become strong and prosperous so we need to think about our nations prosperity and basis on harmonious family and health care for sustainable society.

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# ESSENCE OF DHAMMACAKKAPPAVATTANA SUTTA: INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

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by Pushkar Singh\*

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“A unique being, an extraordinary man arises in this world for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit and happiness of gods and human beings. Who is this unique being? It is the Buddha/Tathāgata, the exalted, fully enlightened, fully Awakened One.”

*Anguttara Nikāya- AN 1:13/A I 22*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta is the first discourse which the Buddha delivered after getting enlightenment or awakening (Samyak Sambodhi). It is one of the most important texts which connect with the first teaching delivered by the Buddha. It is called ‘The discourse on setting in motion the wheel of dharma.’ The Buddha spent seven weeks at Bodhgayā, reflecting and meditating on various places and issues. In the seventh week, the Buddha peacefully passed at the Rājāyatana tree, experiencing the bliss of emancipation. One of the first utterances of the Buddha:

*‘Aneka-jāti saṃsāram, sandhāvissam anibbisam,  
Gahakārakam gavesanto, dukkhā-jāti-punappunam.  
Gahakāraka! Ditthōsi, Puna gēham na kāhasi.  
Sabba te phāsuka bhaggā, gahakūtam visankhitam.*

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\*Ph.D. scholar. Department of Buddhist Studies University of Delhi, India.

*Visankhāra-gatam cittam, tanhānam khayamajjhagā?*

*'Through many a birth in existence I wandered, Seeking, but not finding, The builder of this house, Sorrowful is repeated birth. O house builder, you are seen! You shall build no house again. All your rafters are broken. Your ridgepole is shattered. Mind attains the Unconditioned; Achieved is the end of craving.'*

## 2. BEGINNING AND DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE SUTTA

Followed by above mentioned sutta the Buddha found, treasure or replica which he found is of great depth and something untold before. The people would find it difficult to understand. He was unsure if he should teach his insights or not and uttered another *Udāna* i.e.

*'Adhigato kho myāyam dhammo,  
Gambhiro duddaso duranubodho santo,  
Panito atakkāvacaro, nipuno panditavedaniyo'.*

*'The truths that I have discovered are so profound, difficult to perceive, difficult to penetrate, peaceful and refined. They cannot be understood by mere logic. They are very subtle; only for the wise to penetrate'.*

Then Brahma<sup>1</sup> Sahampati appeared in-front of the Buddha and requested him to teach. He further expressed that the world is really in great need of this precious Dhamma and there are people who are capable of understanding it. After accepting the request, the Buddha looked for a proper vessel to which he can deliver the Dhamma he had discovered. So he remembered his first two teachers Alāra Kalāma and Uddhaka Rāmaputta to whom he

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1. Devas, māras and brahmās: devas refer to divine beings, especially those of the higher reaches of sense-desire (kāma-) realm that is seen to be the world shared by them, humans, animals, ghosts and hell-beings. The earth-dwelling devas and the following six types of devas in the above discourse are, in ascending order, the types of devas of the sense-desire realm. A māra is a tempter-deity, seen as seeking to keep beings attached to sense pleasures. A brahmā is a divine being of the more refined realm of elemental form (rūpa-); beings attain rebirth at this level due to attaining meditative jhāna, which māras try to prevent happening. The devas of the brahmā group (brahma-kāyikā) are those of this realm of elemental form, the lowest of which are the devas of (Great) Brahmā's retinue (brahma-pārisajjā). A Great Brahmā is a type of being who is full of lovingkindness and compassion, but with a tendency to deludedly think he created the world. The brahmās also include more refined kinds of beings.

thought of sharing his knowledge but he found that both of them had passed away. Then he thought about the five old friends who were with him during the six years of penance and since these five monks were staying in Varanasi he also left for it.

### 3. THE FIRST DISCOURSE

This discourse was expounded by the Buddha while he was residing at the Deer Park in Isipatana near Varanasi. The Buddha delivered his first discourse to the five ascetics with whom he had been travelling and practicing for several years prior to his enlightenment<sup>2</sup>. They were namely Kondañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma, and Assaji. Those five monks (Bhikkhus<sup>3</sup>) had abandoned him about a month earlier when he decided that the extreme asceticism which he was practicing would not get him closer to his goal, and he consumed the food<sup>4</sup> offered by Sujātā. The ascetics felt that he had broken the commitment by eating food, and they walked away. But the Buddha understood that they were wise enough having strong commitments for the Dhamma practice, so he made his mind to deliver the Dhamma to these five ascetics. The discourse he delivered to them contained deeper meanings, and included the very foundational concepts of Buddhism such as ‘The Middle Way’, ‘The Four Noble<sup>5</sup> Truths’, and ‘The Noble Eight Fold Path’. These principles which were reflected in the first discourse of the Buddha, later became the foundation of the whole Buddhist system and led to the origin of Buddhist literature.

The intellectual five monks who were closely associated with the Buddha for six years were the only human beings who were present to hear the sermon. Some scholar states that many invisible beings such as devās and Brahmās also took advantage of golden opportunity to listen the sermon. As Buddhists believe in the existence of realms other than this world, inhabited by

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2. Enlightenment: Nibbāna, the destruction of attachment, hatred and delusion, the cessation of pain/the painful, the unconditioned state.

3. Bhikkhu: generally translated “monk,” but literally “almsman,” a renunciant living off donated alms.

4. kheer/pāyas

5. Noble: the path is noble (ariya) and transforms those who practice it into spiritually ennobled ones

beings with subtle bodies imperceptible to the physical eye, possibly many devās and Brahmās were also present on this great occasion. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Buddha was directly addressing the five monks and the discourse was intended mainly for them. At the outset the Buddha cautioned them to avoid the two extremes.

According to the Buddha there are two extremes which should not be resorted by an ascetic. The two extremes are Kāmasukhāllikānuyoga and Attakilamathānuyoga.

### *Kāmasukhāllikānuyoga*

In the Buddha's words, one of the extremes was the constant attachment to sensual pleasures. The Buddha described this as base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and profitless. This should not be misunderstood to mean that the Buddha expects all his followers to give up material pleasures and retire to a forest without enjoying life. The Buddha was not so narrow-minded.

Whatever the deluded sensualist may feel about it, to the dispassionate thinker the enjoyment of sensual pleasures is distinctly short-lived, never completely satisfying, and results in unpleasant reactions. Speaking of worldly happiness, the Buddha says that the acquisition of wealth and the enjoyment of possessions are two sources of pleasure for a layman. An understanding recluse would not however seek delight in the pursuit of these fleeting pleasures. To the surprise of the average man he might shun them. What constitutes pleasure to the former is a source of alarm to the latter to which renunciation alone is pleasure.

### *Attakilamathānuyoga*

The other extreme is the constant addiction to the practice of self-mortification. This experience is not practised by ordinary man, the Buddha remarks it as painful, ignoble and profitless; unlike the first extreme this is not described as base, worldly, and vulgar. The selection of these three terms is very striking. As a rule it is the sincere recluse who has renounced his attachment to sensual pleasures that resorts to this painful method, mainly with the object of gaining his deliverance from the ills of life.

The Buddha, who has had painful experience of this profitless course, describes it as useless. It only multiplies suffering instead of diminishing it.

There are these two extremes which should be avoided by one who has renounced (*pabbajitena*)

(i) ***Indulgence in sensual pleasures*** - This is base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble and profitless; and,

(ii) ***Addiction to self-mortification*** - This is painful, ignoble and profitless.

Abandoning both these extremes the Tathāgata has comprehended the Middle Path (*majjhima patipadā*) which promotes sight (*cakkhu*<sup>6</sup>) knowledge (*ñāṇa*), which tends to peace (*vupasamāya*), higher wisdom (*abhiññāya*), enlightenment (*sambodhāya*) and Nibbāna.

#### 4. THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

##### 4.1. ***Dukkham Ariyasaccam:***

*Idam kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkham<sup>7</sup> ariyasaccam<sup>8</sup>—jātipi*

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6. Cakkhu means eye, but also vision, insight

7. Dukkha, the basic everyday meaning of the word dukkha as a noun is “pain” as opposed to “pleasure” (sukha). These, with neither-dukkha-nor-sukha, are the three kinds of feeling (vedanā) (e.g., S iv 232). S v 209-10 explains dukkha vedanā as pain (dukkha) and unhappiness (domanassa), i.e., bodily and mental dukkha. This shows that the primary sense of dukkha, when used as a noun, is physical “pain,” but then its meaning is extended to include mental pain, unhappiness. The same spread of meaning is seen in the English word “pain,” for example in the phrase, “the pleasures and pains of life.” That said, the way dukkha is explained in this discourse shows that it is here “pain” in the sense of “the painful”, that which is painful, i.e. which brings pain, whether in an obvious or subtle sense.

8. Ariya-sacca, usually translated “Noble Truth,” but K.R.Norman sees this as “the least likely of all the possibilities” for the meaning of ariya-sacca. He points out that the commentators interpret it as: “truth of the noble one,” ‘truth of the noble ones,’ ‘truth for a noble one,’ i.e., the truth that will make one noble, as well as the translation ‘noble truth’ so familiar to us. The last possibility, however, they put at the very bottom of the list of possibilities, if they mention it at all” (A Philological Approach to Buddhism, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1997, p. 16). He prefers “truth of the noble one (the Buddha),” but acknowledges that the term may be deliberately multivalent. At S v 435, the Buddha is “the Spiritually Ennobled One,” but the term also applies to any of the ennobled persons (see entry on “Spiritually ennobled ones”). They are different from the “ordinary person,” the puthujjana, though an ordinary person can become a Noble person by insight into Dhamma. As regards the transla-

*dukkhā, jarāpi dukkhā, byādhipi dukkho, marañampi dukkham, appiyehi sampayogo dukkho, piyehi vippayogo dukkho, yampiccham na labhati tampi dukkham sañkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā.*

Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

To be born into this world means to suffer, that's Buddha's first noble truth. This is because human life isn't perfect and neither are our surroundings. Our life in this world is subject to suffering and physical pain due to sickness, old age, disease, injury and death. We undergo mental suffering and pain due to sadness, disappointment, poverty, lust, love, fear, frustration, greed, injustice and depression.

Although suffering has various degrees of manifestation, there also lies certain conditions in life that are perceived to be the opposite of suffering such as luxury, pleasure, sexual misconduct, lust, wealth, status and power. However, life in its totality remains impermanent because this universe is subject to impermanence. Ev-

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tion of *sacca*, this means "truth" in many contexts, but as an adjective it means both "true" and "real." Taking *sacca* as meaning "truth" in the term *ariya-sacca* is problematic as in the above discourse it is said that the second *ariya-sacca* is "to be abandoned"; but surely, the "truth" on the origination of pain/the painful should not be abandoned. Rather, the "true reality" which is the origination of pain/the painful — craving — should be abandoned. Moreover, the discourse says that the Buddha understood, "This is the *ariya-sacca* which is pain," not "The *ariya-sacca* 'This is pain,'" which would be the case if *sacca* here meant a truth whose content was expressed in words in quote marks. The *ariya-saccas* as "true realities for the spiritually ennobled ones" are reminiscent of such passages as S iv 95, which says that, "That in the world by which one is a perceiver of the world, a conceiver of the world — this is called the world in the discipline of the spiritually ennobled one (*ariyassa vinaye*)."<sup>1</sup> That is, spiritually ennobled ones understand things in a different way from ordinary people. Indeed, at Suttanipāta p.147, it is said, 'Whatever, bhikkhus, is regarded as "this is true reality" by the world... that is well seen by the spiritually ennobled ones with right wisdom as it really is as "this is deceptive", and vice versa. Sn. p.148 then says 'Whatever, bhikkhus, is regarded as "This is pleasant" by the world... this is well seen by the spiritually ennobled ones with right wisdom as "this is painful (dukkha)", and vice versa. This is because desirable sense-objects are impermanent and bring pain when they end, and because spiritually ennobled ones, unlike ordinary people, see the five 'bundles of grasping fuel' — the conditioned world — as painful. While ordinary people do not agree with this, or that 'birth', that is, being born, is painful, they may of course agree that, for example, 'not to get what one wants is painful.'

erything in this universe undergoes various cycles of birth, growth, decay and death. This is the Universal law and all of us have to accept whether we are Buddhists or non-Buddhists.

#### **4.2. Dukkha Samudayam Ariyasaccam:**

*Idam kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhasamudayam ariyasaccam yāyam taṇhā ponabbhavikā nandirāgasahagatā tatratastrābhinandinī, seyyathidam kāmataṇhā, bhavataṇhā, vibhavataṇhā.*

The origin of suffering is attachment to impermanence and is perceived to bring us happiness. This is the second Noble Truth. The transient illusions (wealth, lust, power, beauty) conditions our mindset into believing their permanence, thus preventing our mind from overcoming ignorance. We suffer because of our desire, passion, and greed; pursuit of decay and death is natural. Thus sadness will follow happiness, old age will follow youth and death will surely follow life. The notions of 'self' or 'I' are in reality delusions because there is no permanent 'self.' What we commonly refer to as 'self' is a nonexistent entity born in our ego which is a transient entity in the cycle of Samsāra, or the ceaseless cycle of our Universe.

#### **4.3. Dukkha Nirodha Ariyasaccam:**

*Idam kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodham ariyasaccam yo tassāyeva taṇhāya asesavirāganirodho cāgo paṭinissaggo mutti anālayo.*

This is the third noble truth. Suffering can be eliminated through Nirodha. The meaning of Nirodha is elimination of sensual craving and worldly attachment, which according to the Buddha will eliminate suffering. Nirōdha eliminates all forms of craving and attachment thus setting us off on our long journey towards ultimate salvation from suffering. We then understand that suffering can be eliminated through one's own efforts independent of divine help. Attaining dissipation is a mental process of many levels with the ultimate goal of seeking Nirvāna<sup>9</sup>. Nirvāna basically means

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9. The unbinding of the mind from passion, aversion, delusion etc. Awakening; liberation from the entire round of death and rebirth (samsāra). The state of having extinguished suffering. Nirvāna is a spiritual state in which the bonds of existence are cut away. It is held to be an ineffable, indefinable experience. Nirvāna/Nibbāna also denotes the extinguishing of a fire; it carries the connotations of stilling and cooling. Profound peace, limitless awareness, bliss, unity.

nonexistence in either physical or spiritual forms which frees one from suffering. However, Nirvāna remains incomprehensible for those who have not attained it.

#### 4.4. Dukkha Nirodha Gāminī Patipadā Ariyasaccam:

*Idam kho pana, bhikkhave, dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccam ayameva ariyo atṭhaṅgiko maggo, seyyathidam sammādiṭṭhi sammāsaṅkappo sammāvācā sammākammanto sammāājivo sammāvāyāmo sammāsati sammāsamādhi.*

The Noble Eight Fold Path explains the gradual path of self-improvement towards the cessation of rebirth and its resultant suffering. Lord Buddha described the Eightfold Path as the Middle Path as it avoids extremes of self-indulgence (such as hedonism) and excessive self-mortification (asceticism). This is the Path which leads to the end of Samsāra, the cycle of rebirth. The path to the end of suffering (Nirvāna) can extend over many lifetimes, through eons in fact, throughout which every individual rebirth will be subject to karmic conditioning. However, by adhering to the Noble Eightfold Path, ignorance, delusion, craving and its resultant effects would gradually disappear as progress is made along the path.

#### 5. ARIYO ATṬHAṄGIKO MAGGO (THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH)

Right understanding (*sammā diṭṭhi*), right thoughts (*sammā saṅkappa*), right speech (*sammā vācā*), right action (*sammā kammanta*), right livelihood (*sammā ājīva*), right effort (*sammā vāyāma*), right mindfulness (*sammā sati*), and right concentration (*sammā samādhi*),—this is the middle path which the Tathāgata has comprehended.

These eight factors of the Noble Eightfold Path the first two are grouped in wisdom (paññā), the second three in morality (sīla) and the last three in concentration (*saṃādhi*).

<b>Sīla</b>	Right Speech Right Action Right Livelihood
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<i>Samādhi</i> <sup>1</sup>	Right Effort Right Mindfulness Right Concentration
<i>Paññā</i>	Right Understanding Right Thoughts

The Buddha at first cleared the issues and removed the false notions of his hearers. When their troubled minds became pliable and receptive the Buddha related his personal experience with regard to these two extremes. The Buddha says that he (the Tathāgata), realising the error of both these two extremes, followed a middle path. This new path or way was discovered by him. The Buddha termed his new system the middle way (majjhimā patipadā<sup>10</sup>). To persuade his disciples to give heed to his new path he spoke of its various blessings. Unlike the two diametrically opposite extremes this middle path produces spiritual insight and intellectual wisdom to see things as they truly are. When the insight is clarified and the intellect is sharpened everything is seen in its true perspective.

Furthermore, unlike the first extreme, which stimulates passions, this middle way leads to the subjugation of passions, which results in peace. Above all it leads to the attainment of the four super mundane paths of sainthood, to the understanding of the four noble truths, and finally to the realisation of the ultimate goal, Nibbāna. The middle way is the Noble Eightfold Path. The eight factors are then enumerated in the discourse.

The first factor is right understanding, the keynote of Buddhism. The Buddha started with right understanding in order to clear the doubts of the monks and guide them in the right way. Right understanding deals with the knowledge of oneself as one really is; it leads to right thoughts of non-attachment or renunciation (*nekkhamma saṅkappa*), loving kindness (*avyāpāda saṅkappa*), and harmlessness (*avihimsā*

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10. Middle Path. This is the entire noble eight-fold path or middle path which, by avoiding the two extremes of sensual desire and self-torment, leads to enlightenment and deliverance from suffering.

*sankappa*), which are opposed to selfishness, ill will and cruelty respectively. Right thoughts result in right speech, right action, and right livelihood, which three factors perfect one's morality. The sixth factor is right effort which deals with the elimination of evil states and the development of good states in oneself. This self-purification is best done by careful introspection, for which right mindfulness, the seventh factor, is essential. Effort, combined with mindfulness, produces right concentration (single pointedness) of the mind, the eighth factor. A one-pointed mind resembles a polished mirror where everything is clearly reflected with no distortion.

Prefacing the discourse with the two extremes and his newly discovered middle way, the Buddha expounded the four noble truths in detail. *Sacca* is the Pāli term for truth which means that which is. Its Sanskrit equivalent is *satya* which denotes an incontrovertible fact. The Buddha enunciates four such truths, the foundations of his teaching, which are associated with the so-called being. Hence his doctrine is homocentric, opposed to the centric religions. It is introvert and not extrovert. They cannot change with time because they are eternal truths. The Buddha was not indebted to anyone for his realisation of them, as he himself remarked in this discourse thus: '*With regard to things unheard before, there arose in me the eye, the knowledge, the wisdom, the insight and the light.*' These words are very significant because they testify to the originality of his new teaching. Hence there is no justification in the statement that Buddhism is a natural outgrowth of Hinduism, although it is true that there are some fundamental doctrines common to both systems.

## 6. ESSENCE OF THE SUTTA

In Dhammacakkappavattana sutta, the Buddha said that a man is his own master. Who else is there as your master? The one who tames his or her mind is the one. It's the approach of the noble beings and with this in the mind, whether we skip studies or whether we embrace studies, whether we skip business or whether we embrace business, whether we go into universities or whether we go into politics, whatever we are doing is for the benefit of one self.

Finally this is for one's own happiness and it really does not matter if some people think for the happiness of the community, or for the happiness of their family or for their own happiness. This is because any form of happiness that we are seeking, is our birth right. We have the right to this; then the next question is how to acquire that? Buddha Shakyamuni in Dhammapada<sup>11</sup> beautifully puts it: *even though you have brilliant eyes, if you don't have the light, these eyes will be of no use. Only with the light of the knowledge, the eyes of your intelligence will become functional.* So therefore, this knowledge that we are seeking from everywhere is so precious. From there, see how we can make the most out of this and then see that our life becomes more and more qualitatively happier. That is the whole purpose of (**Sila, Samādhi, Paññā**) Dhammacakkappavattana sutta.

If we think of our own life, sometimes we are happy, and sometimes we are unhappy, this is the reality. At times we feel very dissatisfied, lonely, painful and sometimes happy and so forth. So, these are all the mental experiences and the same mind has the capacity to do things. The human mind is capable of performing anything, the capacity to give rise to the happiness; not only happiness, the maximum happiness, 24/7 happiness; not only 24/7 happiness, the most intense happiness; this mind can produce miracles but of course it also has the capacity to create miseries. For example, you take dirty water from the sewage which no one would like to drink. The same water if treated with chemical alum or with reverse osmosis technique, all dirts will settle. The water becomes so pure, and clean after all the dirts are separated. All the water we get from the shops, mineral water, bottled water, are all treated water. On the other hand, take a black charcoal, and try to change into white colour inside out. Do you think we can do this? At the most, we can remove the black dirts, but the charcoal will also disappear in this process. The water however dirty it is, by removing impurities, becomes clean and pure and does not disappear, whereas, the charcoal does. The next question to be asked then is why did the water not disappear and the charcoal disappears? The two objects go

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11. A sutra consisting of two sections and 39 chapters, with 423 short verses of the Buddha, and teachings given at various times and places. It is regarded as the original teaching of the Buddha, which can be used for reference, moral instruction, and inspiration.

through the same process but the results are different. Why? What is the difference?

With the help of these examples, we come to discover who we are and then we will come to know, "I am not to be undermined. I have the capacity; I have the potential to be enlightened like anyone else". We then become confident and become aware of our own potential. So, let me explain why the end results of water and charcoal are different.

*With dirty water, the true nature of the water is not dirty; whereas with the black charcoal, the intrinsic nature of the charcoal is black.* So, when we remove the dirts, we are not removing the true nature of the water. We are only removing the temporary nature of water. When we remove the dirts, the true nature of the water is manifested. In case of water, the perfect purity is revealed, whereas, in the case of black charcoal, the true nature is black. So, when we remove the black part, we also remove the true nature, the object disappears. *Our mind, however dirty it is, is unlike the black charcoal, it is like the dirty water. The true nature of the mind is not dirty.* A cruel, rude and an unforgiving person will also surrender like Angulimāla<sup>12</sup>, if he receives genuine care and love. The person is transformed overnight. The child when young, like two or three years old is happily dependent on his parents, he is not rude but affectionate towards the mother. But as he grows up, the environment and sensory experiences he collects, sometimes changes him into a rude person. This may be possible, but the true nature of the person is not harsh. We all have some degree of ego; some degree of anger, jealousy and so forth. But we can eradicate all of these by resorting to the respective remedies, we see that even the little defects that we have in us can also be cleansed eventually. So, from this, we see that the true nature of the mind is so pure.

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12. Angulimāla, the robber and murderer, is one of the best known figures of the Buddhist scriptures, because of his dramatic life story. His conversion to monkhood and later to sainthood was exceptional as he seems to have been the only former criminal to be accepted into the Buddhist monastic order. The Buddha had often warned not to judge people from appearances and their external behaviour. In Angulimāla's case, the Buddha had seen his hidden potential to win freedom, not only from his present low moral status and from rebirth in the lowest worlds of painful existence, but that Angulimāla would also be able to gain the highest freedom from all suffering in this very life.

Another beautiful analogy, which I am so fond of, is one given by Arya Maitreya. He gave the analogy of a beggar living in a very simple hut. He was so poor, hardly had anything to eat every day and yet underneath the floor of his hut, there was a rich treasure. The beggar is a beggar, as long as he cannot discover the treasure. The moment the beggar discovers the treasure, he is no more a beggar. Perhaps he can be the richest person in the country or in the nation. Likewise, we all have this incredible treasure of the perfection within us, like the true nature of the water, which is very clean. We do not have to bring this purity of water from elsewhere – just remove the dirts and the purity is already inside us. **Likewise, when we remove the mental dirts, the purity comes out. When the dirts are no more there, then the purity becomes perfectly pure. That perfect purity is known as the full enlightenment.** At that point, we become like the sun, not only the darkness within us is eliminated, we are able to eliminate the darkness of every atom of the universe and that is called Buddha nature too.

The next question then is has Buddha nature nothing to do with the external? Is it all about mind and mental state? When we speak about a mind, the mind is not isolated but always interacts with objects. For example, a young child, after being separated from his mother for weeks is extremely joyous on seeing her. Why does the child experience such joy? That joy is a mental experience. This mental experience comes into being by cognition; his mind comes into contact with the mother's appearance. With the mother as the object and his mind coming into contact, then the incredible happiness comes in the child's mind.

The next question is, if this is how the happiness arise in us or the miseries arise in us, then what will be the situation like to experience the maximum happiness?

To experience the maximum happiness, we have to remove the mental dirts to the maximum. It is like extracting the gold from the gold mine or the gold ore.

What is the gold ore?

It is just the soil for the eyes of an ordinary being but in the eyes of gold experts, it is so precious, it's not ordinary soil, it is gold. But

in the eyes of the ordinary people like us it is just soil; we have to throw this away.

But how do we know that there is gold there?

Separate the dirts, separate the soil from the gold. The more we separate, the more we successfully separate the soil from the gold, the more the gold will shine, the more it will glow. Buddha Shakyamuni has set a great example for all of us through these ideas. He tells us that everyone has the same potential irrespective of our gender, education, or status. We all have the same potential, all of us have the seed of perfection. This seed of perfection is known as the seed of full awakening. It means that everyone has the capacity to be fully awakened; everyone has the capacity to become perfect.

The next question is what do you mean by perfection?

By perfection, we mean that all of us are capable. What do we want? We want happiness and we don't want miseries. We have the capacity to achieve the maximum happiness which we seek and we have the capacity to shun all the miseries which we dislike. This is known as the seed of awakening also referred to as the Tathāgatagarbha.

Now, the point is that if we have a conviction, if we have confidence and believe in our inner strengths, our potential also known as Tathāgatagarbha<sup>13</sup>, no one or no outside force can waver our determination. Tathāgata<sup>14</sup> means the one who has gone to the ultimate, the one who has gone to the suchness. So, when we go to the ultimate state nothing can hamper us, nothing can stop us.

In fact, except for Chārvāka, Indian tradition, all Indian traditions like Jainism, Sāmkhya, Vedānta, Mimāmsaka, Vaishāyshika, Nyāya, Buddhism and Sikhism; share one concept which is ***the concept of reincarnation***. This concept of reincarnation is common to all

13. Literally, the seed or essence of the Buddhas which is usually translated as Buddha-nature or Buddha essence. It is the seed or essence of enlightenment, possessed by all sentient beings and which allows them to have the potential to attain Buddhahood.

14. "One who has truly gone" (tathā-gata) or "one who has become authentic" (tathāgata). The living embodiment of Ultimate Reality. An epithet used in ancient India for a person who has attained the highest spiritual goal. In Buddhism, it usually denotes the Buddha, although occasionally it can also denote any of his arhat/arahant disciples.

these Indian traditions. The best book to explain the concept of reincarnation is “*Pramāṇavārtika*<sup>15</sup>.” Pramāṇavārtika’s chapter II, by an incredibly great saint scholar Acharya Dharmakirti, 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D.. It is purely based on the rational reasoning and logic; it has nothing to do with the blind faith.

Further, another book, “*The Blaze of the Non-dual Bodhicittas*,” says:

*‘The Buddha does not wash the negativities of beings;  
Nor does he remove their miseries by his hands;  
His spiritual realizations are not transferred to them;  
It is by teaching the truth of suchness, that beings are liberated.’*

**The Buddha does not wash the negativities of beings;**

It is not that the Buddha pours some water over our body then our negativities disappear. If that happens then we are so lucky. Then we don’t have to put any effort. But it does not work that way. If this was so easy then nobody would be suffering. But this is not the reality.

**Nor does he remove their miseries by his hands;**

Say for example, if the thorn is pricking us. Then our mother or our loved ones will come and remove the thorn. But our miseries, nobody can do this on this earth even the Buddha cannot removes the miseries. If it could be done by someone else then there would have been no suffering by now. But the fact is that the suffering is ever increasing, and not decreasing.

**His spiritual realizations are not transferred to them;**

It’s not that “oh I have now seen the wisdom. I will share my wisdom with each one of you. Your darkness of ignorance is gone.” It never happened.

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15. The *Pramāṇavārtika* is an influential Buddhist text on *pramāṇa* (valid instruments of knowledge, epistemic criteria), a form of Indian epistemology. The book is a masterpiece of Indian Buddhist philosophy and logic which is written in about 2,000 stanzas. The four chapters deal, respectively, with inference for oneself (*svārthānumāna*), valid knowledge (*pramāṇasiddhi*), sense perception (*pratyakṣa*), and inference for others (*parārthānumāna*).

**It is by teaching the truth of suchness, that beings are liberated.**

So then how does it help us then?

It is by teaching the truth of suchness,

Truth of suchness is what?

The light of wisdom is like teaching the truth of the suchness, the light of the wisdom that people learn. After learning this then they practice it. Then they see that the wisdom is ignited within oneself through one's effort. You learn from the Buddha but you have to put the practice yourself. Put the effort yourself and then the light is ignited within you. As the light is ignited then the darkness is dispelled, gone. This is how the beings are liberated from the fears of Samsāra. It is only through Buddha's teachings; given that these are the three things which can help the beings. What are the three things? **Paññā, Sīla, Samādhi**, from bottom **Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā**. It is only through these three things taught to us and its application, light is ignited with the stability and the darkness is eliminated. The beings are liberated which is here the real or true meaning of essence of dhammacakkappavattana sutta and its individual and social benefits.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta or the first turning of the wheel of the dharma plays a very important role in laying the foundation stone of Buddhist tradition. It primarily talks about the 'Cattāriariyasaccāni' or Four Noble Truths based on which the whole Buddhist teachings of 'Dukkha, Anicca and Anattā' are explained. Some pāli phrases for the four noble truths are grammatical anomalies. From these anomalies some scholars have argued that the expression 'noble truth' is a later addition to the texts. Others have argued even further that the content of the four noble truths is also a later addition. Both of these arguments are based on the unproven assumption that the language which the Buddha spoke was grammatically regular and that any irregularities were later corruptions of the language. This assumption forgets that the languages of the Buddha's time were oral dialects and that the nature of such dialects is to contain many grammatical irregularities.

Languages tend to become regular only when being used to govern a large nation state or to produce a large body of literature. Some scholar says, all events happened only after the Buddha's time. Another argument for the lateness of the expression "noble truth" is that a truth meaning an accurate statement about a body of facts is not something that should be abandoned. In this case, only the craving is to be abandoned, not the truth about craving. However, in Vedic Sanskrit as in modern English 'truth' can mean both a fact and an accurate statement about a fact. Thus, in this case the 'truth' is the fact not the statement about the fact and the argument for the lateness of the expression does not hold.

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# AN ANALYSIS OF THE BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE OF FAMILY POLICY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

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by Moggallana Sraman\*

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## ABSTRACT

Family is the central basis for the development of a sustainable society and it has been, and still is the most valued institution in the world. In addition, Buddhism plays a significant role in establishing an effective family policy. Family and society depend on each other and the connection between these two is undeniable. Untraced problematic facts are to be appraised and emphasized such as behavioral, psychological, financial, and physical from family. The initial task of this research is to analyze how Buddhism plays an important role in establishing a sustainable society through the application of the method of Dependent Co-origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda), and core early Buddhist teachings. The data has been collected through primary sources as well as secondary sources, library studies, social observation, and web findings for this research. The eightfold path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika maggo) touches the tenets of Buddhism to the family policy towards sustainable society which deals with incontrollable mind. “Everything is the creation of mind” and therefore, proper family planning comes from one’s own mind it assists them to have a happy family life. Family grows through a networking system which is inter-dependent. “Sigālovāda Sutta” shows the directions of meaningful life and peaceful society. Meanwhile, the “Parābhava Sutta” as well

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\*University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

as “Vasala Sutta” are concerned with how one’s life downgraded if he fails to maintain his duties and obligations to others and to the society. In addition, “Maṅgala Sutta” depicts auspicious things for one’s relation. Thus, I confidentially believe that the relevant documentations are significant for the sustainable society. I infer that Buddhist teachings always focus on practical aspects in life and individuals should practically follow the teachings in their lives. These are very essential teachings that can be practiced by all human beings not only by Buddhist. Buddhism is a philosophy; however, it being perceived as a religion makes the individuals lose focus on these practical aspects of the subject. The teachings which had been discovered by Buddha 2500 years ago still have its actual validity. Buddhism is valueless until human beings value it.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Family is the central basis for the development of a sustainable society and it has been, and still is the most valued institution in the world. As Unicef Synthesis reports that family policies are a mainstay of national public policies, and the most meaningful vehicle for governments to influence the living standards of upcoming generations. As part of achieving the global ambitions of the Sustainable Development Goals, family policies have an important part to role in meeting targets across many of the goals. Almost every person in our society starts life in a family of some kind. The kind of family one has influences the kind of person one grows up to be. Plato also recognized the importance of the family for the moral development of individuals. Families are schools of moral learning, but they are more than that.

When we look the role of renunciation, detachment, and the individual’s pursuit of enlightenment, the family life is not encouraged to be enjoyed. Later many discourses on family matters were taught by the Buddha in different ways for happiness of living people. In the Sigālovāda Sutta of Dīghanikāya, the Buddha encounters a young man who honors his dead parents by performing rituals. The Buddha recasts the meaningless rites in terms of virtuous conduct. This is the most detailed discourse on ethics for lay people which are totally discussed about family.

In addition, Buddhism plays a significant role in establishing an effective family policy. Family and society depend on each other and the connection between these two is undeniable. Family as an institution is highly valued in the Buddhist system of the thought. While *Aggañña Sutta* is deeply analyzed, it shows a gradual systematic evolution how a family can give birth to a society. So the good families are to be considered for establishment of sustainable society. Here, family is not defined only Buddhist family. The family centered by human without any discrimination among human beings.

On the other hand, according to Buddhism the five precepts mandate promoting virtuous individual and family life. They are (1) abstaining from killing living beings; (2) abstaining from taking what is not given; (3) abstaining from sexual misconduct; (4) abstaining from false speech; and (5) abstaining from intoxicants. These precepts, by governing social and interpersonal relationships they provide an ethical framework for family life.

The method of Dependent Co-origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*) is one most notable and important teachings of the Buddha which is undeniable and mostly that deals with human mind. “When there is arising, there is ceasing; when there is no arising, there is no ceasing”. So thus, when there is no family, there is no society. When there are good families, there is a good society. It is sustainable by the practice of virtuous and ethical Buddhist life. My limitation of this research paper is within the area of social perspectives in Buddhism.

## 2. THE PROBLEMS IN FAMILY OF SOCIETY

As we know that suffering is one of the common teachings in Buddhism and most important discovery for all human. There are many problems right now in the society. Some of these problems can be easily solved, or can be impossible to solve depending how bad it is. Many people think these problems should be solved by the governments, since they are in charge. But we can also solve these problems if we get together. Not all the problems, but some that can be solved. Maria Montessori wrote that peoples' fundamental needs fall into two categories: material (survival needs) and spiritual (pertaining to the soul and intellect). In order to realize a more peaceful world, she considered spiritual needs to be of utmost importance.

Material needs include: shelter, food, clothing, transportation defense (safety, protection) communication, Medicine.

Spiritual needs include: love spirituality/religion culture/arts/ music vanitos (self-adornment).<sup>1</sup>

Though majority of people in our society have their fundamental needs, they are not happy. In Buddhism, "Dukkha" (suffering) is the most important teachings that has wide definition and explanation regarding our life and world. Suffering considers as psychological factor. The people in our present society do not die or suffer due to fundamental needs; they suffer because of improper planning or understanding and psychological issue. For example, a young matured who is about to get married in a family, the young man should have confidence, earning sources, good understanding and a punctual livelihood. So in this case parents play the important rule. Right Understanding (sammā ditthī) is very essential here in Buddhist sense. Although education is most important, I would say that self-education is better than certificate education. To be self-educated person Buddhism aids to the path. The facts mentioned above are totally deal with human mind, which will be discussed later in broad. "Everything is the creation of mind" and therefore, proper family planning comes from one's own mind it assists them to have a happy family life. Without understanding oneself, human being act or live being legally or illegally; emotionally or without emotion; proper or improper responsible for something like fame, name, power, over self-confidence and liability as ministers, parents, husband and wife etc. Society has attached an undeniable stigma to so-called emotional or mental illness. Several kinds of problems are seen in our society like as hatred, fighting, capturing others land raping, killing human beings, conflict between brother to brother; conflict among family members or with others.

Buddhist teaches us primarily about self-knowledge-finding out more about who you are; understanding one's decisions, actions, thoughts, feelings, etc. It teaches to realize the understanding of consciousness, mind, behavior, motivation, personality.

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1. The Fundamental Needs Of Humans, Ideas & Insights Article, Irene Baker, MEd, Montessori Educational Consultant at Montessori Services. Published 2017

Problems in a family is not created by external world, each members of a family creates suffering due to ignorance and craving; so thus in the society. Human creates the external world, so human can create a beautiful society with the knowing the every problems by themselves.

### **3. BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE OF FAMILY POLICY TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY**

The individual and society are two phenomena that are related to each other and support each other too. There is no a society without individuals. There is no protected and organized individual life without the society. Therefore, these two phenomena cannot exist separate from each other. Some scholars who studied Buddhism have named Buddhism as an asocial religion. Max Weber popularized this idea in his book named 'Religions in India'. Because of the social significance of Buddhist discourses, E.F. Schumacher in his momentous work named 'Small is Beautiful' says that Buddhist teachings are the best for a healthy human society in constructive development of human society as well. He says "(according to Buddhism) development does not start with goods, it starts with people and their education, organization and discipline." According to this scholar, in the present society dominated by capitalists socio-economic structure the competition has become a dangerous evil, competition could be seen in every nook and corner of social life causing unhappiness and damage to human beings, human society and natural environment. Buddhism, which encourages not the competition but the co-operation, is seen as the most suitable solution to the up-rising economic social and political unrest.

Buddhism does not deviate individual welfare from social welfare, it emphasizes that individual, social and spiritual welfare have to go hand in hand in creating a world happy for all beings. This philosophy of Buddhism can be better studied from the teachings of the five precepts, which is the fundamental code of ethic in Buddhist moral path. The first precept among the five respects the right of life of every individual; it aims the preservation of lives of all human beings, non-human beings and of other living things as well. The second precept respects the right of property of

each member of the society; next to one's life, his property is dear to every being, if individuals' properties are not protected beings feel no safety of their living, therefore, Buddhism takes this as second important precept. The third precept respects the right of personal life; every individual in the society likes and wants his personal life (sexual and family life) not to be disturbed by any other in any way. Therefore, Buddhism assigns third place to this fact of life and establishes third moral precept of refraining of sexual misconduct. The fourth precept is refraining from fault hood, it relates to verbal discipline of the being, the ability of expression naturally inherited by man should not be misused in a way that it disturbed oneself and others, that principle is taught by this fourth precept. The fifth precept is refraining from intoxicants, physical and mental activeness and alertness are essential for successful individual and social life. Intoxicants intoxicate man preventing the use of best ability that lie in human personality, in order to prevent that Buddhism admonishes this fifth precept of refraining from all forms of intoxicants. The five precepts given here and their application surely are effective not only for individual welfare but also for the welfare of entire society.

The Sigālovada sutta of DN records the Buddha's following advice to householder Sigāla.

*“Yato kho, gahapatiputta, ariyasāvakassa cattāro kammakilesā pahīnā honti, catūhi ca thānehi pāpakkammā na karoti, cha ca bhogānam apāyamukhāni na sevati, so evam cuddasa pāpakkāpagato chaddisāpaṭicchādī ubholokavijayāya paṭipanno hoti. Tassa ayañceva loko āraddho hoti paro ca loko. So kāyassa bhedā param maranā sugatim saggam lokam upapajjati.”<sup>2</sup>*

“O householder! Indeed, the noble disciple has given up four defilements of action (killing, stealing, adultery and faultlessness). He does not do evil deeds in four ways (chandā-desire, dosa-anger, bhaya-fear, moha-delusion), he does not associate the six ways of downfall of wealth. He thus refrains from fourteen evils and protected from six directions, he has entered for the victory of both worlds. It is the world and next world are accomplished. He will be

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2. DN iii 180.

born on the heaven after in the breaking of holy and death."

In the Vyaggapajja sutta of AN<sup>3</sup>, both the personal and spiritual development has been emphasized in equal terms for the well-being of this worldly life, four things are recommended.

Uṭṭhānasampadā – vigilance.

Ārakkhasampadā – protection.

Kalyānamittata - good friendship.

Samajīvikata - balance life.

Vigilance is one of the essential factors for the progress of personal life; it is the quality contrary to letharginess and laziness. One who lives with these two negative qualities can never progress in his own efforts, having abandoned them one should be vigilant in the following five ways.

Dakkho – clever.

Analaso – active (not lazy).

Tatrūpāya vimamsāya samannāgato – clever in performing acts according to time and situation.

Alam kātum – capable of doing.

Alam saṃvidhātum – capable of organizing.

The fourth principle given in the Vyaggapajja sutta is leading a balance or even life with a simile the Buddha illustrate how one should live a balance life, if there is a tank to which water is supplied with four doors and water sent out with four doors. If one closes, the doors that water come the tank will be empty, if only the doors that take water away are closed, the water could be over flown and wasted, so the doors should be opened and closed with lot of care in order not to destroy the tank.

The four qualities recommended in the sutta for spiritual advancement are saddhā (confidence), sīla (morality), cāga (generosity) and paññā.

On the other hand, the "Parābhava Sutta" as well as "Vasala

“Sutta” are concerned with how one’s life downgraded if he fails to maintain his duties and obligations to others and to the society.

The eightfold path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika maggo) touches the tenets of Buddhism to the family policy towards sustainable society which deals with incontrollable mind. The realization of suffering (dukkha) means understanding fully the unsatisfactoriness related to five aggregates of grasping which is beyond normal suffering. The origin of suffering, that is classified as craving for sensual pleasure (kāma tañhā), craving for becoming (bhava tañhā) and craving for non-becoming (vibhava tañhā). The cessation of suffering is the appeasement (nibbāna). The path leading to liberation is Eight-fold Noble Path (ariyāṭṭhamgika magga). The eight noble-fold path is gradual practices when we look it’s true nature such as:

**Sammā-Ditṭhī** —Right view or understanding. Vision of the nature of reality and knowing in right way.

**Sammā-Sankappa** —Right thought. Liberating emotional intelligence in your life and acting from love and compassion. An informed heart and feeling mind those are free to practice letting go.

**Sammā-Vāca** — Right Speech. Clear, truthful, uplifting and non-harmful communication.

**Sammā-Kammanta** — Right action. An ethical foundation for life based on the principle of non-exploitation of oneself and others.

**Sammā-Ajīva** — Right livelihood. This is a livelihood based on correct action the ethical principal of non-exploitation. The basis of an Ideal society.

**Sammā-Vāyama** — Right effort. Consciously directing our life energy to the transformative path of creative and healing action that fosters wholeness. Conscious evolution.

**Sammā-Sati** —”Right mindfulness”. Developing awareness, “if you hold yourself dear watch yourself well”. Levels of Awareness and mindfulness - of things, oneself, feelings, thought, people and Reality.

**Sammā-Samadhi** — Right concentration, meditation, absorption or one-pointedness of mind.

Buddhism explaining the nature of the life and the world based

on its analysis on classification and its synthesis on the theory of causality. It is the Dependent Co-origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda) that human should understand well in every way of life. As the Buddha was examining the reality on the causes of decay and death with the middle way of understanding. Thus, He realized the futility of other views and the uniqueness of His theory of cause and effect.

Family member leader supposed a mother should practice the teachings of eight noblefold paths with the application of Dependent Co-origination to understand others family members and lead them. If a family can live with this way of practices, it will make a network in the society. The network will spread in a society, so the society will sustain in peace where we still see the main teachings causes and conditions. A family should be a cause to sustain, so the condition will be sustained in society. Thus, the main teaching of Buddha plays a very significant role for a sustainable society.

#### 4. MIND AS THE KEY POINT FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

From the very beginning of human history, human beings have tried to know and understand the nature of nature his surrounding world and universe. This is common to any ancient culture in the world. Each and every one them have had maintain certain ideas on the nature of universe. The curiosity in the human mind to know, to understand and enlarge the horizon on his knowledge about the world, create much room for this birth of new idea. Some of them developed as religions, some other as philosophies while certain ideas matured as sciences. And the finding of nature of "Mind" also was one the searching among scholars.

As the Saṅgarava sutta in of MN described as follows:

*"kāmāsavāpi cittam vimuccittha, bhavāsavāpi cittam vimuccittha, avijāsavāpi cittam vimuccittha. Vimuttasmiṁ vimuttamiti nāṇam ahosi".*

"Mind freed from cankers of sensual sphere, of becoming and of ignorance. There was knowledge of freedom in what is freedom"<sup>4</sup>. Again the Buddha says in the Hinādhimuttika sutta of SN that those beings with low mental behavioral characteristics come to the world together with the similar. Those beings who are with higher

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4. MN ii 209

and noble mental and physical characteristics come to the world with the similar. They work with their similar person and it is the nature of human beings.

“*Hīnādhimuttikā hīnādhimuttikehi saddhim samsandīnsu samīmsu; kalyāñādhimuttikā ... sattā samsandissanti samessanti. Hīnādhimuttikā hīnādhimuttikehi saddhim samsandissanti samessanti;*<sup>5</sup>

“The beings who are in low mental behaviour behave with those having low mentality. The beings who are endowed with compassionate mind behave with the one who are compassionate.”

In Dhammapāda very well-known verse “*Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomaya*”, mind beset everything, everything is mind made. Happiness or unhappiness comes from within our mind. He lives having attained freedom by oneself in this life in mind and freedom in wisdom having given up defilements and being free from them<sup>6</sup>.

If human being can lead their very well with proper understanding, anything in our world can be sustainable. So thus, there will be a sustainable society when there is right leading mind which emerges from Government to a farmer.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Thus, I confidentially believe that the relevant documentations are significant for the sustainable society. I infer that Buddhist teachings always focus on practical aspects in life and individuals should practically follow the teachings in their lives. These are very essential teachings that can be practiced by all human beings not only by Buddhist. Buddhism is a philosophy; however, it being perceived as a religion makes the individuals lose focus on these practical aspects of the subject. The teachings which had been discovered by Buddha 2500 years ago still have its actual validity. Buddhism is valueless until human beings value it.

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5. SN ii 154

6. SN v 305

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# A STUDY ON BUDDHIST SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION: PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHALLENGES FACED BY TEENAGE MOTHERS A CASE STUDY BASED ANALYSIS

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by Ven. Omalpe Somananda\*

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## ABSTRACT

Teenage mothers are becoming the newest social challenge in Sri Lanka. Teenage mother faces many difficulties from pregnancy and delivery to raising the infant. The aim of this study is to investigate whether teenage mothers experience Psycho-Social challenges and distress during pregnancy and to explore the nature of such distress. A representative sample of 10 teenage mothers in the 13-20 year age range, from a women's home (running under the Buddhist temple) in the Rathnapura District participated in the research study. This research study utilized the purposive sampling method and qualitative research methods. Research methodology included qualitative data collection methods and in-depth interviews, observations and Case study. Collation of information relating to the representative sample was collated by observing the daily behaviors of teenage mothers in the women's home & a review of the institutions' daily records.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis. The main objective in this study focused on exploring the Psycho-Social challenges faced by teenage mothers. The specific objectives of the

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\*Senior Lecturer. Community leadership, Department of Buddhist culture, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

study were to identify the social challenges of teenage mothers, to identify future expectations and to understand the role of Social Work intervention strategies. These objectives explain how Psycho-Social challenges affect teenage mothers. Here, the researcher examined the mental challenges faced by these girls. The facts that the study considered were unexpected pregnancy the challenges that they face the lack of capacity to manage their time effectively, and additional challenges emanating from differences in their sexual behavior. This research also focused on the reasons for under-age pregnancies and includes the recommendation in Buddhist social work intervention.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

When discussing the importance of this study, the researcher focussed on a risk group of adolescents and the reasons for the unexpected pregnancies, how those teenage mothers took responsibility and the challenges they faced during pregnancy and the psychological and sociological factors faced both during pregnancy and after delivery. Another objective of this study was the Buddhist social worker's role and intervention strategies, and how they empowered the teenage mothers to concentrate on their well-being and reduce the challenge they faced. This representative sample comprised teenagers who were victims of sexual abuse and the services and solutions which can be provided to them to reduce a recurrence of the unexpected pregnancies and the impact and challenges face by them.

The aim of this article is to explore the challenges faced by adolescent teenage mothers, the life cycle of these challenges and the role of the Buddhist social worker, the internal and external influences and the social, psychological, physically and emotional changes they faced in life. There are many definitions of an adolescent. The World Health Organization defines it as:

*“Adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from age 10 to 19. It represents one of the critical transitions in the life span and is characterized by a tremendous pace in growth and change that is second only to that of infancy. Biological process drives many aspects of this growth*

*and development, with the onset of puberty making the passage from childhood to adolescence. The biological determinants of adolescence are fairly universal; however, the duration and defining characteristics of this period may vary across time, cultures and socio economy situations. This period has seen many changes over the past century namely the earlier onset of puberty, later age of marriage, urbanization, global communication and changing sexual attitudes and behaviours."*

Adolescence is very challenging and the adventurous part of the life cycle which is also known as an age of "hurricanes". Mostly adolescents have curiosity and a high interest in sexuality and reproduction. However, accurate knowledge and education on sexuality is unavailable to these adolescents. Adolescents also do not have the confidence to seek information from elders due to cultural and generational gaps where elders do not feel comfortable discussing these subjects openly. Accordingly, most teenagers discuss and share information and their interest in these topics with peer groups where the information can be far from accurate and very limited. Peer pressure, misinformation and technological development leads to teenagers exploring sexuality misleads them to experiment with sex and gain experience in an unsuitable manner.

Statistics show that Sri Lanka has the highest number of online hits in South Asia on searches for "sex". This evidences the number of people interested in finding facts regarding sexuality in order to quench their curiosity. Child abuse, sexual harassment of girls, rape and is also very prevalent in modern day societies and is rapidly growing. Love affairs between teenage whose hormonal growth makes them confused causes many of the pregnancies in adolescents. This is not a problem restricted to Sri Lanka but is experienced globally.

Women in today's world are still regarded as vulnerable from a social, economic, political, and traditional perspective. Some local laws also consider women as inferior or subordinate to their husbands. Therefore, society has developed a safety network for women to protect their rights and has developed certain policies and laws to protect and uphold the rights of women. Ironically, society itself destroys the safety network which it developed for women's protection.

There is a huge difference between girl and a woman - socially, physically, mentally and psychologically. Women are more mature and stronger than girls. It is therefore more difficult for a girl to manage a pregnancy and care for a baby than a mature woman and even more difficult to have the patience and maturity to raise an infant. This issue of teenage pregnancy is a barrier to achieve sustainable development goals as children are the back bone or future generations of a society. The collapse of their participation leads to or under-development of the country.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

The main objective was to find out the psychosocial challenges faced by teenage mothers in the womens' homes.

The specifics objectives of this study are to identify social challenges, family support, varying reactions, the support from their educational institutions, the behaviour patterns of teenage mothers and the social aspect affecting teenage mothers.

### 2.1 Problem statement

Teenage mother face many difficulties arising from pregnancy as well as from the delivery stage to raising the infant. She has to face stressful reactions from her family, neighbourhood, relations, schools, peers and society. This challenge affects s for her psychological well-being and also influences for her physical health. Sri Lanka is a multicultural society. A part of Sri Lankan culture is that love affairs between school adolescents are frowned upon, and parental and family consent is denied or there is non-acceptance of these affairs by society.

### 2.2 Research methodology

Qualitative method was used for this research. Methods are designed to reveal a target audience's range of behavior and the perceptions that drive it with reference to specific topics or issues. It uses in-depth studies of small groups of people to guide and support the construction of hypotheses. The results of qualitative research are descriptive rather than predictive. Qualitative research methods originated in the social and behavioral sciences: sociology, anthropology and psychology.

Case study-based analyses were used as an analysis tool. This study conducted by the case studies, data analysis was done by thematic analysis and quantities information was analysed by using manual records. To present the data the researcher used the charts and tables.

### **2.3 Study area**

The incumbent of Sri Bodhiraja Temple at Embilipitiya most venerable Omalpe Sobitha Thero is a valuable resource for the village. According to his aide he set up womens' homes in affiliation with Department of Probation and Child Care Services in the Sabaragamuwa province. This institution opened its doors on 08 March 2014. It provides services to teenage pregnant mothers referred by the Court system for rehabilitation. Welfare facilities are delivered by Bodhiraja foundation and the Department of Probation.

### **2.4 Services provided by the Home**

Teenage mothers receive mental and physical exercise, education support, vocational training, health services, counselling and religious guidance. Such services assist in strengthening mental stability, protection, hope for the future and security. There are trained teachers, matrons and assistants in the home who care for these teenage pregnant mothers. Observation is also conducted by Sri Bodhiraja foundation and Probation officers from the Department of Probation. The Sri Bodhiraja foundation is the only institution receives government funding to assist teenage pregnant mothers in Sabaragamuwa province.

### **2.5. Sampling procedure**

The Sample size of this study was 10 pregnant teenage mothers in the age range of 13 to 20, an officer from the institute, one probation officer and one mid wife. In total there are 13 participants in the study.

### **2.6 Analysis of Data**

To examine the social challenges of teenage mothers

When examining the social challenges that are faced by these mothers, special emphasis is placed on the following factors

- Poverty

- The Mother has gone abroad by yielding guardianship of children to relations or to husband of the first marriage or to the second husband.
- These girls have lost a protected background.
- These girls have been labeled discriminatively by various institutions (school, community, women's homes)
- They have been rejected by their families.
- They do not have a good relationship with their family members.
- The teenage mother and their families lack education.
- These adolescent mothers have not received any sexual education.
- Post r pregnancy they lose opportunities to continue with their education.
- They have had love affairs in schools or outside of school with adult men.

### 3. FAMILY DISCRIMINATION

The primary background of every person in the societal system is the family unit. One's family helps other family members to build up his/ her own life. According to the society's opinion family will stand by you even if you lose everything. Society has named this "le bandeema". In this society a person cannot live without his/ her own family. It is a rough experience and unacceptable for an adolescent girl to live alone.

Table 01: Family discrimination

Source: field research data 2018

Family discrimination	Amount of students	Percentage %
Discriminated by own family	07	70
Not discriminated by own family	03	30
Total	10	100%

According to the above table 70% of under-age pregnant mothers in the womens' home have been rejected by their families. with only 30% having family acceptance, The reason for their pregnancy and the shame associated with it is not only considered their fault but also that of the family.

### **Case study No 01**

Name: Chamari, ( not real name) Age 17, Religion - Buddhist

Chamari was born on 08 October 1999. She is the oldest girl in her family – she has one sister and two brothers. Her father is 40 years old and mother is 36 years old. Her father separated from them about 10 years ago. Her mother remarried and lives abroad. The 3 children live with their aunts. Chamari attended school till grade 09. Her two brothers and one sister are still schooling.

Chamari was raped by one of villagers in 2015, and fell pregnant. The rapist forced her to keep it secret from everyone including her aunt. At the time of the rape, Chamari was having a love affair with a boy of her age. . She made a complaint to the police that "she was raped by her boyfriend". DNA Tests however revealed that she was raped by her uncle. Chamari's aunt has got to know about her pregnancy and with the assistance of the police and the court she was sent to the womens' home.

*Voice of Chamari... "I like to live with my younger brother, mother and sister. But I fell pregnant. They do not visit me. Even the father of the child does not come to see me. Mother does not like to talk with me. My Aunt also told my younger brother not to go to see me. I called my younger brother. He told me that although he likes to see me his aunt told him not to talk with me. We both cried".*

Because of the rejection by her family Chamari was stressed and frustrated. It is important for parents and family to have knowledge and awareness about the teenage mother's expectations and there should be a close relationship among the family members.

The researcher found that, mothers have been rejected by their own families. One reason for this is parents are living separately or are divorced. Or trying to avoid the stigma. According to the interviews that were e conducted by the researcher and after

reviewing these incidents it was found that mostly, fathers are deserting their families. There are no records about 50% of such mothers. . This mother enters into second marriages after their husbands have left. Step-fathers of that marriage either reject these girls or abuse them.

### ***Isolated them among their relatives***

Other than their parents they have only the relatives either from the mother's or father's side. About 80% of the girls in womens' homes have also been rejected by their relatives. When they appear in the court the relatives have stated that they cannot look after those girls because they do not want their own children to be misguided.

### ***Institutional discrimination***

Discrimination by the institution means they are differentiated by the institutions that provide service (villages, schools and other institutions)

Table 02: Institutional discrimination *Source: field research data 2018*

Institutional discrimination	Amount of students	Percentage %
At school	04	40%
At village	06	60%
Others	02	20%
Total	12	120%

This table showed that, the percentage of the school discrimination is 40%.the percentage of discrimination by the village where they lived is 60%. Discrimination by the other institutions is 20%.

***At school*** - Among under-age pregnant women there are some who were studying before they became pregnant and there are some who were stopped their studies before they become pregnant. Some have gone to the school without knowing that they are pregnant and were admitted to hospital when they got sick. The publicity of the pregnancy around the school caused difficulties for these teenage mothers.

### Case study No 2

Name: Gayani, (not real name) Age 13, Religion - Buddhist

She was born on 02 April 2003 was the oldest daughter in the family. Her mother's age was 48. Her parents were separated. Her Mother has remarried. Her Father lives with another woman. She was very talented student. Her sister also studied in some school. After her mother went abroad, she and her sister lived with their step farther. She did not like her step father because he harassed her. and often came home drunk. She was abused by the step farther and fell pregnant

*Voice of Giyan "I can't go to school again because the teachers and other children said unkind things. They did not care even though I cried. My mother was not here for me, my step mother also scolded me. Even though the school principal asked to come to school my grandma and step-mother they didn't come to see me. My friends who were neighbours also scolded me. one day I neglected all of them. I wanted to commit suicide, but I thought about my mother and brother and changed my mind."*

This girl suffered from oppression. The unexpected pregnancy causes an increased pressure and social challenges. These girls faced derision from family, school, friends and society. Her pregnancy also put an end to her studies, and she contemplated suicide. Her past negative experiences have affected her appropriation of society and education and.

#### *At village*

All these girls lived in a village. Before they come to the womens' home they had lived in these villages without any discomforts. Although there were problems in some families there were no reasons to leave the village. The unexpected pregnancy was criticized and the girl was marginalized by the villagers.

### Case study No 03

Name: Thakshila (not real name) Age 16, Religion - Buddhist

Thakshila was borne in 21st of February 2000. She has two brothers and one sister. She was the youngest in her family. Her

father passed away when she was very young. She lives with her mother. Her older brothers and sister work in different village.

As Thakshila mother works in the plantation sector she had to stay at home along. Her mother did not like this situation, and so she send her to her older sister's house. One day her brother in law came home from work and raped her and threatened her not to reveal the incident to anyone. She revealed this in court.

This girl didn't have any knowledge of sex and had not engaged in sexual activities before this incident. She hid her pregnancy until the second trimester. Her brother, mother and sister carried on with their lives and had no concern for her. When her sister found out about the pregnancy, she reported it to the police and obtained a court order to send her to the womens' home.

#### Voice of Thakshala

*I was told "you became a bad woman like her sister"*

*"My Brother has said he wanted to see me. The aunt who was living near my home has said to my sister that I had an affair with the cousin".*

#### **Mother migration**

Table 3: Mother migration      Source: field research data 2018

Mother migration	Amount of students	Percentage %
Mother migration	9	90%
Not Mother migration	1	10%
Total	10	100%

The girls in womens' home as her mother has gone abroad to alleviate their poverty. When her mother went abroad, this teenage lost the protection and love of mother. According to the case research 80% of girls are abused by their step-father, father or other relation in the family.

#### **Case number 04**

Name Vijayashanthi (not real name) Age 16 – Religion – Hindu)

Vijayshanthi was born on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2001. She is youngest in her family and she has two elder brothers who are 19 and 17 years old. Her father is a 43 years old and works as a labourer and her mother has gone abroad around 1 and ½ years ago as a migrant worker. They have good relationship with father's family. She studied till grade 3 and after that she has stopped her schooling. Both her brothers work as labourers away from home. Her father is an alcoholic and is always quarrelling with the family. Before her mother went abroad, she sent her daughter to her husband's brother's home for her safety.

She lived with father's brother (uncle) his wife, grandparent and with their children. Vijayshanthi helped to look after those children as well. Her father visited her sometimes but there was not a close relationship between father and daughter. After her mother went abroad, she only had connection with her mother via telephone. In 2015 on a Deepavali day she was raped by her uncle. She never told anyone about this incident. She continued to live in this home until the 6th month in her pregnancy, when a neighbour complained about the incident to police and Vijayshanthi was sent to a women's remand home and from there she was referred to the women's home.

### **Psychological challenges of teenage mothers**

#### **Unmanageable their life pattern**

There is a cycle in the life of every person. Men and women see gradual changes in their physical body and also their mental state. and are sometimes unable to control these changes and behaviours. Because of the rough and harsh experiences that had to face these girls become distressed. As their pregnancies progress the distress increases and they cannot control their emotions. Even a small incident triggers anger and they have negative thoughts.

#### **Aggressive behaviour**

About 70% of these mothers get angry with other residents in the home. 40% get angry with their own child whilst 30% get anger with the matron. After the birth of the child this anger is directed towards the child. All these mothers didn't behave in a cruel way

when the child was in the womb. Their behaviour was peaceful. But, after the birth of the baby their behaviour changed. They have conflicts with other mothers in this home especially when engaging in work.

### **Frustration**

They speak about these incidents in anger. According to institutional medical reports the regret they had before the childbirth gradually increased after childbirth. After discussions with them it is understood that they find it hard to face responsibility and also it causes problems and difficulties they never experienced before. This has affected their personality and they think that their lives have ended because of this incident. 80% of the girls don't think about a marriage. They firmly believe that no one will want to marry them and fear that the child will be abused like they were. This is an obstacle for them to starting a new life.

### **Lack of food appetite and fasting whole day**

Eating habits of these mothers are very poor as they spend the whole day by thinking about their life. They often go hungry have no interest in food or eating at regular times.

### **Lacking good health**

These mothers suffer from various illnesses physically and mentally due to starving and over thinking things. These mothers are encouraged to think about their diet as these under-age mothers even though developed in physically are under developed mentally.

### **Sleeplessness**

The mothers are negative about their situation and try to sleep during the day to avoid thoughts about their current situation and to deny the fate they had to face. Some mothers have sleepless nights.

### **Sexual behaviours**

According to the research 80% of the girls who are in this home do not have a proper education or understanding of sex. After they became pregnant their sexual behaviour patterns change. In the home they do not have any opportunities to meet men or to build up a connection with males or to behave in a sexual way with anyone.

But in the home they have focused on exploring and satisfying their sexual needs in other ways. They enter into homosexual relationships or have sexual relationships with their own child.

#### **Engaging sexual activities with the child**

These mothers don't like to talk about sexuality. Some mothers did not have sexual relationships with anyone before they were abused. Some had sexual relationships with their boyfriends. But some mothers in the home have allure that they engage in sexual activities with her own male infant. Mothers with these behaviours always try to be alone with her child. Fingering the genitalia or sucking the genitalia of the child is offensive activities that are engaged in by these mothers.

#### **Highly involving in homosexuality**

About 40% of girls in these homes engage in homosexual behaviours. There were conflicts among the girls and some girls are not very good friends. This home consists of several rooms and in each room there are about 3 or 4 mothers. As some mothers are transferred to other homes or taken away by guardians some rooms become empty. These rooms are used by mothers who are having homosexual relationships.

#### **Reason for teenage pregnancies**

The reasons why teenagers fall pregnant is that they do not have a proper sex education regarding in school or from their parents.

- Lack of sex education
- Unprotected sexual behaviors
- Having love affairs in their adolescence
- Lack of knowledge about being pregnant
- Lack of supportive environment to discuss sexual problems in school or at home.

#### **4. SUMMARY**

The ideology about teenage mothers is negative. There is no definite vision in society about the under-age mothers and about the social and psychological challenges that they are facing. Society

must take responsibility to support the situation that these girls have faced and be sympathetic to the harsh experiences that they have suffered. From this research the researcher has examined the challenges that are faced by the under-age mothers socially as well as mentally due to their pregnancy, the way they face to those challenges, their experiences, the reasons for under-age pregnancies and the womens' home which gives the protection to under-age mothers.

These girls have been abused by people they trusted like a father brother or relative mothers going abroad and that the unprotected background around the family have also caused this phenomenon. The abused girls have to face many social challenges and difficulties including psychological challenges.

## 5. RECOMMENDATION

Researcher has presented recommendations and suggestions are

### **As a government**

Most girls don't have a sex education. Therefor there is a rate of increasing pregnant women. To mitigate this situation, government educational policies and school syllabus should change. From grade 7 age appropriate sex education should be given to the students and that subject should be a compulsory subject. Tougher Legal action against abusers and rapists

Appointing a social worker or an instructor in every school in Sri Lanka especially for rural and urban areas.

Education about the birth of a healthy child, increasing knowledge about pregnancy and advice about the physical and mental problems should be establishing the government institutions.

Dedicated telephone lines where privacy and confidentiality is protected

Creating a friendly and supportive environment to avoid social phobia or stigma

Make the changes to national policies for mothers going abroad.

### **Socially**

Awareness by society about the challenges that under-age mothers have to face socially and mentally

Programmes should be launched to create awareness for parents and adolescents.

Holding programmes for the protection of girls and teenage mother by labour organizations and the other institutions.

### **At school level**

Appointing a suitable teacher who is able to teach sex education and to have discussions with under-age girls in confidence

Developing good attitudes at school among the teachers and the students

Increasing Awareness for parents and teachers at school level regarding the behaviour of teenagers

Discussing sexuality and reproduction at school in an open way and give students awareness about these issues

### **As a family**

Especially mothers should pay more attention to teenage girls

Should discuss in an open way about the sexuality and the problems that they face and how to stay safe

When mothers go abroad, they should think about their daughters and what protection is there for them.

### **Buddhist Social Work intervention**

Contribution as a social worker to minimize social and psychological challenges that under-age pregnant mothers have to face

When working with teenage pregnant mothers a social worker can play the role of mediator, facilitator, educator and organizer.

Organizing programmes to create awareness in teenagers about sexuality and reproduction

Organizing a programme for community and school teachers to have awareness about teenage mothers and how to work with them

Provide support to poor families whether it be legal, social,

mental or connecting resources.

### **Mediator**

When making national government policies a social worker can work as a mediator

Work as a mediator to maintain good relationships among under-age mothers who are in government residence and also with their families.

Conducting special research and monthly valuation regarding the girls whose mothers are in foreign countries

### **Educator**

Equipping matrons and the staff who are work in these institutions with education and proper knowledge about how to work with the under-age mothers and their mental condition

Have forums for open and friendly discussion and instruction about the problems faced by under-age mothers.

Launching programmes for the girls who are in adolescence to provide awareness them about their protection.

Launching programmes in rural and urban level and for the community who work in estates regarding under- age pregnancy sex education and the protection of adolescents.

### **Facilitator**

Connecting with GO, NGO, INGO for the parents who are in low economic families.

### **School social worker**

Organizing programme to aware the teenagers about the sexuality and the reproduction.

Organizing a programme for school teachers to aware about teenage mothers and how to work with them

Specially paying attention about the young girls who are not coming to the school.

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# TIBETAN BUDDHIST APPROACH TO A HAPPY AND HARMONIOUS FAMILY LIFE IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE

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by Prem Shankar Shrivastava\*

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of Family is an unique creation of human mind. Significant ingredients of its happiness are E3 + PH i.e. Education, Ethics, Economics and Psychophysical health. Being a cultivation of mind, Buddhism is a culture of truth, forgiveness, reconciliation, co-operation, harmony, peace and happiness. Reconciliation heals past injustices and fosters behavioral transformation of individual towards friendships (Metta), one of the elements of Brahmavihara. Vipasana is the marvelous gift of the Buddha to human way of life. Buddhism deals all aspects of human welfare. Welfare of a family is one of them. Aiming the welfare of the human, modern social scientists have also thrown a flood of light on it according to their own ways. But they have not reached up to the mark as that of the Buddha. Tibetan culture as well as family life is the burning example before the world.

## INTRODUCTION

### Family

“Set of relations, especially parents and children, all the descendants of common ancestor, lineage or group of similar things people etc.; or group of related genera of animals”

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\* Doctor, Department of Tibetan Studies, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar-803111

Thus according to this definition family can be divided into two. One is biological based on blood relation such as parent's children, and relatives. Another is non- biological based on their features, origination, and ideology. Family of Flora and fauna, Language, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist etc. are in this category.

Many kinds of biological families are formed in different countries. Two are significant i.e. the nuclear the smallest one parents & children mostly prevalent in the west and another is extended family in which all relatives of one ancestor along with nuclear. It is in vogue in oriental countries.

### **Family: Buddhist as well as Tibetan perspective.**

Keeping in view all these above mentioned divisions as well as definition and concept of oriental and occidental of a family H.H the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama always says that the whole world is one family despite of varieties.

All sentient and non-sentient including natural elements such as Air, water, Earth, Sky, Sun, Moon, Fire. etc., are sub-families of one ancestor from which they all have evolved known as a single family tree i.e. the nature.

### **Kinds of family in Buddhism:**

According to Buddhist view three types of sub-families related to human world are evolved out of one family tree. These are as follows:

**The Five Buddha Families:** It is highly philosophical and imaginary. It is based on Buddha's nature as well as the idea of Five-Enjoyments Body of Buddha's. These are five types of knowledge inherent in knowing. The Five Buddha "Families" consist of Buddha's as family heads (Fathers), their female Buddha consorts (mothers), several Bodhisattvas seen as their spiritual descendants (sons and daughters), and several other minor figures.

Again, since the wisdom of self-arising knowledge appears in all kinds of forms there are the Vairocana ("illuminator"), Aksobhaya ("Unshakeable") Amitabha ("Infinite light") Ratnasambhava ("Sower of Jewels") Amoghasidhi ("Action Accomplishment"). They do not exist apart from the expressive power of knowing.

The great Tibetan saint Gampopa (1079-1153) argues that the Buddha nature is present in all living beings (Brahmapandit, 2017, p.142) Eventually they will all attain the supreme awakening of a Buddha if they endeavors assiduously (Brahmapandit, 2017, p.141). Prior to that one must free oneself from this delusory world in Sanskrit “Samsara”, in Tibetan “Khor-va”, i.e. the cycle of birth and death from time without beginning. It is “delusory” because it stems from ignorance or not knowing of ultimate reality and because it induces delusions (of Permanence where there is none etc.)

Whenever any member of a family of Tibetan community dies all other relatives pray to those Five Buddhas before the dead person to remind him what he has practiced during his life. Such prayer is known as Bardo-Thorold. Duration of the prayer is of 49 days. Ideology of Bardo-Thorold awakens human beings and shows them the right path to lead a virtuous life in family. Wishing that dead family member to remain happy in the next world teaches all other living members of the family to cultivate seeds of altruism and high compassion and live harmoniously with all other members so long as they are in this world (Fremantle,F.& Trungpa,C. p-xx).

### **Laity family:**

It is based on biological relation .It consists of a mother, a father, grand parents and children and other relatives concerning the same pedigree.

### **Samgha family:**

It is based on ideology. It consists of teachers, pupils, co-learners, senior and junior learners' based on particular ideology. In this family Acharyas are regarded as parents disciples, like sons, Co-learners like brothers and sisters. Interest, aim, and ideals of a samgha family is same. The Buddha is regarded as the spiritual father of all members of the monastic community (David, T.W.R. and Carpenter,J.E.81); They live together, think for others and for the welfare of human world in general and the samgha family to which they belong to in particular. In laity family all members are related with each other physically whereas samgha family are related with each other psychically.

## **Happy Family:**

When all member of every family get along well just like a group of different musical instruments which harmoniously produce a soothing music like symphony is called a healthy, happy, harmonious as well as peaceful family which is lacking today.

## **Present Scenario of Family life in Global Perspective:**

We are living in a new era of 21<sup>st</sup> century known as materialistic period. Charles Dickens once called it “Hard Time” pressures and tensions which are concomitant to economic growth are eroding the value system that was integral part of our ethos. Changes are taking place in all directions and every walk of our life. The fires of angers and hatred are raging. It is the time of rate-race, confusion, great losses, war, and continuous conflicts; happy family life has become a dream. Unhappy conjugal life, familial violence, drug addiction, extra marital relations, bastard, delinquent children etc. are on the rampage. Resultantly disharmonious life of a couple disturbs not only the life of the two but it affects the whole family. It hampers the personality of children too. Naturally society can never be unaffected with that very family just like a rotten mango spoils the mangoes of the whole bucket.

Most of the populace are suffering from many mental agonies, committing suicide and murder, passing sleepless nights while having excellent comfortable bed and abundant material facilities to lead a joyful life so on and so forth. Families ‘values are almost non-existent. Although problems of family life are all over the world yet they are more in the west. Data of divorce rate is higher in the west than the eastern countries.

World record relating to divorce acknowledges us that 87% in Luxemburg, Belgium 70% Spain, 65%, France 55%, China 3%, and India less than 1%. (UNO Report, 2018) The lowest rate of divorce in India is due to Indian traditional way of family life in general and Buddhist tradition in particular life.

A number of social organizations along with scientists, psychologists, economists etc. have been trying to solve such perplexed problems. Yet needful success has not been achieved till

today. Efforts would be made to throw a flood of light as to how such baffling problem of a family, society as well the globe could be mitigated in the light of Buddhist ideology. For being a minimal unit of society family life plays a pivotal role for the development and depletion of it.

### **Views of Einstein and the Buddha**

Ignorance is the sole cause of suffering, said the Buddha (Goenka,1998, pp. 155-56) In fact we all are not fully conversant with the truth that we all are related with each other. If we understand it in reality, we will also understand the fact that one's happiness is based upon others happiness. For each and every thing is inter-related. Again all phenomena of the globe are interdependent. Conditionality is the basis of their existence as the Buddha has described it in the principle of dependent origination. (Goneka, 1998, p.1) The same thing has been explained by the great saint Nagarjuna in the theory of emptiness (shunyata) that none has its own existence or identity alone (Madhymikarika,p-11, chap, 24, 18)

His holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama also always affirms the same that if a piece of paper falls anywhere on this earth trembling occurs in the universe because all are related with each others.

Although the world fame scientist, Einstein, the great has not told anything about the theory of dependent origination and emptiness yet it can be said that the theory of relatively and the phenomenal relationship of the Buddha is same to some extent. Difference between the two is that one deals the aspect which can be practiced only on this physical world and another is related with transcendental world along with present one too. Way of explanation also differs only.

To understand functions of husband and wife Einstein theory speaks that it is necessary to understand the natural function of heart and mind. Both are to be cooperated for the inner work to create a venture of their place alike in masculine and feminine energies. Here male qualities have been with the mind while the feminine energies with the heart.

The above mentioned fact is quite clear in the form of husbands and wives of the families that we find all over the globe. We find that

when mind is either perturbed or peaceful, angry or happy then heart palpitation becomes accordingly. Husband and wife in a family represent mind and heart respectively. So they also follow the same status and feeling and behave like that.

With regard to energy Einstein and the Buddha affirms that all things are energy. Here there is one difference between the two that while Einstein worked with his own mind rational side the Buddha took help of heart, body and chakras. Einstein took help of mind in a laboratory with certain external instruments while the Buddha took help of yogic practices, Vipashyana meditation system, self-realization beneath the tree in the open field. The Buddha has propounded his unfathomable ideology with the help of internal intuition whereas Einstein has propounded his theory with the help of objective system which can be measured by any one (The Fusion of Einstein and Buddha: spiritual science creates a New vision of reality).

Regarding religion and science Einstein himself once said that where science stops religion and spirituality begins. He further said that religion is blind without science and science is lame without Religion and spirituality. His remarks about Buddhism are also very high. He says that if there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs it would be Buddhism.

Thus the similar thought of Einstein and the Buddha is well expressed with regard to family life that we see in the form of male and female all over the world. It appears that different energies prevalent in the global are manifested psychophysical relations of male and female.

### **Education/Mental Training:**

Ignorance can be ended through proper education. The greatest gift of nature to human being is rationality. Rational mind can achieve happiness in this life and afterwards of it. In Tibetan Buddhism cultivation of mind is highly emphasized. Yogāchār School also says that the whole world is nothing but the mind only. Mind as well as mental phenomena play very significant role in every walk of human life. Family life is not an exception. The Buddha has said:

1. “ Manopubbangma dhamā,

Manosettha Manomaya

Manasa ce paduthena  
 Bhasati vakaroti va,  
 tato nam dukkhamaneti,  
 Cakkamva vahato padam.”

2. “Manopubbangma dhamma

Manosettha manomaya;

Manasa ce pasannena

Bhasati va karoti va ;

Tato nam sukkhamaneti.

Chaya, va anapayani.”

(Goneka, 1998, p. 1)

That mind works in all human activities. Accordingly man suffers or enjoy in this world and afterwards. Mind is very powerful and active. It is always working. It is very difficult to control it. Harnessing the mind of people is very difficult task. Einstein once said that even atomic energy which shakes the whole world cannot train a man's mind. He says it can be trained and harnessed through proper cultivation and guidance. Tibetan Buddhism deals various kinds of mental training based on Abhidhama and teachings of other great seers like Atisha, Nagarjuna etc. to harness the human mind which enables every individual to enjoy enormous mental peace. Being free from negativity such persons live harmoniously and happily in family, society or elsewhere in the world.

### **Buddhist and Modern psychology**

Vigyanvāda is a description and explanation of psychic phenomena which deals with various processes of mental aspects of human beings to elevate them to such a high state that they would be able to get rid of all sorts of sufferings and enjoy enormous mental peace. Modern psychologists like Wundt, Freud, Jung and Adler etc. have explored some psychic methods for the treatment of persons suffering from mental disorders. These are not new. Only ways of treatment differ.

Freud's pleasure and pain principle deals id, Ego and superego and its relation with conscious, subconscious and unconscious aspects of mind. Human behaviour is guided by them. Gratification Of desire psychophysical needs during childhood is limited upto id. From adolescent to youth and thereafter function of ego and superego also begins along with id. When Desire originates from it gratification ego comes instantly and awakens the organism about the surroundings whether it is favourable for the same. The superego comes at last and suggest that that should be done according to the then situation, norms of society and ethics as well as morality then the individual acts accordingly. On the basis of this natural principle, case history, behavior and some other techniques, along with his own intuition Freud treats his patients. Detecting reason for the disease of a particular patient cures him. Whereas the Buddha, the Great psychiatrist as well as social physician he preached human as to how one will remain free from any mental agony. He deals causes of suffering and its elimination through eight fold path, middle way, dealt in four noble truth. Numerous mental exercises have been suggested by him to human for keeping sound mind. He further says that just like physical exercises and good food keep one's body fit and healthy so is the mental exercises and pious thoughts. Vipassana system of meditation of the Buddha is the greatest gift to human world .Various kinds of methods prescribed by the Buddha are precautionary measures and at the same time curing too. He further says that most of the physical diseases are related with mind. In this way the theory of the Buddha is vast and deep. Today is the time of interdisciplinary study and research. Research should be done in that very direction. Recently in western countries people are practicing various kinds of mental training for balancing emotions. UK schools have begun teaching mindfulness, relaxation, techniques of breathing, vipassana meditation and methods as subjects of study to regulate emotions of children. Almost 370 schools have already been imparting for some years such subjects along with other subjects (The Times of India, page 21). It should be started like this in other parts of the world too.

Regarding The Fire Sermon of Adityapariyaya-sutta, which occurs in two places in Mahavagga of Vinaya pitaka and in the

Sanyuktanikaya of Sutta pitaka, T S Eliot says that the Sermon delivered by the Buddha is very comprehensive. It covers all the psychological processes involved in the entanglement of the mind with passion of all kinds. It includes all the senses visual auditory, olfactory, gustatory , textile and bodily. Also includes mental attachment perhaps a stored in the active memory. It should be noted that it does not confine itself to sexual passion only. Going through The Wasteland it can be said that Buddhism exercised strong attraction on T.S. Eliot and he was highly influenced by Buddhist philosophy and psychology.

The Buddha has already taught more than that. Regarding Buddhist psychology including Tibetan tradition in the context of modern psychology it can be said that modern psychologists have had a limited success in the treatment of sick mind. They are still in experimental stage. In many cases they fail to relieve the tensions and inner conflicts that come through the lack of a spiritual anchorage in our turbulent and disturbed person, family ,society and so on and so forth. It can be a substitute for that deep inner awareness of spiritual values, and that sense of security in a dangerous world which Buddhism gives. Charles Gustava Jung, the world fame - great psychologist believed that Buddhism was the most perfect religion the world has seen. Leo Matos, 21<sup>st</sup> century psychiatrist also praises Tibetan Buddhist system of meditation and various kinds of mental training for the welfare of human world.

Nurturing as well as learning of a man begins in a family at first from his childhood. From the first moment of life child depends on Parents .H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama always says that infants, kids and little boys feel secure and comforts in one's mother lap. Thus family plays a significant role on building personality of man. It is the first and foremost school for educating an individual.

### **Ethics: Glimpses of Tibetan Buddhist Family:**

Tibetan Buddhism is known as esoteric Buddhism as its founder, Padmasambha himself was versed in it .He was known as guru Rinpoche among Tibetans. Tibetan cultural life is unique. Its traditional culture is essentially religious and monastic. (Tolstoy, L. and Dolan ,B. expedition report,(1903) speaks that between ten to

twenty percent of the male population become monks (Rosemary, p.21) (Tibet from barbaric darkness only with the dawn of its Buddhism in the seventh century of our era)

In about 7<sup>th</sup> century Ad. Tibetan Buddhism has begun with General Buddhist outlook born in India with the gradual formation of four major sects such as nying-ma, kargyu, sakya and gelug. It is also known as Lamaism due to the prominence of lama in it.

The era of Lamaism may be divided into (1) Primitive of “Augustine” (from king thri-sron-Destsan’s reign to the persecution by Lan-dar-ma)

(2) Medieval, including the reformation age, (3) Modern Lamaism, from the priest-kingships of the Dalai Lama in the seventeenth century. Dalai Lamas can be regarded as Bodhisattva’s family. They remain unmarried and think for the welfare of all sentient and non-sentient.

It is the duty of a family to teach its progenies, perfect education so that as a man with well-disciplined mind, good moral character, profound knowledge would be able to deal easily economic and social affairs of family and lead a happy and harmonious life. Such well-developed personality would be a boon for society.

Today the motto of education is earning. People are trying to teach those subjects through which they can earn more and more money and to enjoy materialistic life.

In traditional Tibetan education people learn how to cultivate mind and study of various texts of kanjur and Tanjur along with other subjects.

The aim of family life is to acknowledge human world to lead a happy and harmonious life to save the world from annihilation. To achieve the goal one has to inculcate Bodhichitta which is the key of education.

The etymological meaning of the Tibetan term for Bodhichitta, is to enhance one’s courage on mental attitude. An awakening of man from within is Bodhi. It refers to a state of balance and harmony in the life of man who attained it. Conjugal as well as any kind of social life can never be unhappy if an individual has a state

of balance mind. Meditation lies at the heart of the spiritual life of Tibetan Tradition. The last three stages of the noble- Eight fold path i.e. Perfect Effort, Perfect Awareness, and Perfect Samadhi- are all concerned in one way or another with meditation. Samadhi or meditation is also the fifth of the six Parmitas or perfections, which according to the Mahayana tradition form the path of the Bodhisattva. H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama always says that one should regard all living beings as if they were one's own relatives like parents, wife, sons & daughters so on and so forth. It is certain that everybody we meet has at some time a thousand life ago, been our parents or anyone family member compassion arises for them naturally and we will think for the benefit of all living beings which is the ideology of Bodhisattva.

Developing inter human relations cordial,observance of moral precepts Sila along with Brahmavihara which refers to amity (metta) , compassion (karuna), rejoice in others joy (mudita) and indifference to pleasure and pain (upekkha) is essential. Along with cultivation of mind modern subjects also should be taught so that man should be self-dependent for his lively-hood.

Modern days social scientist have explained the purpose of education is life Adjustment. Intellectual Discipline, Psychological maturity, Moral character and freedom consecutively by Florence B. Stratemeyer, Arthur Bestor, Arthur T. Jersild, Ernest M. Ligon, R. Freeman Butts (Phenix,pp.25 -121).

Tibetan Buddhism has already explained all those ideologies in its system of education. Cultivation of Bodhichitta and other mental phenomena acknowledge human world more than that even. It would be discussed here in the context of social life in general as well as different aspects of family life in Tibetan tradition.

Prior to deal way of family life in Tibetan society it would be proper to mention common social relations of family members and way of life as prescribed in *sigalovāda-Sutta* in pali canon. Tibetan traditional society is centering round Buddhism though the influence of its Bon culture, ecology and other neighboring countries cannot be denied. At the very outset the Buddha urges family members to practice virtues like generosity (donation)

(Dhammapada Atthakatahā, vol. ii. p.102). Such teaching was widely practiced by Tibetan. This system will reduce the curse economy of disparity to some extent.

In making the efforts to attain the ideal state of perfect man the Laymen are preached to fulfill their worldly duties for the good and interest of themselves as well as for others without any attachment.

Six types of fundamental principles of social ethical relationship may be derived from the teachings of the Buddha contained in the Singalovāda-Sutta (Goneka,1998,p-136-146). Here the Buddha instructs an young man sigal about the real meaning of worshiping the six directions properly as done by a noble person while explaining the significant phenomena of social relations. This discourse also shows that how each and every member of a human family/society, in general, has to act according to mutual interest. East, South, West, North Nadir and Zenith, these six directions are mentioned here as symbols for six type of social relationships. Each group of human society including family relationship is setup here as a direction through these six type of relations. The discourse lays great emphasis upon a specific moral code of a family and social behavior yet, it cannot be regarded as a rigid social code (Goenka, p.136-137).

This discourse is the main consideration in the form of certain duties and obligations of house holder towards his wife, children, parents, servants, workers, friends and companions, Teachers and religious persons. In Fact it is mainly due to the variations of the nature of these obligations that the social positions of an individual also vary as a husband, a father, an employer a friend, a pupil and a religious lay adherents & monk (Anguttar Nikāya, vol.iv,p.45).

Rights and duties of each group of these six categories are indicated by the Buddha in the context of social relationship.

### **Husband and Wife**

The Buddha says that one's wife should be set up with respect, by handing over authority and by giving her adornments. As for wife is concerned she is also advised to arrange the work of the house hold well, treat the attendants properly, be faithful, look after the income,

be skillful and diligent in everything that out to be done. A husband or a wife behaves properly in accordance with moral obligations, rights and duties in running the household business ...

In accordance with the travelers the Dolan and Tolstoy, the status of woman was remarkably high as compared with that of other Asian countries.

Tibetan woman were equal partners of men in most matters. women had the right to inherit and run a household. The women were very influential and esteemed in the Tibetan society. Amongst various kinds' of marriage polygamy, polyandry and monogamy all are prevalent. Polyandry system was more prevalent. In this system property remains undivided in the family.

Marriage was a secular affair. Both marriage and divorce were considered personal matter. Divorce like marriage was a decision made by the two people involved (Stein, optic, p.100).

The couple who wished to be divorced usually tried to arrive at an agreement as to the disposition of property and children, divorced woman could remarry easily. Tibet was surprising and unique in Asia in its attitude toward the role of woman. The Tibetan gentleman address their wives generally as 'La' or the Honorable little wife ('chun- chung'). (South western Journal of Anthropology , pp.65-68).

In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries the saint Mila- Repa's father entrusted his wife and children to his younger brother (Evans wentz,W.Y. p.26).

The secular experience of the whole human race showing that several families could not live in peace and concord under the same root was quite contrary to Tibetan way of life. A Family of men with one wife and several common descendants meant their ancestral estate remained undivided and they saved money also Such unique feature is only because of the influence of teachings of the Buddha. They practice it in their day to day life whole -heartedly. It appears that Tibetan system of family life differs from normal one and deviate from Buddhist ideology. In fact the way of life may differ but not the ideology of the Buddha because the Buddha has emphasized of happy harmony and peaceful life.

All were living harmoniously srong tsen-gampo, the 33th

king of Tibet got inspiration for Buddhism from his two wives. One is Bhrikuti, the daughter of the king lichvi of Nepal. Another is wencheng Li a daughter of, Chinese king of Tang dynasty. Both were Buddhist. Both lived along with another Tibetan wife harmoniously and taught him Buddhist ideology. As a result of it Srong Tsen gaompo made a tremendous effort to establish Buddhism in Tibet. Padmasambhava, the founder of esoteric Buddhism in Tibet also married two wives and live with them happily. Here polygamy, polyandry or any other system of marriage does not matter so far as harmony is concerned. Harmony as well as love has got no any relation with physical contact rather it is purely a psychic affairs. Today monogamy is widely prevalent because it is approved by society in most of the countries yet people are not happy with their conjugal life. Differences on many issues have cropped up and they quarrel with each other and at last they got separated Negative thought as well as ignorance is responsible for such happening that positive thoughts based on Buddhist ideology such as friendship (Mattriy), happiness (Mudita), compassion (Karuna) and in difference uperka, the elements of Brahm Bihar, middleway tolerance alteration extra enhance love and harmony not only for the members of his her family but for others too. They extend their love to all those who are not directly associated with them even.

### **Parents and children**

The Buddha strongly emphasizes on proper respect and love towards one's parents in general. Five conditions are shown in this teaching to be the ideal factors for making the mutual relationship of this group harmonious. These are thinking that he was brought up by parents as a son should support his parents should do such thing which ought to be done, should establish the family ( the wealth) should engage in the family heritage ( keep up its tradition) should grant donations for the parents after their death. On their turn, parents also should keep their children away from evil, introduce them to good ,have them trained in a trade, unite them with proper wives and handover the inheritance to them in time.

The supreme position occupied by the parents is further

confirmed by several other passages of the Pali canon. At one place the Buddha declared that parents are as sacrificial fire. He further says that this venerable fire should be rightly attended for happiness, by esteeming, revering, venerating and worshiping them (Goenka, p.4). It is also declared one who neglects one's own parents and even does wrong to them, he cannot expect any blessing in the life but the doom of ruin and hell. Such statements reveal the Buddha's acceptance of the highly valued position of good parents.

### **Friends and companions**

Friends and companions belonging to different families grow love and affection to each other after getting association at various stages of their life such as during childhood at playground in school, college, during youth in office, in monastery as co-learner, co-teachers and so on and so forth become friend. Friend in need is friend indeed confirmed by the Buddha. They should be reciprocal in their helping nature.

### **Teacher and taught: - The ideal underlying**

The relationship within this group is highly valued in Buddhism. A teacher should provide resources and methods to impart knowledge as well as wisdom to the best of his capacity. He should love his pupil like his own son. The pupil also should pay high regard to his teacher more than his father even. His keen attention to the lesson, his good will by doing something useful for his teacher even in his day to day life should be maintained.

### **Employer and employee**

The Buddha's advice to both is based on their mutual harmonies relationship. Aim of both should be interdependency in boosting the organization so that both should be happy and wealthy. According to the Buddha's advice the employee should be employed by arranging the worth according to their ability, by granting proper wages and food, by attending to them in illness, by sharing special enjoyment with them and by granting them holidays at proper times. In turn the employee should be keen to fulfill his duties to the employer's contentment. They should be anxious to make himself agreeable in deed and word, should wait upon his employer, should be eager to

please him and should speak friendly words to him.

### **Lay followers and monks**

This is a special type of social group especially significant in Buddhist social setup in general and in Tibetan society in particular. The relationship between the monks and the lay followers operate on the basis of mutual help and interdependence. Tibetan culture is essentially religious and monastic. According to Tolstoy,L. Dolan,B.1903. and It was estimated that between ten to twenty percent of the twenties to twenty percent of the male population, became monks (Evans and Marry, p.21) Practically most of the placed of Tibetan villages are occupied by monasteries in which life is still controlled by specified rules and regulation. The development of religious and social cultures in Tibet stands side on by side on the path (Goenka,p-73-77).

These principles work as the balancing factors for the proper preservance of the mutual relationship of the six types of social groups. Although they are negative in formulation yet positive recommendations are implied by them. Lastly it is essential to add here that in this system of relationship a detailed and specific positive code of social conduct has been presented by this discourse which was deeply rooted in Tibetan society. This discourse would be useful even in the present context the world over if it is practiced a properly.

### **Economics**

Economics is the back bone of a family. Regarding financial affairs common economic interest is the most vital ingredients that bind a family with its members. Any division of interest between wife and husband on economic terms shakes the very fabric of all sorts of family relationship; even sexual relationship is reduced to external level only. (Wundt,pp. 225-227).

Traditional cultural Economy of Tibet was Agricultural and nomadic. According to French Traveller Beligatti in 1739, the life and property were valued almost equally where the head of a family died; (Sandberg, p.28). Quarreling for property was meager though polygamy, polyandry and monogamy all were prevalent. At least one

child of a family becomes monk who never accepts anything from the family share. The monastic hierarchs continued the life of the lords not to speak of the independent states ruled by local princes. Thus this whole structure rested on the Tibetan religious practice and the belief in a tiered heaven at the top of which the Buddha is conceived as residing and the Dalai Lama, his human representative on earth. (Stein, p. 106). Every lay official had a monastic counterpart. Therefore the socio-cultural life was mostly controlled by the monasteries. When conditions remain peaceful, people were encouraged to develop trade and commerce between the neighboring countries, which had always been a vital element in the Tibetan economy. Inscription, dated to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Attributed to monks and merchants, indicating early commercial transactions. Commercial operation was their line due to extreme scarcity of agricultural field. Nepalese coin and Chinese Tarter were used for all transactions. The Indian merchants in particular did not accept any of the above coins; Indian goods were sold either in exchange offer-barter or an exchange of gold dust. (Lamb, pp.116-120).

Since the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D in the region of the king srong- Btsan-sgam- po, there has been a great spiritual and cultural exchange between India and Tibet.

Large number of Indian scholars of theology and Buddhists with their philosophy, religions theories, cultural habits, symbols, motifs, deities, rituals, literatures and also important manuscripts had greatly enriched Tibet.

Tibet was engaged in a different way of life based on Buddhist ideologies the meaning of which has to be understood in indigenous term. The western notion of progress has not affected this way of life even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when British imperialist hand knocked rudely at its doors.

### **Karl Marx and the Buddha**

Many wise person of the east and those of the west had accepted the “Challenges of hungers” since the lifetime of Zoroaster (1000 B.C.) each personality analyzed the sources of human hungers from the one’s own angle of vision. Among them we cite the thoughts of the Buddha C. 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and Karl Marx (1818-1883).

They had their humane outlook regarding the human environment. Multiple of observations in the East and in the West appeared in the history of human since the pre- Christian days. Those personalities had their separate humane perspective. Their contributions made an effective advancement the world over. About one third of the world population follow the teachings of sakyaputra Gautama, the Buddha. And almost every member of the working class and on the have notes today rely on the Marxian analysis to overcome the tyranny of the exploiters. Marxism thus becomes a solace to the economically handicapped and the downtrodden. A critical study of the social economy with reference to the materialistic approach is dealt by Marx. The Buddha has shown his middle path to appease the source of the human.

Hungers by understanding the self- nature( svabhāva) of the matter. The human suffers on account of one's ignorance avidya. One is the human mind, serene and effulgent by nature. But due to cravings led by two veils the average mental suffers in frustrations and depression (Pathak, pp.16-17).

Acquiring perfect education if one practices ethics and lead a spiritual life he will be balanced mentally. All activities of a man of Balanced mind would be balanced and moderate. Financial affairs is not an exception earning saving and expenditure will be proportionate. He earns money to support his family just like a bee extracts Honey without harming flowers as prescribed in Buddhism. Miserliness, and extravagance both are prohibited. Followers of the ideologies would be happy whatever wealth is possessed by them. Contentment is the greatest wealth. In short it can be said that significant ingredients such as education ethics economics provide good psychophysical health of an individual if all activities based on it based on Sheela ,Samadhi and Pragya. Naturally Family will be happy and harmonious.

Karl Marx once said that if religion is the soul of soulless conditions, the heart of heartless world, the opium of the people, then Buddhism certainly is not such a religion. If by religion is meant a system of deliverance from the ills of life then Buddhism is the religion of religions. In Digh- Nikaya a proper work ethic is recommended for the laity (Gahapatis) and highlighted socio-

economic responsibilities for them which focus on a series of actions based on materialistic relationship.

## CONCLUSION

Consequently duties in respect to householders who live with family members, kith and kin, descendant, and neighbors have been dependent to socio-ethical norms of society.

Extended family in general and Indian in particular teaches love and affection. A child living amongst many members such as parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, cousin, etc learn love with their association if they are of positive thought. Home/family is the first learning place for human. Because children learn love from mother first then father, uncles, grandparents so on and so forth. Those who do not love their parents and grandparents or another family member they will never love anyone including wife/husband. Buddhism teaches to pay high regards and affection to ones parents, grandparents and other elders of the family.

Tibetan Buddhism has emphasizes loving kindness and compassion along with other virtues. Compassion (Karuna) is a great virtue in Buddhism. The buddha talks of developing great compassion means developing the mind (Goneka,pp. 355-56). In the Tibetan tradition compassion is analyzed as universal sympathetic understanding. Even at the cost of suspension of one's own emancipation, one should be ready to help others due to karuna. It has individualist and social aspect both. It needs to be developed individualistically and then collective extension is possible. A Bodhisattava should practice four psycho-physical modes of living known as Maitri(empathy), Karuna ,compassion, Mudita(sympathetic joy) and Upakua (equanimity and impartiality ) which are interrelated. Bodhisattava desires enlightenment for all beings and not for himself only. He is in grief on account of the suffering of others and does not care for his own happiness.(Jatakmala 41.1) He desires welfare and good of the world. All his faults are destroyed when his heart is full of karuna . He loves all beings like a mother loves her only child.(Lankaavatara sutra) Karuna consists in realizing the equality of oneself and others as equal to himself, he gets rid of I and you; "yours" and "mine". He

learns to feel love and joy of others like his own. His mind must be overwhelmed and saturated with the feeling of pity for others that it is impossible for him to think of his own enlightenment. Thus altruism is recognized and recommended as root motivation of the Bodhisattva.

How one should cultivate loving kindness and compassion within oneself has been described in Tibetan Buddhism. The vows of Bodhisattva to help all beings are explained as the appropriate response to the fact that all living beings have at one time or another been a parent and relatives. For Karma and rebirth theory says that our dead relatives are maybe living as animal or any other form of creature therefore, all living beings throughout the six realms can be considered as father and mother as our other relatives. Naturally loving kindness and compassion will arise for all beings in our minds.

The present Dalai Lama says that Buddhism is fully associated with trees since its inception. He also advise human to learn altruism from trees which give humane fruits, leaves, plants shelter, wood for furniture and fuel but it never demand anything from human.

Today more than ever before, life must be characterized by a sense of universal Responsibility, not only individual to individual in a family, nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other form of life.

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# IMPORTANCE OF BUDDHISTIC QUALITIES AND ETHICS FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

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Ven. I. G. Pasadike Thero

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## INTRODUCTION

The noble words of Lord Buddha gave birth to a vast number of philosophies, cultures, traditions, and Practices. Those teachings have supported a lot of living beings to develop their minds and reach ultimate levels. In general most of those concepts are directed to develop the human mind. By developing the mind, gain access to advance Buddhistic qualities. For a better and sustainable society, a culture based on a proper philosophy or advanced teaching is very important. We have to study and understand how to reach that sustainability, from the individual to nations, and study how the world functions through common concepts. According to the Buddhist pathway, Lord Buddha introduced different techniques to develop once qualities and mind. In that pathway to develop Buddhist qualities and mind, the proper atmosphere is very important. In that case, Buddhistic Ethics contributes a major part. Human beings are social creatures, so they can't live alone in society. But according to Buddhist teachings, total isolation is also not advised, unless the mind is well trained and developed. Because of that need to introduce a system which can integrate with people and develop mind as well. So Buddhistic qualities and Buddhistic Ethics support each other in the journey to develop the mind.

According to Buddhism sustainable society is not only based on ordinary resources but also spiritual values. To find the way to sustainable Society must focus on a system that can develop those spiritual qualities together with wealth. To recognize what are the

Buddhist qualities and ethics have to use Buddhist canonical texts and other explanations. To get a proper understanding of sustainable society to have to use modern explanations together with Buddhistic knowledge.

There is an uncountable number of qualities explained by Lord Buddha, among them list out some of the selected qualities which support the sustainability of a society under the following groups.

Supreme Qualities - 24 supreme qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

Spiritual Qualities - Mindfulness, Concentration, Awareness, and Tranquillity.

Social Qualities - Metta (Loving-Kindness), Karuna (Compassion), Mudita (Sympathetic Joy) and Upeksha (Equanimity)

Behavioural Qualities - Tolerance, Generosity, Respect, Caring, Satisfaction, and Gratitude etc.

Buddhist ethics are a set of guidelines as well as qualities, a number of Buddhist Ethics are widely explained but we can simply divide those ethics into three main groups.

Ethics for ordinary lay people who live in a common society.

Ethics for renouncers (lay people who renounce their ordinary life)

Ethics for Monks

As explained above if some one practice the path and develop these qualities results will be there accordingly. If the same concept can apply to the entire society, the effect will be more positive. In any subject before finding out how it effects on the society needs to examine and test on an individual or small units. The smallest unit that we can find out in society is a family or a couple. At the same time, it is very important to recognise the main problems those social units are facing. In the present world with the uprising economical pressure, social issues, health, and other impactful conflicts prevent the majority focusing on human values.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM/ISSUE

The main intention of the research is to find proper Buddhist qualities and Buddhist ethics four specific issues that we experience in our society. By understanding and analysing the proper technique can easily approach to the matter and generate a solution. Main reasons to disturb the internal sustainability of the society can categories under the Buddhist concept of attachment, anger, and delusion. Each and every disturbing mental factor can be explained under these three concepts.

Under the research, I've interviewed such units and introduce different Buddhistic practices such as meditation, chanting, offering, supporting and practice precepts etc. At the meantime collect the information with those individuals and groups to measure the progress. And Cross check that information with Buddhist canonical text.

Sustainability is explained as “the quality of being able to continue over a period of time”. When we consider a group of people who live together with proper understanding and trust, that can lead to a sustainable society. By developing, qualities can easily deal with society not only that but also the environment. As an example, if someone practices satisfaction, the necessities will be less can easily maintain their lives and indeed they will use fewer facilities. If we apply the same condition to the entire society result will be magnificent if people start using fewer facilities and commodities then the damage on the environment will be less.

Most of the time the encouragement to practice the Buddhistic pathway or qualities comes from society as a request. Because of the modern day stress, restlessness, anxiety and a lot of psychological issues, also because of working pressure, economical issues, social issues, family problems people are really fed up and tired in their day to day lives. They always look for a solution in different fields such as music, videos, social media and different types of hobbies. Among them practising meditation or any Buddhistic teachings can be more beneficial and supportive. In general, people request to have advice, support, and guidance to correct path that they had and to practice meditation. The main practical approach of Bud-

dhism is practical teaching. Only learning about the theory is not enough, need to practice and apply in their day to day lives as well. The list of activities as below:

### **LIST OF ACTIVITIES**

- Meditation
- Chanting
- Workshops
- Lessons
- Discussions
- Stories
- Motivational speeches etc.

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The main intention of the research is to recognise and analyse those conflicts with more details and introduce Practical Buddhist knowledge to avoid such conflicts and develop themselves into a better sustainable society. Some of the issues may not be a conflict but simple matter that individual makes it complicated, at that kind of situation we would help them to recognise that they are not in a such a conflict, just practising Buddhist relaxation methods are good enough to archive peacefulness. To recognize Buddhist ethics and values we will use the main Buddhistic resources such as Tipitaka, Commentaries, Sub-Commentaries and other cultural ideologies. Then categorize them based on the particular necessities of the social unit such as,

- Anger management
- Stress relief
- Avoid harmful addiction
- Increase productivity
- Develop an understanding
- Introduce community activities

In the recognition process, individual and group discussions are very effective to identify the conflict and to overcome such; the practice of Buddhistic concepts develops the idea of unity for a better and strong sustainable unit. As an example, a family or a society facing a problem based on anger will be educated and discussed of Buddhistic values and encouraged to practice patience, loving-kindness, compassion, compassionate joy, and equanimity.

In the same way, there are many more issues that societies and communities face based on attachment and delusion so an introduction of Buddhist understanding to avoid those unnecessary mental factors will immensely develop the mind.

As a Buddhist Monk, it's easy to approach individuals, families, communities and other social organizations with their invitation or under our request. Through one to one discussions, group discussions, meditation, group chanting, workshops, demonstrations, philosophical discussions based on various beliefs that encourage to develop the human mind and moral values.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main intention of the research was to find out about the capital issues that societies face and to recognise how effective they are for sustainability of the society, at the same time introduce Buddhist techniques qualities and ethics as a solution to achieve the goal of sustainable society. One of the best way to access those societies are to find out particular groups who are already practising Buddhistic theories and practical knowledge. In another way, to educate those who don't have enough knowledge but interest and willing to practice the Buddhist pathway. According to that understanding, we managed to access specific Buddhist communities established in different cultural backgrounds.

Lost of social units that we accessed

- Dhamsuwa Meditation Society in Kandy, Sri Lanka.  
(With varying age groups and families that volunteered.)
- Singapore Buddhist Groups.  
(Group of over 20 families diverse in their religious beliefs and

## 2 Buddhist communities.)

- Nandaka Vihara Meditation Society, Penang, Malaysia  
(Community of Nandaka Vihara)
- Buddhist Meditation Association of Australia.  
(Students from age 6 and above and the ordinary members).
- France (non-Buddhist French communities and families)

## **THE OBSERVED OUTCOME OF SELECTED GROUPS.**

all of these selected groups have their own identity, own culture and believes to follow, first we recognise that and tried to give the best set of Buddhistic solutions to them. According to that, we can recognise these qualities in different communities.

### Dhamsuwa Meditation Society in Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka is a Buddhist country with rich Buddhistic cultural background and knowledge also the support given by society to one who practices the path is tremendous. Because of that, it is very easy to introduce the simple and advance Buddhist techniques without taking huge effort. As a result of that outcome of the solutions also very strong.

### Singapore Buddhist Groups.

Singapore is a developed country with a rush and busy lifestyle. Most of the participants complain about there busy lives and lack of time to meditate and practice the path. On the other hand mix and modern cultural background and diversity of religions gives difficult access to explain the main solutions. Most of the participants weren't ready to accept the solutions we introduce strait away without in detail explanations. But once explain they were hard working and target oriented so the level of result also depends on how they practice and what they believe.

### Nandaka Vihara Meditation Society, Penang, Malaysia

With the influence of early Chinese culture and Mahayana Buddhist background is was very easy to approach to people who seek

help with Buddhistic teachings. And impressive results were there as most of them practice diligently.

Buddhist Meditation Association of Australia.

Specifically selected Participant with those who have good meditation practice already together with Buddhist knowledge and background. But it was a little bit challenging because most of participants had mix knowledge about Buddhist teaching, but overall practice was impressive.

France (non-Buddhist French communities and families)

With most of the young and open-minded surrounding, even though without Buddhistic approach in there background still the participant respect the ideas and wanted to try out the Buddhist teachings.

At the end of the program, the collected data gives almost the same outcome with or without Buddhistic background and knowledge, once they practice the qualities and ethics we introduce alone with meditation they were managed to reach some happiness and relaxation.

Base on that most of the participants were able to face their life with more confidence and happiness without stress. That was a good result because if a society can be free from stress and bad behaviours it is very easy to earn the sustainability that we are looking for.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results exhibited that the reason for all conflicts in families and communities were based on anger, attachment and delusion. By introducing solutions to each group huge differences in character were progressively noticed. The reduction of anger, hatred and delusion helped them overcome stress due to uprising economical pressure, social issues, health and other impactful conflicts. By releasing that stress they were able to perform with more confidence and productivity, most of all satisfaction that leads to a sustainable society.

Base on the experience, knowledge, and qualities that can develop , we categorised issues into four groups. In that way it is easy to

recognise the approach of the issue and also easy to give a solution. Those are.

- Basic Issues
- Intermediate issues
- Advance issues
- Complicated issues

When we consider about practising meditation to develop once qualities the main important thing is to find a proper and appropriate system. There are multiple numbers of meditation techniques available at the movement, so we have to find a meditation which can develop qualities. If the meditation can develop happiness internally but not supporting to develop a quality we have to think twice before we start such a meditation. We can list out the quality based meditation systems such as loving-kindness, compassion, compassionate joy, equanimity, breathing meditation, recollection of repulsiveness, recollection of elements etc.

As an example, there was a young man who suffered from anger issues due to the abusive experiences in his childhood. He could not give up that anger and suffered from panic attacks, depression, stress, even engaged with unnecessary debates and physical fights. Later on his life, he found out it is unnecessary to let the anger grow and do nothing about it. One of his friends suggested him to go to a meditation centre that he can find a solution for his anger. In that way, he came to our organization and explain about his anger issues so we introduce a step by step solution (Loving-kindness) for his anger issue at the beginning he was struggling with the process it took some time for him to develop faith about the technique.

Misusing the valuable time of youth is a serious matter who wishes to have sustainable development as a responsible society, therefore addiction to video games, movies and especially adults movies are equally dangerous as much as drug addiction. They consume a lot of time, money and a lot of energy in society. Guide them in the correct path to understand the value of entertainment and enjoy them without addiction. There is another example of a youth group who had a serious issue with game addiction and adult

movie addiction. Fortunately, they recognize that they are facing to a serious matter and wanted to get rid of that addiction they, themselves decide to ask for a solution from a Buddhist monk and then he directed them to our ten days meditation program. At the beginning of the meditation program, they clearly ask for the instruction to get rid of the above entertainment addiction.

## CONCLUSION

By practising Buddhist qualities one of the best achievement that one can experience is satisfaction. That can be one of the great solutions for all kind of problem at the basic level

In this way there was an applicable effect on society to change negative matters to positive and rearrange conflicts into stable situations that support to develop a sustainable society and by maintaining those qualities they uphold the sustainable society longer and improve that sustainability to a higher level.

Simply the overall conclusion is by practising Buddhist qualities and ethics society or individual starts to be stable and start caring about oneself and society. That would easily lead to a harmonious society which thinks about everyone and works for the benefit of all. So sustainable society not a dream any more if everyone works together. **With the results and discussion it is very clear that even though the society is not Buddhist Buddhistic qualities and ethics are very important and impactful for a sustainable society.** To practice Buddhist qualities and ethics you don't necessarily have to be a Buddhist. That means you can practice the pathway without any religious barrier. Which is very important for the modern world to develop a peaceful Society.

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Social data - Data collected by different sources in society



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**Nilima Chawhan** obtained the M.A. Pali, Degree from Nagpur University in 2000. After that, she joined as a lecturer in Siddhartha Pali Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur. She shared her knowledge to students and guided them for practicing Buddhism to inspire their mind. She is also the Secretary of NGO Pali Pracharini Sabha, Nagpur. Through this organization, her team organized Dhamma Talk, Pali Communication Classes for children, laypersons and Retreat for children, etc. She got Ph.D. Degree from RTM, Nagpur University in 2009. She also worked with Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, Deemed University, Lucknow (U.P.) as a JRF in three years, 2009 to 2012. She got Post-Doctoral Fellowship from UGC for five years. Now she is working as an Associate Professor in Samrat Ashok Subharti School of Buddhist Studies, Meerut, U.P State in India. She is done her meritorious deeds and dedicates her life for the propagation of Pali literature & Buddhism in India.

**Ludovic Corsini** obtained M.A. in Buddhist studies at the International Buddhist College of Thailand and he achieved a Ph.D. in religious studies in Buddhism track at the University of Mahidol in Thailand.

**Udani Disaanayake** went to Delhi University in India and completed her degree in Commerce. Now she is studying for the Master of Human resources management course. She completed a Diploma in Buddhist counseling Psychology and work as Deputy Director of Vimansana Counselling Center at Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. She also serves as volunteer Dhamma school teacher in SIBA CAMPUS. She is interested in research on health, women, elderly and childcare issues.

**Jenny Ko Gyi** graduated from the Institute of Medicine, Yangon in 1976. After graduation, she worked at co-operative clinics in rural towns near the India border. She also taught English, Physics,

Chemistry, Biology to native children who had difficulty studying textbooks in English. At the same time, she worked to bring ties and harmony between different natives group. She also served as a translator for the Mogok Meditation Centre, published some translations on Mogok Sayadaw's insightful Teachings, and joined the newly established ITBMU.

**H.M. Mahinda Herath** has served the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies for four years as a Temporary Lecturer, and currently working as a Senior Lecturer, Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, the University of Peradeniya from 2012. He is also Secretary of Board of Studies (Religion), Post-graduate Institute of Humanities and Social Science, University of Peradeniya. He worked at the Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy (SIBA Campus) for two years as an Academic Coordinator and Deputy Director. He also served as an Chair of the of International Pali Conference 2018, Co-chair of International Pali Conference 2017 and Editor of the Peradeniya University International Research Session (iPURSE) 2015, and member of the Faculty Research Committee, Faculty Arts Council, Faculty IT Committee, Faculty Internship Committee and Treasure of Teachers Welfare Society, Faculty of Arts. He has 45 research articles in respected journals and presented 32 papers in the local and International Conference in the field of Pali, Early Buddhism, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Psychology and Buddhist culture. He has served as a resource person in workshops for development of the curriculum of undergraduate degree program. He is teaching and researching Pali language and literature, Early Buddhism and Abhidhamma studies.

**Ven. Polgolle Kusaladhamma** had achieved Ph.D. in Buddhist Studies completed in Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand, and Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy, Sri Lanka in 2017. His dissertation topic is "Body Mind Relationship Based on Buddhist Meditation and Modern Research on Neuroscience." He entered the University of Peradeniya in 2004, completed MA in Buddhist Studies in the University of Kelaniya in 2009, MPhil in the University of Peradeniya in 2013 and Postgraduate Educational Diploma in the Open University of Sri Lanka in 2013. Now he works for Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy in Sri Lanka as Senior

Lecturer and as coordinator of Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies. He is nominated as Saṅgha Nayaka (Leading Chief Monk of the sect) of Dumbara Secretary Divisions by Mahanayaka Thera of Buddhasasanodaya Saṅgha Committee of Amarapura Nikaya. Due to the interest of spreading Buddhism, he established Sunday Dhamma School and work as principal. As a religious service build new Buddhist monastery in Pallakale.

**Dr. Niharika Labh** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Buddhist Studies, at the University of Delhi, Delhi (India), and since 2011 has been teaching mainly Pali language and Literature and Buddhist Studies. Her previous Post-Graduate degree in Hindi language inspired her to go further and study Pali and Buddhism. Dr. Labh did her Ph. D. research on the role of the Buddhist nunnery (Bhikkhunī Saṅgha) in strengthening the propagation of the Buddhist faith in India and abroad. She has been a regular seminarian and contributed her academic papers covering a vast area of Buddhism such as Pali language and literature, Buddhist Philosophy, social thoughts, Buddhist Ethics/Morality, Environmental Awareness, Social justice and harmony. Dr. Labh has been associated with many social and academic organizations such as the Indian Society for Buddhist Studies, Indian Society of Gandhian Studies, All India Oriental Conference, Delhi University Women's Association, Akhil Bharatiya Darshanik Parishad and the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre.

**Dr. Pandurang Tukaram Gaikwad** was born in the rural part of India in the backward section of the society got lessons from society and inspiration from Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, that education is the key to break the social barriers and stigma. He has knowledge in various fields like medicine, engineering, basic sciences and management. To give back to society, he chooses a career in medical research. He has invented the solutions for basic medical problems like bone grafts in orthopedics and early detection of cancer. Currently, he is doing research with his own funding for the major problems worldwide of lifestyle diseases like diabetes, obesity and hypertension. The Buddha and his teachings had invented various medical therapies focusing on healthy mind and body. He is reinventing these teachings and trying to integrate

with modern medicine.

**Anita Meena** completed the M.Phil. degree in 2011 and the post-doctorate degree in 2016. She had around ten papers published in national and international journals, 20 papers presented in national and international conferences and participated in ten workshops and symposiums. She also worked as an Assistant Professor at Zakir Husain College from August 2016 to April 2017. She worked at Ramjas College from January 2018 to March 2018.

**Mahakachchakodiye Pangngasekara** achieved Master of Philosophy (Sociology), the University of Sri Jayewardenepura in 2015 and Master of Art (Buddhist Philosophy), Faculty of Postgraduate, University of Buddhist and Pāli in 2013. Before that, he got Bachelor of Art (Hons) Sociology (First Class), University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda. He has passed Diploma in English - 2017 conducted by the English Language Teaching unit of the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka.

**Ihala Gokeralle Pasadike Thero** studied Buddhist Civilisation (Theravada) and Buddhist Philosophy (Theravada) and Pali language at Buddhist school, Pali University, University of Sri Jayewardenepura. He also studied and taught meditation in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and conducted online courses in over 35 countries. His main intention is to deliver the message of our Lord Buddha to entire word for a better future and world peace.

**Malawi Patiranage Ranjani** achieved Master of Philosophy Degree from the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka. She has already registered for Doctor of Philosophy in Postgraduate Institute of Pali & Buddhist Studies at the University of Kelaniya. She is now a lecturer teaching Buddhist Culture in Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka. Her research interests are Social Issues and Buddhism, Buddhist Ayurvedic Psychiatric and Counselling, Buddhist Rituals and rites. Her research and publications include four books, six editions (Journals) in Buddhist Studies, and more than 50 articles on Buddhist Studies.

**Dr. Patitham Samniang** graduated Ph.D. in Buddhist Education Administration and became a lecturer at Graduate School Center,

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand. Over the years, Dr. Patitham Samniang keen on studying about the integration of Buddhism with research to develop a sustainable society. She also worked on the project of Synthesis Research and Creative Showcase base on Monks Health Development project, Monks Thammayat Training Program for Health Development Project 2016-2017, pray builds intelligence project, the effect of group activity based on Sappurisa Dhamma 7 for the novice in Prapariyatitham School.

**Sushma Shree** has completed her Post Graduation in Department of Buddhist Studies from Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda. Presently she is doing Ph.D. in the Department of Buddhist Studies under the supervision of Dr. Rana Purushottam Kumar Singh. During her research work, she also attended seminar and conferences related to Pali and Buddhism.

**Prof Dr. Prem Shankar Shrivastava** is teaching as a Guest faculty in the Department of Tibetan Studies, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, Bihar, India. Prof. Shrivastava has more than 14 years of teaching experience (Post Graduate Classes) and taught Tibetan History & Culture in the Department of Indo-Tibetan Studies, Visva-Bharati University, Shantiniketan, W.B.; Indian & Asian History in the Department of Ancient Indian and Asian studies, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda. Considering the ability of Prof. Shrivastava, Government of Bihar appointed him Director, Education, Bihar New Secretariat, District Superintendent of Education, District Education Officer in different Districts and retired as a Principal, Govt. Teacher's Training College. Presently Prof. Shrivastava is working on Vijyanavad (a description of various phases of mind) explained by Lord Buddha and Modern Psychiatrists: Tibetan Buddhism vis-à-vis Ecosystem and Global Peace based on Tibetan and Pali exegetical literature. He has participated in many seminar/conferences, delivered lectures, and contributed numerous research articles in various research journals.

**Pushkar Singh** achieved M.A and M.Phil in Buddhist Studies and currently pursuing his Ph.D. from the Department of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi, India. His Ph.D. topic is “Buddhist Cultural Legacy and its Impact in Uttarakhand's Culture” which

is focusing neglected sites of Himalayan Buddhism in India, i.e. Uttarakhand. He is serving as a Guest Faculty in Non-Collegiate Women Education Board (NCWEB) and School of Open Learning (SOL) from last three years and teaches undergraduate students. He has authored three papers namely: "Comparison Between The Buddha and Swami Vivekananda in Relation to their attitude towards Women", "Nomadic Business Through High Passes to Tibet from Uttarakhand and Nepal", and "The Role of Music in Buddhism: A Study of Some Buddhist Instruments and the Musical Texts of China and Tibet". Mr. Pushkar Singh also completed his Diploma in Pāli language and literature in 2013 and Diploma in Tibetan Language and literature in 2014.

**Ven. Omalpe Somananda Thera** is a young scholar who was graduated at University of Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka with a first-class honor in Buddhist Philosophy. Afterwards, he had completed his Master of Social Work degree at the University of Bangalore, India with 1<sup>st</sup> Class. Ven. Somananda Thera obtained the Diploma in Social Work at National Institute of Social Development and Diploma and Human Resource Management at Gangakawery University College in India. His discipline encompasses English language, Buddhist literature, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Psychology, Early Buddhism, Buddhist Social and Ethical Philosophy, Buddhist Epistemology, Buddhist Psychiatry & Counselling, Buddhist Meditation and research related to Buddhist studies. In addition, he has written and published several books, articles and research papers for the upliftment of Buddhist Philosophy. At present, he serves as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Buddhist Culture, Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka. He is also a Visiting Lecturer in the Master Degree, Diploma and Higher Diploma Course in National Institute of Social Development Sri Lanka and Oxford University College in Bangalore India

**Moggallana Sraman** is a Buddhist monk who completed his general educational life in a Buddhist Orphanage of his country. Later, he was in charge as an assistant of Compassion- Buddhist Institute for four years. He completed his Diploma in Buddhist Studies under Buddhist and Pali University. He is an undergraduate

student on Bachelor of Arts (Special) at University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. He wishes to complete Ph.D and do service to the society.

**Dr. Tran Thi Dieu Huong** (Bhikkhuni Tuong Nghiem) graduated from Vietnam Buddhist University in 2009. She continued her Master degree at Department of Buddhist studies, Delhi University, India, 2012. Bhikkhuni Tuong Nghiem was awarded the M.Phil of Buddhist Studies & Civilization at Gautam Buddha University, India, with her research paper “Formation and Development of Mahayana Buddhism” in 2013. Recently, she obtained a Ph.D. in Buddhist studies & Civilization at Gautam Buddha University, India, in 2019 with her research papers: “An analysis of Buddhist Educational Psychology as depicted in the Trimsika-Karika of Vasubandhu.”

**Bajrangi Yadav** graduated B.A in 2007 and M.A. in Psychology in 2009 at Avadh University, Faizabad, India. He had Certificate in Guidance (CIG) in December-2015 from Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Maidanganhi, New Delhi. Currently, he works as an Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Kamla Nehru Institute of Physical & Social Sciences (KNIPSS) ,India and Guest Faculty (Psychology), Dept. of Law, Kamla Nehru Vidhi Sansthan (KNIPSS Campus), India.

**Dr. Venerable Panahaduwe Yasassi** is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. He is also a visiting lecturer at Buddhist and Pali University of Sri Lanka, University of Kelaniya, University of Ruhuna and University of Colombo Sri Lanka too. He is a scholar in Buddhist Culture, Buddhist Civilization and Buddhism & Management. He is the author of five books and seven editions. Buddhist ethics, Buddhist attitude to Freewill and Quest, Phases of Buddhist traditions, Buddhism and Management, Buddhist Social Institution, and Buddhist Culture in Asia and the Expansion of Buddhist Schools are his outstanding latest editions. He has compiled more than forty research articles and presented papers at 30 national and international conferences. He is an editor to M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. dissertations and supervisor to MPhil and Ph.D. theses.

## ABOUT THE EDITOR

**Most Ven. Dr. Thich Nhat Tu** obtained his D.Phil., in Philosophy from Allahabad in 2002, is the Founder of Buddhism Today Foundation since 2000. He made valuable contribution as an editorial member of Hue Quang Encyclopedia of Buddhism (9 volumes, 1992-2007). He is editor-in-chief of the first ever audio Vietnamese Tripitaka, of the ongoing Vietnamese Tripitaka Translation project and Buddhism Today Series (over 250 books), as well as editor of more than 200 CD albums on Buddhist music. He has authored more than 80 Vietnamese books on applied Buddhism. He has traveled extensively around the world to give public Dharma talks to Vietnamese communities in Vietnam, Canada, America, Australia, and Europe and has produced over 4,000 VCDs on various dharma topics.

Master Thich Nhat Tu now serves as Vice Rector of the Vietnam Buddhist University and Vice Chairman of the National Department of International Buddhist Affairs. Several universities conferred upon him the title of Doctor Honoris Causa in appreciation of his excellent contributions to Buddhist education, his works on Buddhist academic research and leadership in international Buddhist communities. He has received many recognitions, awards, and titles from the Government of Vietnam, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia.

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ISBN: 978-604-89-8625-4

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Publishing Liability: BUI VIET BAC

Content Liability: LY BA TOAN

Editor: Phan Thi Ngoc Minh

Designer: Lien Ngan

Cover design: Nguyen Thanh Ha

Publication Coordinator: Giac Thanh Nha

Printed for Free Distribution by  
**Buddhism Today Foundation**

Giac Ngo Temple, 92 Nguyen Chi Thanh, P3, Q10, HCM City, Vietnam

