



Practice Book

Bodhicitta Sangha



BODHICITTA SANGHA

W E L C O M E

We are truly glad you have found your way here. Joining a Sangha is a meaningful step on the path of awakening, and we are honored to support your practice and your connection with this community. This Practice Book gathers what we practice together: our daily guidelines, the chanting book, and the essential knowledge that grounds the path.

Read at your own pace. When you feel ready, begin.

CONTENTS

PART I · ORIENTATION

Core Essential Knowledge for Buddhist Practitioners

PART II · DAILY PRACTICE

Practice Guideline

Metta/Maitri (Loving-Kindness) Meditation Script

PART III · THE CHANTING BOOK

Daily Puja

Practice Vows for the Right Intention

The Heart Sutra

Essence of the Diamond Sutra

Core Teachings of Huang Po: On the Transmission of the Mind

Core Teachings of Zen Master Linji: From the "Record of Linji"

The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

PART IV · IN THE TEMPLE

Etiquette and Codes of Conduct for Buddhist Temples & Dharma Centers

RESOURCES

PART I

Orientation

*What every practitioner holds in view: the Three Jewels, the life of
the Buddha, and the heart of his teaching.*





Core Essential Knowledge for Buddhist Practitioners



Refuge/Homage to the three jewels of Buddhism: Buddha,
Dharma, and Sangha

Life of Gautama Buddha

- ◆ Birth as Siddhartha Gautama and his prophecy
- ◆ Entering Jhana at a young age at the harvest festival
- ◆ Witnessing aging, sickness, death, and a spiritual seeker
- ◆ Leaving home to seek liberation
- ◆ 2 teachers and practices of Samadhi & 6 years of ascetic practice
- ◆ Enlightenment
- ◆ Turning of the Dharma Wheel (with 5 disciples) at Deer Park
- ◆ Entering Maha Pari-Nirvana at Kushinagar

3 Marks of Existence (4 Dharma Seals)

MARK

WHAT IT MEANS

Impermanence

not only the ever-changing phenomenon, but how ephemeral all phenomena are. Realizing this truth benefits from letting go of clinging and attachment.

MARK	WHAT IT MEANS
Non-Self	no inherent independent self or unchanging soul or spirit or “being” because all is conditional and interdependent: Interconnectedness & Interdependence of all as one.
Suffering	unsatisfactoriness, unbalanced from ephemeral but continuous rising and falling activities (karma).
Nirvana*	cessation of suffering, liberation, awakening to Absolute Reality (enlightenment) “the blissful, the secure, the pure, the island, the shelter, the harbor, the refuge, the ultimate.”, “the unconditioned, the unborn, the deathless, the featureless.” The 4th seal was added in the Mahayana version since this is the ultimate goal of Buddhism.

4 Noble Truths

NO.	THE NOBLE TRUTH
1	Life (cycle of life/death) is Dukkha (“Suffering”, “Imbalanced”, “Unsatisfactory”)
2	Cause of Suffering
3	Cessation of Suffering (Liberation)
4	Path to Cessation/ Liberation (8 Noble Paths)

8 Noble Paths

NO.	THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH
1	Right Insight/Understanding
2	Right Intention

NO.	THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH
3	Right Speech
4	Right Action
5	Right Livelihood
6	Right Efforts
7	Right Mindfulness
8	Right Concentration

12 Dependent Origination/Karma

NO.	LINK IN THE CHAIN
1	Ignorance (Avidya) - Departure from the Absolute Truth
2	Karmic Formations (Sankhara) - volitional & karmic formation
3	Consciousness (Vijnana)
4	Name and Form (Nama-Rupa) - mind and body
5	Six Sense Bases (Salayatana)
6	Contact (Phassa)
7	Feeling (Vedana)
8	Craving (Trishna or Tanha)
9	Clinging (Upadana)
10	Becoming (Bhava)
11	Birth (Jati)
12	Aging and Death (Jara-marana)

5 Skandhas

NO.	AGGREGATE
1	Form
2	Senses / Feelings
3	Perception / Conceptualization
4	Mental / Volitional Formation
5	Consciousness

All the above is knowledge necessary for the Middle Way.

Additional Knowledge:

6 Paramitas

PĀRAMITĀ	MEANING
Dāna pāramitā	generosity, compassion, letting go of oneself
Śīla pāramitā	virtue, morality, discipline, proper conduct
Kṣānti pāramitā	patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, endurance
Vīrya pāramitā	energy, diligence, vigor, effort
Dhyāna pāramitā	one-pointed concentration, contemplation
Prajñā pāramitā	wisdom, insight

5 Hindrances

NO.	HINDRANCE
1	Sensual desire

NO.	HINDRANCE
2	Ill will
3	Sloth and Torpor
4	Restlessness and Worry
5	Skeptical doubts (about the Dharma without logical reasoning)

18 Realms (dhatus):

- ◆ 6 Senses
- ◆ 6 Sense Objects
- ◆ 6 Sense-based Consciousness

The eighteen dhātus (realms) are understood as acting along six channels of perception, where each channel is composed of a sense faculty, a sense object, and sense consciousness.

CHANNEL	FACULTY DHATUS (INDRIYA- DHATU)	OBJECT DHATUS (VIŚAYA- DHATU)	CONSCIOUSNESS DHATUS (VIJÑĀNA- DHATU)
1.	eye dhatu (cakṣur- dhatu)	visual forms (rūpa- dhatu)	eye consciousness (cakṣur-vijñāna- dhatu)
2.	ear dhatu (śrota- dhatu)	sounds (śabda- dhatu)	ear consciousness (śrota-vijñāna- dhatu)
3.	nose dhatu (ghrāṇa-dhatu)	smells (gandha- dhatu)	nose consciousness (ghrāṇa-vijñāna- dhatu)

CHAN- NEL	FACULTY DHATUS (INDRIYA- DHATU)	OBJECT DHATUS (VIŚAYA- DHATU)	CONSCIOUSNESS DHATUS (VIJÑĀNA- DHATU)
4.	tongue dhatu (jihvā-dhatu)	tastes (rasa-dhatu)	tongue consciousness (jihvā-vijñāna- dhatu)
5.	body dhatu (kāya- dhatu)	tangible objects (spraṣṭavya-dhatu)	body consciousness (kāya-vijñāna- dhatu)
6.	mind faculty dhatu (mano-indriya- dhatu)	mental objects (mano-viśaya- dhatu)	mind consciousness (mano-vijñāna- dhatu)

Recommended Reading

Buddha's Life:

- ♦ The Buddha: His Life Retold by Robert Allen Mitchell*
- ♦ The Life of the Buddha: According to the Pali Canon by Bhikkhu Nanamoli

Theravada:

- ♦ What the Buddha Taught by Wapola Rahula *
- ♦ In the Buddha's Words by Bhikkhu Bodhi*
- ♦ Maha Kammavibangha Sutta - Karma (Majjhima Nikaya)
- ♦ Sammaditthi Sutta -Right View (Majjhima Nikaya)
- ♦ Satipathana sutta - Establishment of Mindfulness (Majjhima Nikaya)

- ◆ Paṭiccasamuppādasutta (Dependent Origination) (Samyutta Nikaya)
- ◆ Kaccāyanagotta Sutta
- ◆ Majjhima Nikaya
- ◆ Samyutta Nikaya

Mahayana:

- ◆ Bodhipathapradīpa (A Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment) by Master Atisha*
- ◆ The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching by Thich Nhat Hahn
- ◆ Diamond Sutra*
- ◆ Lankavatara Sutra
- ◆ Lotus Sutra
- ◆ Mulamadhyamakakarika (Middle Way) by Master Nagarjuna

Zen:

- ◆ The Zen Teachings of Huang Po *
- ◆ The Platform Sutra – Six Patriarch Huineng
- ◆ The Zen Teaching of Bodhidharma
- ◆ Faith in Mind – Third Patriarch SengTsan

Other than Buddhist texts that are helpful:

- ◆ No Boundary by Ken Wilber
- ◆ Eye of the I by Dr. David R. Hawkins
- ◆ Letting Go by Dr. David R. Hawkins

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PART II

Daily Practice

*The minimal daily effort that fuels our transformation, and the
loving-kindness that grounds it.*





Practice Guideline



Buddha's teachings on dukkha (suffering) and its cessation can only be truly realized through personal cultivation. We must cultivate both Wisdom and Compassion simultaneously. This dual cultivation disciplines the mind and guides us back to our original state of Buddha-Nature. With the Right Intention, we must consistently maintain Right Mindfulness and cultivate unconditional love and compassion for all sentient beings. This practice guideline outlines the minimal daily effort required to fuel our transformation.

Daily:

- ◆ *Morning Puja (min. pages 1-5): 1- Homage (Taking Refuge) to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. 2- Maitri (Loving-Kindness) and reaffirm Intention and 3- Vows. 4- Sutra chanting.
- ◆ Minimum of an hour of sitting meditation every day. It can be broken up, but we recommend a minimum of 20 minutes per session.
- ◆ Minimum three Mindful Activities each day (Mindfulness in daily activities).
- ◆ Minimum of one Random Act of Kindness each day (Compassion).
- ◆ Offering a set amount (alms) daily for Dana (Generosity).

- ◆ *Share your daily practice reflection/diary with the Sangha members via the Band app (practice accountability & reaffirm the Intention).
- ◆ (Optional but strongly recommended) 108 prostrations for recognition of any unwholesome past karma (speech, actions, and thoughts) and strengthening our spiritual intention. Utilize the recording of repentances/vows.

Other supporting practices:

- ◆ Maintain close contact with practicing members for support
- ◆ Participate in the weekly meditation sessions and services
- ◆ Read recommended readings to further the knowledge of Buddha-Dharma
- ◆ Practice Dana (generosity) by donating and volunteering to support the Sangha and its meditation center.

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Metta/Maitri (Loving-Kindness) Meditation Script



Opening Visualization

Visualize and imagine a mother's unconditional love for her only child—gentle and warm, yet filled with the powerful energy of unconditional loving-kindness.

We all possess the innate capacity to generate an infinite amount of unconditional love and compassion for all beings.

Part 1: Self-Compassion

We begin the Metta meditation with ourselves, allowing our hearts to be filled with this energy of unconditional love and compassion.

Repeat softly:

May I be safe, be healthy, and be happy. May I be at ease, free from all suffering.

Continue to fill your heart and body with this energy of unconditional love and compassion. Visualize a glowing, bright, warm light emanating from your heart and filling up your entire body, from head to toe.

Rejoice in this unconditional love and compassion with a sense of gratitude. Say:

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Part 2: Extending to Those Nearby

As your body overflows with the energy of loving-kindness, allow it to overflow and radiate outward toward the people nearby. Let the energy of loving-kindness fill everyone's hearts and fill this entire room.

Repeat softly:

May you be safe, be healthy, and be happy. May you be at ease, free from all suffering.

While sharing this energy of loving-kindness, also rejoice in the energy they are sending you, with a sense of gratitude. Say:

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Part 3: Expanding to Loved Ones

Visualize this room overflowing with the energy of unconditional love and compassion—kind, caring, and understanding. Allow the energy of loving-kindness to emanate from this room toward those you care about. Visualize their faces, individually or in a group. See them receiving this energy of unconditional love and compassion.

Repeat softly:

May you be safe, be healthy, and be happy. May you be at ease, free from all suffering.

Enjoy seeing them rejoice in this energy of loving-kindness.

Part 4: Universal Loving-Kindness

Continue to allow this energy to emanate toward all sentient beings in this world, including those who may have caused pain and suffering in your life. Include those who may currently be causing suffering to others. Recognize that they are causing suffering due to their own suffering. Allow all of them to receive in their hearts this energy of unconditional love and compassion. Visualize how this energy provides relief, and rejoice in loving-kindness.

Repeat softly:

May you be safe, be healthy, and be happy. May you be at ease, free from all suffering.

Closing: Global Blessing

Visualize this powerful energy of unconditional loving-kindness blanketing the entire world, allowing all sentient beings to rejoice in it, free from all suffering.

Final blessings:

May all beings be safe.

May all beings be peaceful.

May all beings be joyful.

May all beings awaken to their true nature.

May all beings be free.

PART III

The Chanting Book

Our daily liturgy: the Puja and prayers, the sutras, the Zen masters, and the Buddha's first turning of the Wheel.





Daily Puja

with Prayers and Intentions



The Daily Puja ritual is a valuable practice to begin our day with renewed energy and a clear intention. It's an opportunity to reconnect with the Triple Gem—the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha—and to reaffirm your spiritual Intention.

By paying homage to the Triple Gem, you strengthen your connection to the Buddha and his teachings (the Dharma). In this context, the Sangha refers specifically to the monastic community of the Buddha's disciples who've dedicated their lives to practicing and preserving these teachings. They, in turn, guide others on their spiritual paths.

While the Sangha of the Triple Gem specifically denotes the monastic order, the term is also used more broadly to describe the wider community of practitioners. Cultivating a supportive Sangha, including a noble teacher, a suitable environment, and spiritually aligned practitioners, is essential to your spiritual journey.

Homage (Reverence) to the Buddha

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-Sambuddhassa

(Homage to the Exalted One, the Noble One, the Perfectly Enlightened Buddha: repeated 3 times or more depending on the

service)

Dedication of Offerings

(Here we make offerings, i.e., daily alms (donations), candle lights, flowers, and incense, to show our reverence and devotion to the compassionate practice of Dana)

To the Blessed One, the Lord, who fully attained perfect enlightenment. To the Teaching, which he expounded so well, the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well -- the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

(Offerings of Dana)

Namo Sakyamuni Buddha (repeated, while offerings are made)

We render our rightful homage with offerings. May these simple offerings be accepted, for our long-lasting benefit and the happiness they bring.

Salutation to Triple Gem (Three Jewels of Buddhism)

(For each salutation, we prostrate – bow to the floor, with our heads touching the ground to show reverence and to take refuge in the Triple Gem)

The Perfectly Enlightened and Worldly Honored One - I take refuge in the Buddha.

He so compassionately offered the teaching - I take refuge in the Buddha-Dharma.

The Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well and preserved the Dharma - I take refuge in the Buddha-Sangha.

The Four Great Vows

Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them all.

(This is the fundamental vow of universal compassion. It expresses an aspiration to alleviate the suffering of every sentient being, without exception, and to lead them to liberation.)

Delusions are inexhaustible; I vow to cut them all.

(Delusion is also called afflictions, defilements, or 'klesha') refers to the mental states that cause suffering, such as greed, hatred, ignorance, attachment, anger, and pride. This vow is a commitment to diligently work on one's own mind, overcoming all negative mental states that hinder enlightenment.)

Dharma gates are boundless; I vow to master them all.

(Dharma gates refer to the countless teachings, methods, and practices of Buddhism. This vow is a commitment to study, learn, and understand the vastness of the Buddhist path to gain the wisdom and skills necessary to guide others effectively.)

Buddhahood is the supreme attainment; I vow to achieve it.

(The Buddhahood or perfect enlightenment) is the highest goal in Buddhism – the state of complete awakening, wisdom, and compassion. This vow is the ultimate aspiration to achieve full enlightenment, not just for personal liberation, but precisely so that one can fulfill the first vow of helping all sentient beings.)

Metta/Maitri (Loving-Kindness) Prayer

May All Beings Be Safe.
May All Beings Be Peaceful.
May All Beings Be Joyful.
May All Beings Awaken to their True Nature
May All Beings Be Free

Daily Intention

May I stay mindful and compassionate, moment-to-moment, so that
I may offer Wisdom and Compassion for the benefit of all.

Bodhicitta Intention

For the benefit of all, may I awaken to the Absolute Truth and
radiate the Wisdom and Compassion of the perfect enlightenment
(Annutara-Samyak-Sambodhi).



Practice Vows for the Right Intention



With utmost sincerity, I respectfully make this vow:

From this moment forth, until reaching the supreme Liberation,
May I always be born in the human realm, and spiritually aligned
with the Buddha-Dharma.

May I dedicate myself to its practice without faltering.

May my wisdom be clear, my mind unwavering,
my body healthy, and free from obstacles.

May I always meet noble teachers,
and never be swayed by wrong views.

May I always be diligent in practice,
never falling into laziness or negligence.

May I always be compassionate towards all beings,
and never harbor thoughts of harm.

May I always be mindful of impermanence,
and never cling to worldly pleasures.

May I always be grateful for the kindness of others,
and never forget their benevolent acts.

May I always strive to benefit all sentient beings,
and never seek personal gain.

May I always walk the path of the Bodhisattva,
and never abandon my great vows.

May I extinguish all defilements,
and transcend the cycle of birth and death.

May I realize supreme, perfect enlightenment,
and universally liberate all beings.



The Heart Sutra



The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, while deeply practicing the Prajna Paramita (Perfection of Wisdom), perceived that all five skandhas are empty and transcended all suffering.

Sariputra, form does not differ from emptiness; Emptiness does not differ from form. Form itself is emptiness; emptiness itself is form. The same is true of feelings, perception, mental formation, and consciousness.

Sariputra, all phenomena (dharma) are marked with emptiness; They are neither created nor destroyed, neither defiled nor immaculate, neither increasing nor decreasing.

Therefore, in emptiness there is no form, No feeling, perception, mental formation, or consciousness; No eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind; No forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile objects, or objects of mind; No realm of the eye, up to no realm of mind consciousness; No ignorance and also no extinction of ignorance, Up to no old-age and death and also no extinction of old-age and death; No suffering, no origination, no cessation, no path; No cognition, also no attainment with nothing to attain.

The Bodhisattva, relying on Perfection of Wisdom, is unimpeded in the mind. Being unimpeded, there is no fear. Transcending the inverted, dualistic views, one realizes Nirvana.

All the Buddhas of the three times, relying on Prajna Paramita, Attain Annutara-Samyak-Sambodhi (unsurpassed, perfect enlightenment).

Therefore, know that the Prajna Paramita mantra is the great transcendent mantra, is the great enlightening mantra, is the unexcelled mantra, is the unequaled mantra, able to dispel all suffering. This is true, not false.

So, proclaim the Prajñāpāramitā mantra, Proclaim the mantra that says:

Gate Gate Pāragate Pārasaṃgate Bodhi Svāhā! (3 times)



Essence of the Diamond Sutra



(**A**tman, Pudgala, Sattva, and Jiva = Self, Individual Person, Sentient Being, and Soul)

A true Bodhisattva does not hold the idea of a self, an individual, a sentient being, or a soul.

4 Gathas of the Diamond Sutra

1st Gatha: Ch 5

All that exists as a form is empty and illusory. if you perceive their true, empty nature beyond their superficial appearance, then you see the Tathagata (the true nature of the Buddha = Absolute Reality).

2nd Gatha: Ch 10

Do not let your mind dwell on what you see, hear, smell, taste, touch, or think. You should develop a mind that does not abide in anything.

3rd Gatha: Ch 26

Those who see me by my physical appearance, or seek me through sound, are on a mistaken path and will not be able to perceive the Tathagata.

4th Gatha: Ch32

All conditioned phenomena are like a dream, an illusion, a bubble, and a shadow; like dew and like lightning. One should realize and see all phenomena in this way.



Core Teachings of Huang Po: On the Transmission of the Mind



I. The One Mind, Beyond All Distinctions

All the Buddhas and all sentient beings
Are nothing but the One Mind.
Besides this, nothing exists.

This Mind, without beginning,
Is unborn and indestructible.
It is not green nor yellow,
Has neither form nor appearance.

It does not belong to the categories of things
Which exist or do not exist.
Nor can it be thought of in terms of new or old.
It is neither long nor short, big nor small,
For it transcends all limits, measures, names, traces, and
comparisons.

It is that which you see before you.
Begin to reason about it, and you at once fall into error.
It is like the boundless void,
Which cannot be fathomed or measured.

II. Cessation of Conceptual Thought

To make use of your minds to think conceptually
Is to leave the substance of Mind
And attach yourselves to form.
The Mind is no mind of conceptual thought.
It is completely detached from form.

If you would spend all your time—
Walking, standing, sitting, or lying down—
Learning to halt the concept-forming activities of your own mind,
You could be sure of ultimately attaining the goal.

Awake only to the One Mind,
And there is nothing whatsoever to be attained.
This is the REAL Buddha.
The Buddha and all sentient beings are the One Mind,
And nothing else.

III. No Seeking, No Attainment

If you are not absolutely convinced that the Mind is the Buddha,
And if you are attached to forms, practices, and meritorious
performances, your way of thinking is false.
And quite incompatible with the Way.

The Mind is the Buddha, nor are there any other Buddhas or any
other mind. It is bright and spotless as the void, having no form or
appearance whatever. There is nothing to be attained. There is
nothing to be done.

Even if you go through all the stages of a Bodhisattva's progress
towards Buddhahood, one by one; When at last, in a single flash, you
attain full realization, you will only be realizing the Buddha-Nature
which has been with you all the time.

By all the foregoing stages, you will have added to it nothing at all.
You will come to look upon those eons of work and achievement
As no better than unreal actions performed in a dream.

That is why the Tathāgata said:
"I truly attained nothing from complete, unexcelled Enlightenment."

IV. The Futility of Duality and Distinctions

If you look upon the Buddha as presenting a pure, bright,
Or Enlightened appearance,
Or upon sentient beings as presenting a foul, dark,
Or mortal-seeming appearance,
These conceptions,
Resulting from attachment to form,
Will keep you from supreme knowledge,
Even after the passing of as many aeons as there are sands in the
Ganges.

The substance of the Absolute is inwardly like wood or stone,
In that it is motionless,
And outwardly like the void,
In that it is without bounds or obstructions.
It is neither subjective nor objective,
Has no specific location,
Is formless, and cannot vanish.

Those who hasten towards it dare not enter,
Fearing to hurtle down through the void
With nothing to cling to or to stay their fall.

So they look to the brink and retreat.
This refers to all those who seek such a goal through cognition.

V. Immediate Realization

The Dharma is Mind,
Beyond which there IS no Dharma;
And this Mind is the Dharma,
Beyond which there IS no mind.

Mind in itself is not mind,
Yet neither is it no-mind.
To say that Mind is no-mind implies something existent.
Let there be a silent understanding,
And no more.

Away with all thinking and explaining.
Then we may say that the Way of Words has been cut off
And movements of the mind eliminated.
This Mind is the pure Buddha-Source inherent in all men.

Understand the one point,
And a thousand others will accordingly grow clear;
Misunderstand that one,
And ten thousand delusions will encompass you.
He who holds to that one has no more problems to solve.

Ordinary people look to their surroundings,
While followers of the Way look to Mind,
But the true Dharma is to forget them both.
The former is easy enough,
The latter very difficult.
Men are afraid to forget their minds,
Fearing to fall through the Void
With nothing to stay their fall.
They do not know that their own Mind is the Void.

VI. Practice is Non-Practice

Were you now to practice keeping your minds motionless at all
times,
Whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying;
Concentrating entirely upon the goal of no thought-creation,
No duality,
No reliance on others,
And no attachments;
Just allowing all things to take their course the whole day long,
As though you were too ill to bother;
Unknown to the world;
Innocent of any urge to be known or unknown to others.
This is the very essence of Zen. This is the true transmission of Mind.



Core Teachings of Zen Master Linji: From the "Record of Linji"



I. The True Person of No Rank

Followers of the Way,
The True Person of No Rank
Is always coming and going
Before your very eyes!

He who is here now, listening to my Dharma talk,
This one is without form, without characteristics.

He is unrooted, unattached.
He is not bound by any place.
He is not constrained by any thing.

Do you want to know him?
He is the one now shining forth,
Bright and clear,
Never lacking, never changing.
He is right here, listening.
Believe in this! Have no doubt!

II. Kill the Buddha, Kill the Patriarchs

Followers of the Way,
If you want to attain the true understanding of the Dharma,
Never be deceived by others!
Whatever you encounter, inside or outside,
Just kill it!

If you meet a Buddha, kill the Buddha!
If you meet a Patriarch, kill the Patriarch!
If you meet an Arhat, kill the Arhat!
If you meet your parents, kill your parents!
If you meet your relatives, kill your relatives!

Then for the first time
You will gain liberation.
You will not be entangled with things,
You will pass freely anywhere you wish to go.
This is the meaning of being truly detached,
Of having nothing to rely upon.
No more seeking outside.
No more seeking for the sacred.
No more avoiding the profane.

III. No Time for Hesitation

The Buddhadharma has no room for effort.
It is only ordinary life with nothing to do.
Evacuate, pass your water,
Put on your clothes, eat your food.
If you are tired, lie down.

Fools laugh at me,
But the wise understand.
An ancient said:
"Those who strive for external things
Are all blockheads!"

Just make yourself master in every situation,
And wherever you stand will be the true place.
No matter what circumstances come,
They cannot dislodge you.

Even if you bear the karma of the five heinous crimes,
These of themselves become the great ocean of deliverance.
Do not fall into the trap of seeking. Do not cling to words or phrases.

IV. Your Own Light

The Buddha-Dharma is not about special practices.
It is about perceiving your own true nature.
The light that shines forth from within you,
This light is not created, not destroyed.
It is not stained, not pure.

It is your own inherent wisdom.
It is your own inherent liberation.
Do not seek it in words.
Do not seek it in scriptures.
Do not seek it in outward forms.

For it is already within you,
Perfect and complete.
It needs no polishing, no refining.
It needs no adding, no subtracting.

V. Immediate Awakening

Why do you go on seeking in other places?
Your own mind, your own light,
Has never ceased to shine.
The fault lies in your lack of faith in yourself.

If you cannot distinguish true from false,
Buddha from Mara,
Sacred from profane,
Then you are merely creating more karma.
You have only left one house to enter another.

A true seeker of the Way,
Possesses a clear eye.
He sees through all distinctions,
And is not bound by them.
He knows that everything is already complete.
There is nothing to obtain,
Nothing to practice,
Nothing to prove.

VI. Just Be Ordinary

Followers of the Way,
Just be ordinary.
Don't affect some special manner.
Don't try to be profound.
Don't try to be enlightened.
When hungry, eat.
When tired, sleep.
When you need to act, act.
Without hesitation, without seeking.

This is the true meaning of the Dharma.
This is the true transmission of Zen.
This is the liberation.
This is the peace.



The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

(The Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion Discourse)



Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Varanasi in the Deer Park at Isipatana. There the Blessed One addressed the group of five monks:

"Monks, these two extremes ought not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the household life. What are the two?

1. There is devotion to indulgence in sensual pleasures, which is low, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and unprofitable;
2. And there is devotion to self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, and unprofitable.

Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (the Perfect One) has realized the Middle Way (*Majjhimā Paṭipadā*); it gives vision, knowledge, and leads to peace, direct knowledge, enlightenment, Nibbāna.

And what, monks, is that Middle Way realized by the Tathagata? It is this very Noble Eightfold Path (*Ariyo Aṭṭhaṅgiko Maggo*), namely:

1. Right Understanding (*Sammā Diṭṭhi*)
2. Right Intention (*Sammā Saṅkappa*)
3. Right Speech (*Sammā Vācā*)

4. Right Action (Sammā Kammanta)
5. Right Livelihood (Sammā Ājīva)
6. Right Effort (Sammā Vāyāma)
7. Right Mindfulness (Sammā Sati)
8. Right Concentration (Sammā Samādhi)

This, monks, is the Middle Way realized by the Tathagata, which gives vision, gives knowledge, and leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna.

Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukkha Ariya Sacca): Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; separation from the pleasant is suffering; not getting what one wants is suffering. In short, the five clinging-aggregates (pañcupādānakkhandhā) are suffering.

Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (Dukkha Samudāya Ariya Sacca): It is this craving (taṇhā) which leads to re-becoming, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is, craving for sensual pleasures (kāma-taṇhā), craving for existence (bhava-taṇhā), and craving for non-existence (vibhava-taṇhā).

Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca): It is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, non-reliance on it.

Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering (Dukkha Nirodhagāminī Paṭipadā Ariya Sacca): It is this very Noble Eightfold Path, namely: Right Insight,

Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

[The Buddha then explains his realization of these truths in three phases for each truth, totaling twelve insights: (not included in chanting)]

1. 'This is the Noble Truth of Suffering': Thus, monks, concerning things previously unheard, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light.
2. 'This Noble Truth of Suffering is to be fully understood': Thus, monks, concerning things previously unheard, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light.
3. 'This Noble Truth of Suffering has been fully understood': Thus, monks, concerning things previously unheard, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light.
4. 'This is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.
5. 'This Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering is to be abandoned': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.
6. 'This Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering has been abandoned': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.
7. 'This is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.
8. 'This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering is to be realized': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.
9. 'This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been realized': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and

light arose.

10. 'This is the Noble Truth of the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.

11. 'This Noble Truth of the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering is to be developed': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.

12. 'This Noble Truth of the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering has been developed': Thus, monks... vision, knowledge, wisdom, insight, and light arose.

As long, monks, as my knowledge and vision of these Four Noble Truths as they really are in their three phases and twelve insights was not thoroughly purified, so long I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment (*anuttaraṃ sammāsambodhiṃ*) in this world with its devas, māras, and brahmās, in this generation with its ascetics and brahmins, its princes and people.

But when, monks, my knowledge and vision of these Four Noble Truths as they really are in their three phases and twelve insights was thoroughly purified, then I claimed to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its devas, māras, and brahmās, in this generation with its ascetics and brahmins, its princes and people.

The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Unshakeable is the liberation of my mind. This is my last birth. There is no more re-becoming.'

Thus spoke the Blessed One. The group of five monks was delighted and rejoiced in the Blessed One's words.

And while this discourse was being spoken, there arose in the Venerable Kondañña the dust-free, stainless Eye of the Dhamma (Dhammacakkhu): "Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation." (Yaṃ kiñci samudayadhammaṃ sabbaṃ taṃ nirodhadhamman'ti.)

And when the Wheel of Dhamma had been set in motion by the Blessed One, the earth-dwelling devas cried out: "At Varanasi, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the unsurpassed Wheel of Dhamma has been set in motion by the Blessed One, not to be stopped by any ascetic or brahmin or deva or māra or brahmā or anyone in the world."

Hearing the cry of the earth-dwelling devas, the devas of the Four Great Kings cried out... [This proclamation continues, rising layer by layer through the heavens:] the Tāvatiṃsa devas... the Yāma devas... the Tusita devas... the Nimmānaratī devas... the Paranimmitavasavattī devas... the devas of Brahmā's company cried out: "At Varanasi, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the unsurpassed Wheel of Dhamma has been set in motion by the Blessed One, not to be stopped by any ascetic or brahmin or deva or māra or brahmā or anyone in the world."

Thus at that moment, at that instant, the cry spread as far as the Brahmā world. And this ten-thousandfold world system shook, quaked, and trembled, and an immeasurable, glorious radiance appeared in the world, surpassing the divine majesty of the devas.

Then the Blessed One uttered this inspired utterance: "Kondañña has indeed understood! Kondañña has indeed understood!"

PART IV

In the Temple

How we carry ourselves when we gather in a sacred space.





Etiquette and Codes of Conduct for Buddhist Temples & Dharma Centers



Here are 10 essential guidelines to observe when visiting a Buddhist temple or Dharma center:

1. **Pay Respect to the Triple Gem:** When visiting a monastery or Dharma center, always go to the main Buddha Hall where the Buddha statue is and offer three bows/prostrations to show respect to the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dharma, Sangha).
2. **Half-Bow When Entering/Exiting:** When entering and exiting the Buddha Hall, offer a half-bow with palms together to show reverence to the hall and the sacred space within.
3. **Address Ordained Monastics (Venerables) properly:** When addressing an ordained monk (Bhikkhu) or nun (Bhikkhuni), whether in person or in correspondence, refer to them by their title “Venerable.” While they might use cultural titles like “Bhante,” “Sunim,” or “Thay” depending on their country of origin, “Venerable” is always appropriate when speaking or writing in English. Also, when greeting a Venerable, offer a half-bow with palms together.
4. **No Strong Perfumes or Makeup:** Refrain from wearing perfumes, colognes, or makeup with strong odors. This helps

maintain a serene and respectful environment, especially for those who may be sensitive to scents or are engaged in meditation.

5. Maintain Modest Dress: Wear clothing that is modest and respectful. This generally means covering your shoulders, chest, stomach, and knees. Avoid revealing attire to show respect for the sacred space and the community. Always wear socks since you have to take your shoes off at the temple.

6. Offering Etiquette: If you bring offerings (flowers, incense, food), place them gently and respectfully. Often, there are designated areas for offerings. Do not consume offerings that have been placed on the altar unless instructed by a monk or nun.

7. Respect Sacred Objects: Treat all statues, scriptures, and other religious artifacts with utmost respect. Do not point your feet towards them, step over them, or place personal items on them. Treat all temple property with care and respect. This includes religious artifacts, books, and general facilities. Volunteer to maintain cleanliness and order in the temple environment.

8. Silence and Mindfulness: While inside the temple or Dharma center, especially in meditation halls or the main shrine room, maintain silence or speak in very low, respectful tones. This helps preserve the peaceful energy in the hall.

9. No Public Displays of Affection: Refrain from public displays of affection, such as hugging or kissing, out of respect for the spiritual environment and those practicing within it.

10. Mindful Eating: When partaking in meals at the temple, practice mindful eating. Take only what you can reasonably consume and avoid wasting food. It's a practice of humility and gratitude for the offerings.

Resources

A few videos the Venerable recommends, to deepen your understanding of the Buddha-Dharma.



Beneficial supplemental videos for understanding Buddha-Dharma

Dharma-related:

Documentary- The Buddha – PBS Documentary

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vc7_VyVXDLs&t=5343s

108 Prostrations of Great Repentance by BTN (English)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNT6ncenIuI&t=259s>

백팔대 참회문 - 나를 깨우는 108 배 (108 Prostration in Korean)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5t8zp1MOWw&t=421s>

Bhikkhu Bodhi Audio: Introduction to Buddhism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4niBATVsdrC&list=PLahooTbMXxrQO--xPw9L6MOMZyfeTuMeH>

The Four Noble Truths

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqtFpaw95ME>

Karma Simplified – How your actions shape your future

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5ooTbNPjzk>

6 Realms of Existence in Buddhism Explained

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptb_ja0c6a8

The 31 PLANES of EXISTENCE | Buddha's Map of Consciousness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csHVstoxppU&t=445s>

Is the Buddha a God? Beyond Gods and Humans

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teF1hj3efwk>

If there is no self, who is responsible for Karma?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vxY7ip08E8g>

Why Consciousness Doesn't End at Death

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMjQ-5BZDU8&t=2s>

Nirvana in Buddhism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVNPT02US2I>

Bodhidharma – “The Wake Up Sermon” – First Zen Patriarch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tAEzEtE5K8&list=PLizcMBAS5iy51MmMEqLRM00mze9NadJbK&index=2>

The Zen Teaching of Huang Po (part 1) – On The Transmission of Mind

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZcmmWPzEAQ&list=PLWzYrEd1V405FvLkyoszBel6BG02fNnbv&index=68>

Consciousness-related videos that may be helpful:

The Field is Infinitely Powerful – Dr. David R. Hawkins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpW-0ch2mIA&t=46s>

Ramana Maharshi - Who Am I? (Nan Yar) - Advaita (NO MUSIC)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odcYw14ACtw>

TED: Do we see reality as it is?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYp5XuGYqqY&list=PLizcMBAS5iy426X9n8R2r5sWTG6IyI7-U&index=15>



This Practice Book gathers the practice materials of the Bodhicitta Sangha for those newly arrived. Every prayer, sutra, and teaching within is reproduced in the Venerable's own words. May it be of benefit to all who begin here.



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