

THIỆN PHÚC

**TO FACE & TO SUBDUE
AFFLICTIONS
IN BUDDHIST POINT OF VIEW
(ĐỐI MẶT & ĐỐI TRỊ PHIÊN NÃO
THEO QUAN ĐIỂM PHẬT GIÁO)**

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Preface

According to Buddhist teachings, afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Practitioners of mindfulness subdue afflictions in four basic ways: Subduing afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation. Subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Subduing afflictions with phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Subduing afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha.

According to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. The one is included in the other. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want

to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Once we thoroughly understand the real meaning of “Afflictions are bodhi”, we’ve already subdued our own afflictions. The Buddha witnessed that all sentient beings undergo great sufferings, so He resolved to leave the home-life, to cultivate and find the way to help sentient beings escape these sufferings. Afflictions manifest themselves through our ignorance. Sometimes they show in our appearance; sometimes they are hidden in our minds, etc. In our daily life, we cannot do without sufferings and afflictions. However, if we know how to cultivate, we always consider “afflictions is Bodhi”. If we know how to use it, affliction is Bodhi; on the contrary, if we do not know how to use it, then Bodhi becomes affliction. According to Late Most Venerable Hsuan-Hua in Talks on Dharma, volume 7, Bodhi is analogous to water, and affliction to ice. Ice and water are of the same substance; there is no difference. In freezing weather, water will freeze into ice, and in hot weather, ice will melt into water. When there are afflictions, water freezes into ice; and when the afflictions are gone, ice melts into water. It is to say, having afflictions is having the affliction-ice of ignorance; having no afflictions is having the Bodhi-water of wisdom.

This little book titled “To Face & To Subdue Afflictions In Buddhist Point of View” simply points out the Buddha's teachings on basic methods of facing and subduing afflictions. Devout Buddhists should always remember that attaining peace, mindfulness and happiness in this life is not easy, but not because of these difficulties we don’t want to start the journey. We should always remember that time flies really fast. The years and months have gone by really fast too. In the same way, people progress from birth to old age and death without being aware of it. So, we should start to enter right away into practicing and cultivating in order to established daily life patterns, makes our lives more peaceful, mindful, and happy. For Buddhists, the journey leading to enlightenment and liberation demands continuous efforts with right understanding and practice. Presently even with so many books available on Buddhism, I venture to compose this booklet titled “To Face & To Subdue Afflictions In Buddhist Point of View” in Vietnamese and English to emphasize that in order to have a peaceful, mindful, and happy life, in cultivation, we should first face and subdue afflictions. Hoping this little contribution will help Buddhists on how to achieve and lead a life of peace, mindfulness and happiness.

Respectfully,
Thien Phuc

Part One
Summaries of the Buddha &
Buddhism
(Phần Một : Sơ Lược Về Đức Phật &
Đạo Phật)

Chapter One

The Historical Buddha Sakyamuni

I. Buddha's Birth Day:

In the year 563 B.C. a baby was born into a royal family in northern India. "In the heavens above and earth beneath I alone am the honoured one." According to Indian legendary, this is first words attributed to Sakyamuni after his first seven steps when born from his mother's right side, not an arrogant speaking, it bears witness to an awareness of the identity of I, the one's own true nature or Buddha-nature with the true nature of the universe, not the earthly ego. This announcement is ascribed to every Buddha, as are also the same special characteristics attributed to every Buddha, hence he is the Tathagata come in the manner of all Buddhas. In Mahayanism he is the type of countless other Buddhas in countless realms and periods. He grew up in wealth and luxury but soon found that worldly comfort and security do not guarantee real happiness. He was deeply moved by the suffering he saw all around, so He resolved to find the key to human happiness. When he was 29 he left his wife and child and his Royal Palace and set off to sit at the feet of the great religious teachers of the day to learn from them. They taught him much but none really knew the cause of human sufferings and afflictions and how it could be overcome. Eventually, after six years study and meditation he had an experience in which all ignorance fell away and he suddenly understood. From that day onwards, he was called the Buddha, the Awakened One. He lived for another 45 years in which time he traveled all over northern India teaching others what he had discovered. His compassion and patience were legendary and he made hundreds of thousands of followers. In his eightieth year, old and sick, but still happy and at peace, he finally passed away into nirvana. It couldn't have been an easy thing for the Buddha to leave his family. He must have worried and hesitated for a long time before he finally left. There were two choices, dedicating himself to his family or dedicating himself to the whole world. In the end, his great compassion made him give himself to the whole world. And the whole world still

benefits from his sacrifice. This was perhaps the most significant sacrifice ever made.

Nowadays, there are still some discussions over the exact year of the Buddha's birth; however, the majority of opinions favor 623 B.C. The Buddha's birthday was the day of the full moon in May. It was a beautiful day. The weather was nice and a gentle breeze was blowing. All the flowers in the Lumbini Park were blooming, emitting fragrant scents, and all the birds were singing melodious songs. Together, they seemed to have created a fairy land on earth to celebrate the birth of the Prince, a coming Buddha. According to the Indian legends, at that time, the earth shook, and from the sky, two silvery currents of pure water gushed down, one was warm and the other cool, which bathed the body of the Prince. Nowadays, countries with Buddhist tradition usually celebrate the Buddha's Birthday around the middle of the fourth month of the Lunar Year. Also according to Indian legends, the more reliable Buddha's Birth Day, perhaps on the 4th month, 8th day; however, all Buddhist countries observe the Full Moon Day of the Lunar month of Vaisakha (April-May) as Buddha Birth Day Anniversary. For the Buddhist community, the most important event of the year is the celebration of the birth of the Buddha. It falls on the full-moon day in the fourth lunar month (in May of the Solar Calendar). This occasion is observed by millions of Buddhists throughout the world. It is called Vesak in Sri Lanka, Visakha Puja in Thailand. On this day, Buddhists in some countries like China and Korea would take part in the ceremonial bathing of the Buddha. They pour ladles of water scented with flower petals over a statue of the baby Buddha. This symbolizes purifying their thoughts and actions. The temple are elegantly decorated with flowers and banners; the altars are full of offerings. Vegetarian meals are provided for all. Captive animals, such as birds and turtles, are set free from their cages. This is a very joyous day for everyone. According to the Theravada tradition, the Buddha's Birth Day, perhaps on the 4th month, 8th day; however, all Buddhist countries observe the Full Moon Day of the Lunar month of Vaisakha (April-May) as Buddha Birth Day Anniversary. This is one of the major festivals of Buddhism because most Buddhist countries celebrate the day on which the Buddha was born, attained awakening, and passed into nirvana. According to the Mahayana tradition, the month

corresponding to April-May, on the Full Moon day of which is celebrated the Birth, Renunciation, Enlightenment and Parinirvana of the Buddha. The Vesak celebration consists of the presentation of the teaching, contemplation of the life of Buddha, the process around the sacred sites. Furthermore, Vesak festival goes beyond mere historical commemoration; it is a reminder for each of us to strive to become enlightened.

Even though the Buddha is dead but 2,500 years later his teachings still help and save a lot of people, his example still inspires people, his words still continue to change lives. Only a Buddha could have such power centuries after his death. The Buddha did not claim that he was a god, the child of god or even the messenger from a god. He was simply a man who perfected himself and taught that if we followed his example, we could perfect ourselves also. He never asked his followers to worship him as a god. In fact, He prohibited his followers to praise him as a god. He told his followers that he could not give favors to those who worship him with personal expectations or calamities to those who don't worship him. He asked his followers to respect him as students respect their teacher. He also reminded his followers to worship a statue of the Buddha to remind ourselves to try to develop peace and love within ourselves. The perfume of incense reminds us of the pervading influence of virtue, the lamp reminds us of the light of knowledge and the followers which soon fade and die, remind us of impermanence. When we bow, we express our gratitude to the Buddha for what his teachings have given us. This is the core nature of Buddhist worship. A lot of people have misunderstood the meaning of "worship" in Buddhism, even sincere Buddhists. Buddhists do not believe that the Buddha is a god, so in no way they could possibly believe that a piece of wood or metal is a god. In Buddhism, the statue of the Buddha is used to symbolize human perfection. The statue of the Buddha also reminds us of the human dimension in Buddhist teaching, the fact that Buddhism is man-centered, not god-centered, that we must look within not without to find perfection and understanding. So in no way one can say that Buddhists worship god or idols. In fact, a long time ago, when primitive man found himself in a dangerous and hostile situations, the fear of wild animals, of not being able to find enough food, of diseases, and of natural calamities or

phenomena such as storms, hurricanes, volcanoes, thunder, and lightning, etc. He found no security in his surroundings and he had no ability to explain those phenomena, therefore, he created the idea of gods in order to give him comfort in good times, courage in times of danger and consolation when things went wrong. They believed that god arranged everything. Generations after generations, man continues to follow his ancestors in a so-called “faith in god” without any further thinkings. Some says they in believe in god because god responds to their prayers when they feel fear or frustration. Some say they believe in god because their parents and grandparents believed in god. Some others say that they prefer to go to church than to temple because those who go to churches seem richer and more honorable than those who go to temples. Devout Buddhists should always remember that each religion has its own faith. We, Buddhists can neither compare this religion to that religion; nor can we say this religion is better than that religion. Be careful!

II. The Buddha Arose in This World for the Sake of a Great Cause:

The Buddha appeared in this World Because of a Great Matter: For the changing beings from illusion into enlightenment (according to the Lotus Sutra), or the Buddha-nature (according to the Nirvana Sutra), or the joy of Paradise (according to the Infinite Life Sutra). According to the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha is a unique being, an extraordinary man arises in this world for the benefit of sentient beings, for the happiness of sentient beings, out of compassion for the world, and for the good of gods and men. The Buddha founded Buddhism. Some says that Buddhism is a philosophy of life, not a religion. In fact, Buddhism is not strictly a religion in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, for it is not a system of faith and worship to a supernatural god. Buddhism is neither a philosophy. In the contrary, the Buddha’s message is really for human beings in daily life: “Keeping away from all evil deeds, cultivation of a moral life by doing good deeds and purification of mind from worldly impurities.” This message originated from the Buddha’s realization of the Truth. As a prince living in the lap of luxury, the Buddha started to ponder very deeply on why living beings suffer in this world. He asked himself: “What is the cause of this

suffering?” One day while sitting under a tree as a young boy, he saw a snake suddenly appear and catch an eel. As the snake and the eel were struggling, an eagle swooped down from the sky and took away the snake with the eel still in its mouth. That incident was the turning point for the young prince to start thinking about renouncing the worldly life. He realized that living beings on the earth survive by preying on each other. While one being tries to grab and the other tries to escape and this eternal battle will continue forever. This never-ending process of hunting, and self-preservation is the basis of our unhappiness. It is the source of all suffering. The Prince decided that he would discover the means to end this suffering. He left His father’s palace at the age of 29 and six years later he gained enlightenment. According to the Buddha, the Law of Cause and Effect controls all beings. Karma simply means action. If a person commits a bad action (karma) it will be impossible for that person to escape from its bad effect. The Buddha is only a Master, who can tell beings what to do and what to avoid but he cannot do the work for anyone. In the Dhammapada Sutra, the Buddha clearly stated: “You have to do the work of salvation yourself. No one can do anything for another for salvation except to show the way.”

From the Buddhist point of view, all the circumstances of our life are manifestations of our own consciousness. This is the fundamental understanding of Buddhism. From painful, afflictive and confused situations to happy and peaceful circumstances... all are rooted in our own mind. Our problems are we tend to follow the lead of that restless mind, a mind that continuously gives birth to new thoughts and ideas. As a result, we are lured from one situation to another hoping to find happiness, yet we only experience nothing but fatigue and disappointment, and in the end we keep moving in the cycle of Birth and Death. The solution is not to suppress our thoughts and desires, for this would be impossible; it would be like trying to cover a stone over grass, grass will find its way to survive. We must find a better solution than that. Why do we not train ourselves to observe our thoughts without following them. This will deprive them their suppressing energy and is therefore, they will die out by themselves. Devout Buddhists do not consider the Buddha as one who can save us from the consequence of our individual sins. On the contrary, we should consider the Buddha as an all-seeing, all-wise Counselor; one who discovered the safe path

and pointed it out; one who showed the cause of, and the only cure for, human sufferings and afflictions. In pointing out the road, in showing us how to escape these sufferings and afflictions, He became our Guide. The Buddha appeared, for the changing beings from illusion into enlightenment (according to the Lotus Sutra), or the Buddha-nature (according to the Nirvana Sutra), or the joy of Paradise (according to the Infinite Life Sutra).

III. Reasons of Appearance-Renounce of the World-Saving Beings:

Appearance to Save and Support All Sentient Beings: There are many reasons for the appearance of Enlightening Beings in order to save other sentient beings from the cycle of births and deaths. They take the roots of goodness universally benefit all sentient beings. They help sentient beings to be purified and to reach the ultimate shore. They help sentient beings forever leave the innumerable pains and afflictions in the paths of sufferings of the realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals and asuras (titans), etc. Furthermore, salvation may be understood as the deliverance of someone from destruction, sufferings, afflictions, and so on, and to bring that person to the state of being safe from destructive forces, natural or supernatural. To other religions, salvation means deliverance from sin and death, and admission to a so-called “Eternal Paradise”. These are religions of deliverance because they give promise of some form of deliverance. They believe that a person’s will is important, but grace is more necessary and important to salvation. Those who wish to be saved must believe that they see a supernatural salvation of an almighty creator in their lives. In Buddhism, the concept of salvation is strange to all sincere Buddhists. One time, the Buddha told His disciples: “The only reason I have come into the world is to teach others. However, one very important thing is that you should never accept what I say as true simply because I have said it. Rather, you should test the teachings yourselves to see if they are true or not. If you find that they are true and helpful, then practice them. But do not do so merely out of respect for me. You are your own savior and no one else can do that for you.” One other time, the Buddha gently patted the crazy elephant and turned to tell Ananda: “The only way to destroy hatred is with love. Hatred cannot be

defeated with more hatred. This is a very important lesson to learn.” Before Nirvana, the Buddha himself advised his disciples: “When I am gone, let my teachings be your guide. If you have understood them in your heart, you have no more need of me. Remember what I have taught you. Craving and desire are the cause of all sufferings and afflictions. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourselves to clearing your minds and finding true and lasting happiness.” These are the Buddha’s golden speeches on some of the concepts of salvation.

Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Show the Act of Walking Seven Steps: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, there are ten reasons Great Enlightening Beings show the act of walking seven steps. For these ten reasons they show the act of walking seven steps after birth; they manifest this to pacify sentient beings. *First*, to manifest the power of enlightening beings. *Second*, to manifest the giving of the seven kinds of wealth. *Third*, to satisfy the wishes of the spirits of the earth. *Fourth*, to manifest the appearance of transcending the three worlds. *Fifth*, to manifest the supreme walk of the enlightening being, beyond the walk of the elephant, the bull, or the lion. *Sixth*, to manifest the characteristics of adamant ground. *Seventh*, to manifest the desire to give sentient beings courageous strength. *Eighth*, to manifest the practice of the seven jewels of awakening. *Ninth*, to show that the truth they have realized does not come from the instruction of another. *Tenth*, to manifest supreme peerless in the world.

Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Practice Austerities: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Great Enlightening Beings practice austerities. Enlightening Beings use these expedient means of austerities to pacify all sentient beings. *First*, to develop sentient beings with low understanding. *Second*, to remove false views from sentient beings. *Third*, to show the consequences of action to sentient beings who do not believe in consequences of action. *Fourth*, to do so in accord with the adulterated and polluted world. *Fifth*, to show the ability to endure toil and diligently work on the way. *Sixth*, to cause sentient beings to want to seek the truth. *Seventh*, for the sake of sentient beings who are attached to sensual pleasures and selfish pleasure. *Eighth*, in order to show that

enlightening beings' effort is supreme, continuing to the very last life. *Ninth*, to induce sentient beings to enjoy the state of calm and tranquility and increase roots of goodness. *Tenth*, to wait until the time is ripe to develop people's immature faculties.

Ten Reasons Enlightening Beings Appear As Children: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Enlightening Beings appear as children: *First*, to manifest the learning of all worldly arts and sciences. *Second*, to manifest the learning of riding military arts and various worldly occupations. *Third*, to manifest the learning of all kinds of worldly things such as literature, conversation, games, and amusements. *Fourth*, to manifest the shedding of errors and faults of word, thought, and deed. *Fifth*, to manifest entering concentration, staying in the door of nirvana, and pervading infinite worlds in the ten directions. *Sixth*, to show that their power goes beyond all creatures, celestials, human, and nonhuman. *Seventh*, to show that the appearance and majesty of enlightening beings goes beyond all deities. *Eighth*, to cause sentient beings addicted to sensual pleasures to joyfully take pleasure in truth. *Ninth*, to show the reception of truth and respectfully make offerings to all Buddhas. *Tenth*, to show empowerment of Buddhas and being bathed in the light of truth.

Ten Reasons Enlightening Beings Appear to Live in a Royal Palace: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons Enlightening Beings appear to live in a royal palace: *First*, to cause roots of goodness of their colleagues of the past to develop to maturity. *Second*, to show the power of roots of goodness of Enlightening Beings. *Third*, to show the comforts of great spiritual power of enlightening beings to humans and celestials who are obsessed with comforts. *Fourth*, to adapt to the minds of sentient beings in the polluted world. *Fifth*, to manifest the spiritual power of Enlightening Beings, able to enter concentration in the heart of the palace. *Sixth*, to enable those who had the same aspiration in the past to fulfill their aims. *Seventh*, to enable their parents, family and relatives to fulfill their wishes. *Eighth*, to use music to produce the sounds to the sublime teaching to offer to all Buddhas. *Ninth*, to dwell in the subtle concentration while in the palace and show everything

from the attainment of Buddhahood to final extinction. *Tenth*, to accord with and preserve the teaching of the Buddhas.

Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Smile and Make a Promise to Tame and Pacify Sentient Beings: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons why Great Enlightening Beings smile and make a promise in their hearts to tame and pacify sentient beings. *First*, Great Enlightening Beings think that all worldlings are sunk in the mire of craving, and no one but Enlightening Beings can rescue them. *Second*, all worldlings are blinded by passion and afflictions, and only Enlightening Beings have wisdom. *Third*, based on this so-called body, Enlightening Beings will attain the supreme reality-body of Buddhas, which fills all times. *Fourth*, then the Enlightening Beings, with unobstructed eyes, look over all the Brahma heavens and all the controlling heavens, and think: These sentient beings all think they have the power of knowledge. *Fifth*, the Enlightening Beings observe sentient beings who have long planted roots of goodness and who now are regressing and sinking. *Sixth*, the Enlightening Beings observe that though the seeds sown in the world be few, the fruits reaped are many. *Seventh*, the Enlightening Beings see that all sentient beings who receive the teaching of Buddha will surely gain benefit. *Eighth*, the Enlightening Beings see that Enlightening Beings who were their colleagues in past ages have become obsessed with other things and cannot attain the great virtues of the Buddha teaching. *Ninth*, the Enlightening Beings see that the celestials and humans who were in the same communities with them in the past still are in mundane states, unable to detach from them, and not tiring of them either. *Tenth*, then Enlightening Beings are bathed in the lights of all Buddhas and are even more joyful.

Ten Reasons Great Enlightening Beings Renounce the World: According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten reasons great enlightening beings renounce the world: *First*, to reject living at home. *Second*, to cause sentient beings attached to their homes give up their attachment. *Third*, to follow and appreciate the path of Saints. *Fourth*, to publicize and praise the virtues of leaving home. *Fifth*, to demonstrate external detachment from extreme views. *Sixth*, to cause sentient beings to detach from sensual and selfish pleasures. *Seventh*, to show the appearance of transcending the world.

Eighth, to show independence, not being subject to another. *Ninth*, to show that they are going to attain the ten powers and fearlessnesses of Buddhas. *Tenth*, it is natural that Enlightening Beings in their final life should do so.

Fifty-Four Reasons and/or Vows That Cause Great Enlightening Beings to Appear: According to the Buddha in The Flower Adornment Sutra, chapter 25, Ten Dedications Chapter, Enlightening Beings save other sentient beings without any mental image of sentient beings, Enlightening Beings think that: *First*, they may use these roots of goodness universally to benefit all sentient beings, causing them to be purified, to reach the ultimate shore, and to forever leave the innumerable pains and afflictions of the realms of hells, hungry ghosts, animals and asuras (titans). *Second*, when the great Enlightening Beings plant these roots of goodness, they dedicate their won roots of goodness thus. I should be a hostel for all sentient beings, to let them escape from all painful things. I should be a protector for all sentient beings, to let them all be liberated from all afflictions. I should be a refuge for all sentient beings, to free them from all fears. I should be a goal for all sentient beings, to cause them to reach universal knowledge. I should make a resting place for all sentient beings, to enable them to find a place of peace and security. I should be a light for all sentient beings, to enable them to attain the light of knowledge to annihilate the darkness of ignorance. I should be a torch for all sentient beings, to destroy all darkness of nescience. I should be a lamp for all sentient beings, to cause them to abide in the realm of ultimate purity. I should be a guide for all sentient beings, to lead them into the truth. I should be a great leader for all sentient beings, to give them great knowledge. *Third*, Great Enlightening Beings dedicate all foundations of goodness in this way, to equally benefit all sentient beings and ultimately cause them all to attain universal knowledge. Enlightening Beings' protection of and dedication to those who are not their relatives or friends are equal to those for their relatives and friends. Enlightening Beings enter the equal nature of all things, they do not conceive a single thought of not being relatives or friends. Even if there be sentient beings, who have malicious or hostile intentions toward the Enlightening Beings, still the Enlightening Beings also regard them with the eye of compassion and are never angered.

Fourth, Enlightened Beings are good friends to all sentient beings. They always explain the right teaching for sentient beings, so that they may learn and practice it. *Fifth*, Enlightening beings dedicate because they are just as the ocean which cannot be changed or destroyed by all poisons. The various oppressive afflictions of all the ignorant, the unwise, the ungrateful, the wrathful, those poisoned by covetousness, the arrogant and conceited, the mentally blind and deaf, those who do not know what is good, and other such evil sentient beings, cannot disturb the Enlightening Beings; they are just as the sun, appearing in the world not concealed because those who are born blind do not see it, not hidden by the obstruction of such things as mirages, eclipses, trees, high mountains, deep ravines, dust, mist, smoke, or clouds, not concealed by the change of seasons. Enlightening Beings dedicate with great virtues, with deep and broad minds. They dedicate because they want ultimate virtue and knowledge, their minds aspire to the supreme truth; the light of truth illumines everywhere and they perceive the meanings of everything. Their knowledge freely commands all avenues of teaching, and in order to benefit all sentient beings they always practice virtuous ways, never mistakenly conceiving the idea of abandoning sentient beings. *Sixth*, Enlightening Beings do not reject sentient beings and fail to cultivate dedication because of the meanness of character of sentient beings, or because their erroneous will, ill-will and confusion are hard to quell. *Seventh*, Enlightening Beings just array themselves with the armor of great vows of Enlightening Beings, saving sentient beings without ever retreating. *Eighth*, Enlightening Beings do not withdraw from enlightening activity and abandon the path of enlightenment just because sentient beings are ungrateful. *Ninth*, Enlightening Beings do not get sick of sentient beings just because ignoramuses altogether give up all the foundations of goodness which accord with reality. *Tenth*, Enlightening Beings do not retreat because sentient beings repeatedly commit excesses and evils which are hard to bear. *Eleventh*, Great Enlightening Beings do not cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to complete perfect enlightenment just for the sake of one sentient being; it is in order to save and safeguard all sentient beings everywhere that they cultivate roots of goodness and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twelfth*, it is not purify just one Buddha-land, not

because of belief in just one Buddha, not just to see one Buddha, not just to comprehend one doctrine that they initiate the determination for great knowledge and dedicate it to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. It is to purify all Buddha-lands, out of faith in all Buddhas, to serve all Buddhas, to understand all Buddha-teachings, that they initiate great vows, cultivate the foundations of goodness, and dedicate them to unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Thirteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow that: “By my roots of goodness, may all creatures, all sentient beings, be purified, may they be filled with virtues which cannot be ruined and are inexhaustible. May they always gain respect. May they have right mindfulness and unfailing recollection. May they attain sure discernment. May they be replete with immeasurable knowledge. May all virtues of physical, verbal and mental action fully adorn them.” *Fourteenth*, Bodhisattvas use these roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to serve all Buddhas, to their unfailing benefit, to cause all sentient beings’ pure faith to be indestructible, to cause all sentient beings to hear the true teaching, cut off all doubt and confusion, remember the teaching without forgetting it, to cause all sentient beings to cultivate in accord with the teaching, to cause sentient beings to develop respect for the enlightened, to cause sentient beings to act with purity, to rest securely on innumerable great foundations of goodness, to cause all sentient beings to be forever free from poverty, to cause all sentient beings to be fully equipped with the seven kinds of wealth (faith, vigor, shame, learning, generosity, concentration and wisdom), to cause all sentient beings to always learn from the Buddha, to perfect innumerable roots of goodness, to cause sentient beings to attain impartial understanding, to abide in omniscience, to look upon all sentient beings equally with unobstructed eyes, to adorn their bodies with all marks of greatness, without any flaws, beautiful voices, replete with all fine qualities, to have control over their senses, to accomplish the ten powers, to be filled with good will, to dwell or depend on nothing, to cause all sentient beings to attain the enjoyments of Buddhahood and abide in the abode of Buddhas. *Fifteenth*, seeing sentient beings doing all sorts of bad things and suffering all sorts of misery and pain, and being hindered by this from seeing the Buddha, hearing the teaching and recognizing the community, the enlightening beings vow to enter those

states of woe, take on the various miseries in place of the sentient beings, to cause them to be free. *Sixteenth*, Enlightening Beings suffer pain in this way, but they are not discouraged. In the contrary, they vigorously cultivate without ceasing because they are determined to carry all sentient beings to liberation. They are determined to save all sentient beings and to enable them to attain emancipation, so that they can be free from the realm of pain and troubles of birth, old age, sickness, and death. They are determined to save all sentient beings from revolving in erroneous views, bereft of qualities of goodness. They are determined to save all sentient beings who are wrapped up in the web of attachments, covered by the shroud of ignorance, clinging to all existents, pursuing them unceasingly, entering the cage of suffering, acting like maniacs, totally void of virtue or knowledge, always doubtful and confused, do not perceive the place of peace, do not know the path of emancipation, revolve in birth and death without rest, and always submerged in the mire of suffering. *Seventeenth*, Enlightening Beings are not seeking liberation for themselves, but they want to use what they practice to cause all sentient beings become supreme sovereign of knowledge, attain the omniscient mind, cross over the flow of birth and death, and be free from all suffering. *Eighteenth*, Enlightening Beings vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings, and enable them to escape from the abyss of immeasurable woes of birth and death. *Nineteenth*, Enlightening Beings always vow to accept all sufferings for the sake of all sentient beings in all worlds, in all states of misery forever, but still always cultivate foundations of goodness for the sake of all beings. *Twentieth*, Enlightening Beings vow that they would rather take all this sufferings on themselves than allow sentient beings to fall into hell, animal, hungry ghost, and asura realms. *Twenty-first*, Enlightening Beings vow to protect all sentient beings and never abandon them. This is a sincere vow because they set their mind on enlightenment in order to liberate all sentient beings, not seeking the unexcelled way for their own sake. *Twenty-second*, Enlightening Beings do not cultivate enlightening practice in search of pleasure or enjoyment. Why? Because mundane pleasures are all sufferings and mundane pleasures are the realms of maniacs. Only craved by ignorant people, but scorned by Buddhas because all misery arises from them. The anger, fighting, mutual

defamation and such evils of the realms of hells, ghosts, animals and asuras are all caused by greedy attachment to objects of desire. By addiction to desires, one become estranged from the Buddhas and hindered from birth in heaven, to say nothing of unexcelled complete perfect enlightenment. *Twenty-third*, Enlightening Beings vow to dedicate roots of goodness to enable all sentient beings to attain ultimate bliss, beneficial bliss, the bliss of nonreception, the bliss of dispassionate tranquility, the bliss of imperturbability, immeasurable bliss, the bliss of not rejecting birth and death yet not regressing from nirvana, undying bliss, and the bliss of universal knowledge. *Twenty-fourth*, for all sentient beings, Enlightening Beings vow to be a charioteer, to be a leader, to be holding the torch of great knowledge and showing the way to safety and peace, freeing them from danger, to use appropriate means to inform sentient beings of the truth. In the ocean of birth and death, they are skillful captains of the ship, who know how to deliver sentient beings to the other shore. *Twenty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings dedicate all their roots of goodness and save sentient beings by employing means appropriate to the situation to cause them to emerge from birth and death, to serve and provide for all the Buddhas, to attain unhindered, omniscient knowledge, to abandon all maniacs and bad associates, to approach all Enlightening Beings and good associates, to annihilate all error and wrongdoing, to perfect pure behavior, and to fulfill the great practical vows and innumerable virtues of Enlightening Beings. *Twenty-sixth*, sentient beings cannot save themselves, how can they save others? Only Enlightening Beings have this unique determination of cultivating amass roots of goodness and dedicate them in this way to liberate all sentient beings, to illumine all sentient beings, to guide all sentient beings, to enlighten all sentient beings, to watch over and attend to all sentient beings, to take care of all sentient beings, to perfect all sentient beings, to gladden all sentient beings, to bring happiness to all sentient beings, and to cause all sentient beings to become freed from doubt. *Twenty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings' dedications should be like the sun shining universally on all without seeking thanks or reward; not abandoning all sentient beings because one sentient being is evil, just diligently practicing the dedications of roots of goodness to cause all sentient beings to attain peace and ease. Enlightening Beings are able to take

care of all sentient beings even if they are bad, never giving up their vows on this account. Even if their roots of goodness be few, but because they want to embrace all sentient beings, so they always make a great dedication with a joyful heart. If one has roots of goodness but does not desire to benefit all sentient beings that is not called dedication. When every single root of goodness is directed toward all sentient beings that is called dedication. *Twenty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to place sentient beings in the true nature of things where there is no attachment. *Twenty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication to see that the intrinsic nature of sentient beings doesn't move or change. *Thirtieth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without depending on or grasping dedication. *Thirty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to the appearances of roots of goodness. *Thirty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without false ideas about essential nature of consequences of actions. *Thirty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to the characteristics of the five clusters of material and mental existence. *Thirty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without destroying the characteristics of the five clusters. *Thirty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without grasping action. *Thirty-sixth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without seeking reward. *Thirty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to causality. *Thirty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without imagining what is producing by causality. *Thirty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to reputation. *Fortieth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication without attachment to location. *Forty-first*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to unreal things. *Forty-second*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to images of sentient beings, the world, or mind. *Forty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without creating delusions of mind, delusions of concepts, or delusions of views. *Forty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication without attachment to verbal expression. *Forty-fifth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing the true nature of all things. *Forty-sixth*, Enlightening beings cultivate dedication observing the aspects in which all sentient beings are equal. *Forty-seventh*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication

stamping all roots of goodness with the seal of the realm of truth. *Forty-eighth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing all things dispassionately; they understand that all things have no propagation and that roots of goodness are also thus. *Forty-ninth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication observing that things are nondual, unborn, and unperishing. *Fiftieth*, Enlightening Beings use such roots of goodness to cultivate and practice pure methods of curing spiritual ills. *Fifty-first*, all of their roots of goodness are in accord with transcendental principles, but they do not conceive of them dualistically. *Fifty-second*, it is not in their deeds that they cultivate omniscience. *Fifty-third*, Enlightening Beings cultivate omniscience, but it is not apart from deeds that they cultivate omniscience. Omniscience is not identical to action, but omniscience is not attained apart from action either. Because their action is pure as light, the consequences are also pure as light; because the consequences are pure as light, omniscience is also pure as light. They detach from all confusions and thoughts of self and possession, Enlightening Beings skillfully cultivate dedication of all roots of goodness. *Fifty-fourth*, Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication in this way to liberate sentient beings ceaselessly; they do not dwell on appearances. Though they know that in all things there is no action and no consequences, yet they can skillfully produce all deeds and consequences without opposition or contention. Enlightening Beings cultivate dedication, free from all faults and are praised by all Buddhas.

IV. The Buddha Is a Complete Enlightened One:

The word Buddha is not a proper name, but a title meaning “Enlightened One” or “Awakened One.” Prince Siddhartha was not born to be called Buddha. He was not born enlightened; however, efforts after efforts, he became enlightened. Any beings who sincerely try can also be freed from all clings and become enlightened as the Buddha. All Buddhists should be aware that the Buddha was not a god or any kind of supernatural being. Like us, he was born a man. The difference between the Buddha and an ordinary man is simply that the former has awakened to his Buddha nature while the latter is still deluded about it. However, whether we are awakened or deluded, the Buddha nature is equally present in all beings. “Buddha” is an epithet

of those who successfully break the hold of ignorance, liberate themselves from cyclic existence, and teach others the path to liberation. The word “Buddha” derived from the Sanskrit root *budh*, “to awaken,” it refers to someone who attains Nirvana through meditative practice and the cultivation of such qualities as wisdom, patience, and generosity. Such a person will never again be reborn within cyclic existence, as all the cognitive ties that bind ordinary beings to continued rebirth have been severed. Through their meditative practice, Buddhas have eliminated all craving, and defilements. The Buddha of the present era is referred to as “Sakyamuni” (Sage of the Sakya). He was born Siddhartha Gautama, a member of the Sakya clan. The Buddha is One Awakened or Enlightened to the true nature of existence. The word Buddha is the name for one who has been enlightened, who brings enlightenment to others, whose enlightened practice is complete and ultimate. The term Buddha derived from the Sanskrit verb root “*Budh*” meaning to understand, to be aware of, or to awake. It describes a person who has achieved the enlightenment that leads to release from the cycle of birth and death and has thereby attained complete liberation. The Buddha is the Enlightened One. Chinese translation is “to perceive” and “knowledge.” Buddha means a person who has achieved the enlightenment that leads to release from the cycle of birth and death and has thereby attained complete liberation. There are three degrees of enlightenment: enlightenment derived from one’s self, enlighten others, and attain the Buddhahood. The Buddha is the Enlightened One with Great Loving Kindness. He benefitted and perfected of the self (to benefit oneself), or to improve himself for the purpose of improving or benefiting others. Self-benefiting for the benefit of others, unlimited altruism and pity being the theory of Mahayana. “Self profit, profit others,” the essential nature and work of a Bodhisattva, to benefit himself and benefit others, or himself press forward in the Buddhist life in order to carry others forward. Hinayana is considered to be self-advancement, self-salvation by works or discipline; Bodhisattva Buddhism as saving oneself in order to save others, or making progress and helping others to progress, Bodhisattvism being essentially altruistic. The second step is Benefiting or perfecting of others (to benefit others). And the third step is to attain of Buddhahood.

The Buddha is the person who has achieved the enlightenment that leads to release from the cycle of birth and death and has thereby attained complete liberation. The word Buddha is not a proper name but a title meaning “Enlightened One” or “Awakened One.” Prince Siddhartha was not born to be called Buddha. He was not born enlightened, nor did he receive the grace of any supernatural being; however, after many efforts, he became enlightened. It is obvious to Buddhists who believe in re-incarnation, that the Buddha did not come into the world for the first time. Like everyone else, he had undergone many births and deaths, had experienced the world as an animal, as a man, and as a god. During many rebirths, he would have shared the common fate of all that lives. A spiritual perfection like that of a Buddha cannot be the result of just one life. It must mature slowly throughout many ages and aeons. However, after His Enlightenment, the Buddha confirmed that any beings who sincerely try can also be freed from all clings and become enlightened as the Buddha. All Buddhists should be aware that the Buddha was not a god or any kind of supernatural being (supreme deity), nor was he a savior or creator who rescues sentient beings by taking upon himself the burden of their sins. Like us, he was born a man. The difference between the Buddha and an ordinary man is simply that the former has awakened to his Buddha nature while the latter is still deluded about it. However, the Buddha nature is equally present in all beings.

According to the Zen sects, Buddhists accept the historic Sakyamuni Buddha neither as a Supreme Deity nor as a savior who rescues men by taking upon himself the burden of their sins. Rather, it venerates him as a fully awakened, fully perfected human being who attained liberation of body and mind through his own human efforts and not by the grace of any supernatural being. According to Buddhism, we are all Buddhas from the very beginning that means every one of us is potentially a Buddha; however, to become a Buddha, one must follow the arduous road to enlightenment. Various classifications of the stages of Buddhahood are to be found in the sutras. A Buddha in the highest stage is not only fully enlightened but a Perfect One, one who has become whole, complete in himself, that is, one in whom all spiritual and psychic faculties have come to perfection, to maturity, to a stage of perfect harmony, and whose consciousness encompasses the infinity of

the universe. Such a one can no longer be identified with the limitations of his individual personality, his individual character and existence; there is nothing by which he could be measured, there are no words to describe him.

V. The Historical Buddha Sakyamuni:

The historical person with the name of Siddhattha, a Fully Enlightenment One. One who has reached the Utmost, Right and Equal Enlightenment. The lack of hard facts and information, even the date of the Buddha's life is still in doubt. Indian people believe that the Buddha's Nirvana took place around 100 years before the time of king Asoka. However, most modern scholars agreed that the Buddha's Birthday was in some time in the second half of the seventh century B.C. and His Nirvana was about 80 years after His Birthday. The Buddha is the All-Knowing One. He was born in 623 BC in Northern India, in what is now Nepal, a country situated on the slope of Himalaya, in the Lumbini Park at Kapilavathu on the Vesak Fullmoon day of April. Almost 26 centuries ago, the Sakyas were a proud clan of the Khattiyas (the Warrior Caste) living on the foothill of the Himalaya in Northern Nepal. His royal name was Siddhartha, and his family name was Gautama. He belonged to the illustrious family of the Okkaka of the Solar Race. King Raja Suddhodana founded a strong kingdom with the capital at Kapilavatthu. His wife was Queen Maha Maya, daughter of the Kolya. Before giving birth to her child, according to the custom at that time, she asked for the King's permission to return to her parents' home in Devadaha for the childbirth. On the way to her parents' home, the Queen took a rest at Lumbini Park, a wonderful garden where flowers filled the air with sweet odor, while swarms of bees and butterflies were flying around and birds of all color were singing as if they were getting ready to welcome the Queen. As she was standing under a flowering sala tree, and catching hold of a branch in full bloom, she gave birth to a prince who would later become Buddha Gotama. All expressed their delight to the Queen and her noble baby prince. Heaven and Earth rejoiced at the marvels. The memorable day was the Full Moon Day of Vesak (in May) in 623 BC. On the naming ceremony, many learned Brahmins

were invited to the palace. A wise hermit named Asita told the king that two ways would open for the prince: he would either become a universal ruler or would leave the world and become a Buddha. Asita named the baby Siddhattha, which means “the One whose wish is fulfilled.” At first the King was pleased to hear this, but later he was worried about the statement that the prince would renounce the world and become a homeless hermit. In the palace, however, delight was followed quickly by sorrow, seven days after the childbirth, Queen Maya suddenly died. Her younger sister, Pajapati Gotami, the second Queen, became the prince’s devoted foster mother, who brought him up with loving care. Although grew up in a luxurious life of a prince with full of glory, he was kind and gentle. He received excellent education in both Vedas and the arts of warfare. A wonderful thing happened at a ploughing festival in his childhood. It was an early spiritual experience which, later in his search for truth, served as a key to his Enlightenment. Once on a spring ploughing ceremony, the King took the prince to the field and placed him under the shade of a rose apple tree where he was watched by his nurses. Because the King himself took part in the ploughing, the prince looked at his father driving a golden plough together with other nobles, but he also saw the oxen dragging their heavy yokes and many farmers sweating at their work. While the nurses ran away to join the crowd, he was left alone in the quiet. Though he was young in age, he was old in wisdom. He thought so deeply over the sight that he forgot everything around and developed a state of meditation to the great surprise of the nurses and his father. The King felt great pride in his son, but all the time he recalled the hermit’s prophecy. Then he surrounded him with all pleasures and amusements and young playmates, carefully keeping away from him all knowledge of pain, sadness and death. When he was sixteen years old, the King Suddhodana arranged for his son’s a marriage with the princess Yasodhara, daughter of King Soupra-Buddha, who bore him a son named Rahula. Although raised in princely luxury and glory, surrounded with splendid palaces, His beautiful wife and well-behaved son, He felt trapped amidst this luxury like a bird in a gold cage, a fish in a silver vase. During a visit to the outskirts of the city, outside the four palace portals, He saw the spectacle of human suffering, an old man with white hair, fallen teeth,

blurred eyes, deaf ears, and bent back, resting on his cane and begging for his food; A sick man lying at the roadside who moaned painfully; a dead man whose body was swollen and surrounded with flies and bluebottles; and a holy ascetic with a calm appearance. The four sights made Him realize that life is subject to all sorts of sufferings. The sight of the holy ascetic who appeared serene gave Him the clue that the first step in His search for Truth was “Renunciation.” Back in his palace, he asked his father to let Him enter monkhood, but was refused. Nevertheless, He decided to renounce the world not for His own sake or convenience, but for the sake of suffering humanity. This unprecedented resolution made Prince Siddartha later become the Founder of Buddhism. At the age of twenty-nine, one night He decided to leave behind His princely life. After his groom Chandala saddled His white horse, He rode off the royal palace, toward the dense forest and became a wandering monk. First, He studied under the guidance of the leading masters of the day such as Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. He learned all they could teach Him; however, He could not find what He was looking for, He joined a group of five mendicants and along with them, He embarked on a life of austerity and particularly on starvation as the means which seemed most likely to put an end to birth and death. In His desire for quietude He emaciated His body for six years, and carried out a number of strict methods of fasting, very hard for ordinary men to endure. The bulk of His body was greatly reduced by this self-torture. His fat, flesh, and blood had all gone. Only skin and bone remained. One day, worn out He fell to the ground in a dead faint. A shepherdess who happened to pass there gave Him milk to drink. Slowly, He recovered His body strength. His courage was unbroken, but His boundless intellect led Him to the decision that from now on He needed proper food. He would have certainly died had He not realized the futility of self-mortification, and decided to practice moderation instead. Then He went into the Nairanjana River to bathe. The five mendicants left Him, because they thought that He had now turned away from the holy life. He then sat down at the foot of the Bodhi tree at Gaya and vowed that He would not move until He had attained the Supreme Enlightenment. After 49 days, at the beginning of the night, He achieved the “Knowledge of Former Existence,” recollecting the successive series of His former

births in the three realms. At midnight, He acquired the “Supreme Heavenly Eye,” perceiving the spirit and the origin of the Creation. Then early next morning, He reached the state of “All Knowledge,” realizing the origin of sufferings and discovering the ways to eliminate them so as to be liberated from birth-death and reincarnation. He became Anuttara Samyak-Sambodhi, His title was Sakyamuni Buddha. He attained Enlightenment at the age of 35, on the eighth day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar, at the time of the Morning Star’s rising. After attaining Enlightenment at the age of 35 until his Mahaparinirvana at the age of 80, he spent his life preaching and teaching. He was certainly one of the most energetic man who ever lived: forty-nine years he taught and preached day and night, sleeping only about two hours a day. The Buddha said: “I am not the first Buddha to come upon this earth, nor shall I be the last. In due time, another Buddha will arise, a Holy one, a supreme Enlightened One, an incomparable leader. He will reveal to you the same Eternal Truth which I have taught you.” Two months after his Enlightenment, the Buddha gave his first discourse entitled “The Turning of The Dharma Wheel” to the five ascetics, the Kodannas, his old companions, at the Deer Park in Benares. In this discourse, the Buddha taught: “Avoiding the two extremes of indulgence in sense pleasures and self-mortification, the Tathagata has comprehended the Middle Path, which leads to calm, wisdom, enlightenment and Nirvana. This is the Very Noble Eight-fold Path, namely, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.” Next he taught them the Four Noble Truths: Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Ceasing of Suffering and the Path leading to the ceasing of suffering. The Venerable Kodanna understood the Dharma and immediately became a Sotapanna, the other four asked the Buddha to receive them into his Order. It was through the second sermon on the “No-self Quality” that all of them attained Arahantship. Later the Buddha taught the Dharma to Yasa, a rich young man in Benares and his 54 companions, who all became Arahants. With the first 60 disciples in the world, the Buddha founded his Sangha and he said to them: “I am free from all fetters, both human and divine, you are also free from all fetters. Go forth, Bhikkhus, for the welfare of many, for the happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the good and

welfare, and happiness of gods and men. Preach the Dharma, perfect in the beginning, perfect in the middle, perfect in the end, both in spirit and in letter. Proclaim the holy life in all its fullness and purity.” With these words, he sent them into the world. He himself set out for Uruvela, where he received 30 young nobles into the Order and converted the Three Brothers Kassapa, who were soon established in Arahantship by means of “the Discourse on Fire.” Then the Buddha went to Rajagaha, to visit King Bimbisara. The King, on listening to the Dharma, together with his attendants, obtained the Fruit of the First Path and formally offered the Buddha his Bamboo Grove where the Buddha and the Sangha took up their residence for a long time. There, the two chief disciples, Sariputra and Mogallana, were received into the Order. Next, the Buddha went to Kapilavatthu and received into the Order his own son, Rahula, and his half-brother Nanda. From his native land, he returned to Rajagaha and converted the rich banker Anathapindika, who presented him the Jeta Grove. For 45 years, the Buddha traversed all over India, preaching and making converts to His religion. He founded an order of monks and later another order of nuns. He challenged the caste system, taught religious freedom and free inquiry, raised the status of women up to that of men, and showed the way to liberation to all walks of life. His teaching were very simple but spiritually meaningful, requiring people “to put an end to evil, fulfil all good, and purify body and mind.” He taught the method of eradicating ignorance and suppressing sufferings. He encouraged people to maintain freedom in the mind to think freely. All people were one in the eyes of the Buddha. He advised His disciples to practice the ten supreme qualities: compassion, wisdom, renunciation, discipline, will power, forbearance, truthfulness, determination, goodwill, and equanimity. The Buddha never claimed to be a deity or a saint. He always declared that everyone could become a Buddha if he develops his qualities to perfection and is able to eliminate his ignorance completely through his own efforts. At the age of 80, after completing His teaching mission, He entered Nirvana at Kusinara, leaving behind millions of followers, among them were His wife Yasodara and His son Rahula, and a lot of priceless doctrinal treasures considered even today as precious moral and ethical models. In short, there are eight periods of Buddha’s life. First, descending from the Tushita Heaven Palace, or

descend into and abode in the Tusita heaven. Second, abode at the Tushita and visibly preached to the devas. Third, entry into his mother's womb (Queen Maha Maya). Fourth, birth from his mother's side in Limbini. Fifth, leaving the home life (leaving home at the age of 29 as a hermit). Sixth, subduing mara and accomplishing the Way. After six years suffering, subduing mara and attaining enlightenment. Seventh, turning the Dharma wheel (rolling the Law-wheel or preaching). Eighth, entering nirvana (Parinirvana) at the age of 80.

According to Fa-Hsien in the Records of the Western Lands, there were a lot of stupas associated with some activities of the historical Buddha; however, he only mentioned some that attracted his attention, or some he thought they were important enough to record in his journal. They usually were stupas that were built over the places of commemoration of the Buddha. *First*, where Prince Siddhartha Gautama was born at Lumbini garden. *Second*, where Prince Siddhartha Gautama, having left the city by Eastern gate, saw a sick man and ordered His charioteer Channa to return to the palace at Kapilavastu. *Third*, where Prince Siddhartha Gautama dismissed His charioteer Channa and His white horse Kanthaka in the country of Ràmagràma. *Fourth*, where the Buddha practiced austerity for six years. *Fifth*, where the Buddha once bathed and a deity lowered a branch of a tree for Him to hold on and step out of the water. *Sixth*, where the maidens of Gramika offered milk and rice to the Prince. *Seventh*, where the Buddha sat facing east on a rock under a great tree and ate rice. *Eighth*, where Prince Siddhartha Gautama attained Buddhahood at Gaya. *Ninth*, where the Buddha, seven days after His enlightenment looked at the Bodhi Tree and enjoyed the bliss of emancipation at Gaya. *Tenth*, where the Buddha walked from east to west for seven days under the Bodhi Tree at Gaya. *Eleventh*, where the deities raised a terrace made of seven precious substances to make offerings to the Buddha for seven days at Gaya. *Twelfth*, where the Buddha sat on a square rock facing east under a Nyagrodha tree when Brahma came to invite Him to preach the Dharma at Gaya. *Thirteenth*, where four celestial kings presented Him with an alms-bowl at Gaya. *Fourteenth*, where five hundred merchants offered Him flour and honey at Gaya. *Fifteenth*, where the Buddha sat facing east, preached the first sermon and converted Kaundinya and his companions at

Varanasi in the Deer Park. *Sixteenth*, where he predicted the future of Maitreya Buddha at Varanasi in the Deer Park. *Seventeenth*, where the dragon Elàpattrā asked the Buddha when he could be free from his dragon form at Varanasi in the Deer Park. *Eighteenth*, where the Buddha converted the three Kasyapa brothers and their thousand disciples at Gaya. *Nineteenth*, where the Buddha returned to see His father after His Enlightenment at Kapilavastu. *Twentieth*, where the earth quaked six times when five hundred princes of the Sakya clan worshipped Upali after having renounced their home at Kapilavastu. *Twenty-first*, where the Buddha preached the Dharma to the deities while the four celestial kings guarded the four gates of the hall to prevent king Suddhodana from entering at Kapilavastu. *Twenty-second*, where the Buddha sat facing east under a nigrodha tree while Mahaprajapati offered Him a robe at Kapilavastu. *Twenty-third*, where gods Sakra and Brahma came down to earth from Trayastrimsa heaven along with the Buddha at Samkasya. *Twenty-fourth*, where nun Uptala was the first to worship the Buddha when He came down from Trayastrimsa at Samkasya. *Twenty-fifth*, where the Buddha expounded the Dharma to His disciples at Kanyakubja. *Twenty-sixth*, where the Buddha preached the Law, where He walked and where He sat at Hari village. *Twenty-seventh*, where the Buddha preached for the salvation of men, where He walked and where He sat at Sravasti city. Each stupa had a distinctive name. *Twenty-eighth*, where the Buddha stood by the roadside when king Virudhaka set out to attack the Sakya clan at Sravasti. *Twenty-ninth*, where king Virudhaka slaughtered the descendants of the Sakya Clan who had all attained to the first stage of Sainthood at Kapilavastu. *Thirtieth*, where the Buddha converted an evil demon, eight yojanas to the east of the garden of Ghoshira at Kausamba. *Thirty-first*, where the Buddha lived, where He walked at Champa. *Thirty-second*, where the Buddha left Vaisali with His disciples by the west gate and turning to the right looked back at the city and said: “This is the last place I have visited”. *Thirty-third*, where the Buddha lying in a golden coffin received homage for seven days at Kusinara. *Thirty-fourth*, where Vajrapanni laid down his golden mace at Kusinara. *Thirty-fifth*, where the Buddha entered into Nirvana at Kusinara.

Chapter Two

An Overview & Meanings of Buddhism

I. The Origination of Buddhism:

Indian history before the Buddha's time showed that Hinduism had been founded and developed on the Indian peninsula for a long time ago. Civilization of Harappan or the civilization of the Indus Valley which was known as the cradles of human culture, flourished from the 28th century B.C. till the 18th century B.C. This civilization extended from what is now western Pakistan and to the south near present-day Bombay and to the east near Shimla, in the foothills of the Himalayas. Harappan Civilization was very advanced both materially and spiritually. There is evidence that the people of this civilization exhibited great skills in irrigation, mathematics based on binary models, the same model employed in modern computing. In addition, archaeological discoveries from Mohenjo-daro and Harappa showed that that civilization had a very highly developed culture. Almost 5,000 years ago, Indian people already had a scrip that remains undeciphered to date and they had a system of beliefs and religions which stressed on the liberation of the bondages of karmas and rebirths through renunciation and meditation. However, between 1800 B.C. and 1500 B.C., India was invaded by a people known as Aryans. Aryans originated from Eastern Europe, perhaps where are now called Poland and Ukraine. The Aryans brought to the Indian peninsula a totally different system of beliefs and religion. The Aryans worshipped a number of gods who were personifications of natural phenomena, such as the god of thunder and lightning, the god of fire, of water, etc. Thus, nowadays we can see, two big religions in India inherited from both Harappan and Aryan traditions. For Buddhism, this religion draws most of its inspiration from the religious culture of the Harappan Civilization. The most important elements of the Harappan Civilization such as renunciation, meditation, rebirth, karma, and liberation... are also important in Buddhist theories.

Some twenty-five centuries ago a great man took up the life of a wandering ascetic in what is today Northern India. This in itself was not

a unique event: many others also sought spiritual liberation walking in the deep forests and high mountains. However, this man's quest resulted in answer that have been handed down to successive generations and, in the process, have been elaborated, interpreted and reinterpreted to form one of the greatest living religious traditions. In fact, Buddhism is much more than a religion: its cultural and philosophical impact has for centuries reverberated throughout South and Southeast Asia and, more recently, in the West. The tradition has become so vast and diverse that a superficial glance seems to reveal more disparity than continuity. Nevertheless, behind the many incongruities there is a recognizable common thread. All forms of Buddhism share the same roots and all are motivated by the quest to attain a long-lasting state of contentment through mental, spiritual and moral development. All relate in some way to the enlightenment experience of one man, who is known as the "Buddha." Buddhism began in India in the 5th century B.C. and all its variants can be traced to these origins. According to ancient Indian history, the precise historical beginning of the tradition is somewhat obscure, for at that time there were so many small kingdoms all over India. However, there is no question that around the 5th century B.C., an exceptionally charismatic teacher, probably a member of the Sakya clan in Kapilavastu, in present day Nepal, began to preach a new approach to the age-old problem of salvation. It has been suggested that his teaching was a reaction to the dominant "Brahmanical" culture of his time, which centered on the Vedas and on the sacrificial practices that were carried out by the priestly class. As a matter of fact, Buddhism is very simple. This religion is a demonstration of kindness towards other human beings. The most important thing in Buddhism is a good mind and warm feelings. The Buddha believes that each individual has an opportunity to change his own life and enlightenment is the utmost achievement of everybody. However, Buddhism exerted an enormous influence on the intellectual, religious and cultural life of India for more than sixteen centuries. It played a formative part in defining Hindu culture and, during its first centuries, was so enmeshed in Indian society (together with other spiritual teachings of the subcontinent) that it is misleading to think of it as a self-conscious reformist movement. Buddhism became established as a monastic religion, enjoying spells

of royal patronage, but around the 8th century it came under pressure from a resurgent Hinduism. Its decline was precipitated by Muslim invasions from the North, which began in the 7th century and gradually intensify during the following eight centuries. With the ruthless sacking of the great Buddhist universities at the end of the 12th century, Buddhism all but disappeared from India. The teachings of Buddhism have never been exclusive to one class or limited to one geographical area. The Buddha and his monks spent the dry months wandering in what is today northern India and, long before Buddhism's disappearance from India, their beliefs were carried by monks and travelers all over Asia, to Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam, to name but few of the places where the tradition has taken root. Buddhism is particularly amenable to expansion because of the universality of the Buddha's teaching. His Dharma (Truth) is designed to appeal to every individual, regardless of rank or class, inviting him or her to follow the path leading to enlightenment and the cessation of suffering. Being linked to neither a specific place nor a single society, Buddhism has generally managed to incorporate the local customs and beliefs that it has encountered in its expansion, especially that are traditionally associated with the social life. This has opened up Buddhism to a host of influence and has resulted in a greatly varied tradition, which nevertheless manages to preserve the core of its teaching.

II. The Formation of Buddhism:

About 7 centuries B.C., India was divided into sixteen zones, eight of which were kingdoms and the remaining republics. Indian society before and at the time of the Buddha was a society that had full of conflicts, especially struggles for power and material wealth. During this period many people were not able to find satisfaction in Hinduism to their daily life's disturbing problems. Because of this dissatisfaction, some religious reforms shortly arose in an attempt to rid Hinduism of its superficiality. One of these reforms was to be the beginning of Buddhism. About 600 B.C., the Buddha not only expounded the four Noble Truths as the core of his teaching, which he had recognized in the moment of his enlightenment, He had also shown people how to live wisely and happily, and therefore, his teachings soon spread from

India throughout Asia, and beyond. Spiritually speaking, He mobilized people to stand up to fight against the existing power system. In fact, Buddhism is not a new religion in India, it is only a symbol of separation with Hinduism. As we can see while the religion of the Veda allowed animal sacrifice to propitiate the gods, Buddhism set its face against sacrifices. Moreover, Buddhism waged strong campaigns against this practice. Because the sacrificial ritual required the services of Brahmins, who had specialized in religious ceremonies, while ordinary people, from one generation to another, could only do labor works. Thus, Buddhism denounced the Caste system at that time in India. And the Buddha denounced all claims to superiority on the ground of birth as the Brahmins claimed. Buddhism denounced all social distinctions between man and man, and declared that it was 'karma', the action of man, that determined the eminence or lowness of an individual. The Buddha confirmed with his disciples: "The insistence on the equality of social status based on one's actions and not on the lineage of birth of that person." Another revolutionary idea we can find in Buddhism was the fact that it widely opened the doors of organized religious life to women and men alike. In addition to distinguished nuns and lay Buddhist-women, such as Khema, Patacara, and Dhammadinna, Sujata, Visakha, and Samavati, even courtesans like Amrapali were not denied opportunities to embrace the religious life. For these reasons, from the beginning in Northeast India almost 26 centuries ago, Buddhism penetrated not only in the heart of Asian people, but since the nineteenth century it also became part of the thinking and practice of a lot of people in Europe and America as well.

About the Seventh Century B.C., many people questioned the value of their own religion: Hinduism. According to Hinduism's theories, they had to be reborn to the same class forever. If they belonged to the class of Sudra, they would be reborn into that class life after life. At first, Prince Siddhartha always concerned with burning questions as: "Why was there unhappiness?", or "How could a man be happy?", etc. He diligently performed ascetic practices, but after six years of persevering search and strenuous self-denial, He still had not found the answers for these problems. After spending six years in seeking a solution of emancipation through ascetic practices without any success, Prince Siddhartha determined to find the answer in

thought and meditation. After 49 days and nights of meditation under the Bodhi Tree, He had become the “Awakened One”. The path that the Buddha had found was the “Middle Path”, which was in between extremes. The extremes to be avoided were the life of sensual indulgence on the one hand and the life of drastic asceticism on the other. Both led to out-of-balance living. Neither led to the true goal of release from sufferings and afflictions. The Buddha declared: “To find the Middle Path to harmonious living, each person must search thoughtfully, not wasting any time in wordy arguments. Each person must explore and experiment for himself without any exception.” During almost twenty-six centuries, both Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism have proved adaptable to changing conditions and to different peoples in the world with the belief that what the Buddha discovered can help almost everyone. For the question “Why am I unhappy?” the Buddha suggests: because you fill yourself with wanting, until the wanting is a thirst that cannot be satisfied even by the things you want. “How can I be happy?” By ceasing to want. Just as a fire dies down when no fuel is added, so your unhappiness will end when the fuel of excessive is taken away. When you conquer selfish, unwise habits and hopes, your real happiness will emerge.

III. An Overview of Buddhism:

In the year 563 B.C. a baby was born into a royal family in northern India. He grew up in wealth and luxury but soon found that worldly comfort and security do not guarantee real happiness. He was deeply moved by the suffering he saw all around, so He resolved to find the key to human happiness. When he was 29 he left his wife and child and his Royal Palace and set off to sit at the feet of the great religious teachers of the day to learn from them. They taught him much but none really knew the cause of human sufferings and afflictions and how it could be overcome. Eventually, after six years study and meditation he had an experience in which all ignorance fell away and he suddenly understood. From that day onwards, he was called the Buddha, the Awakened One. He lived for another 45 years in which time he traveled all over northern India teaching others what he had

discovered. His compassion and patience were legendary and he made hundreds of thousands of followers. In his eightieth year, old and sick, but still happy and at peace, he finally passed away into nirvana. It couldn't have been an easy thing for the Buddha to leave his family. He must have worried and hesitated for a long time before he finally left. There were two choices, dedicating himself to his family or dedicating himself to the whole world. In the end, his great compassion made him give himself to the whole world. And the whole world still benefits from his sacrifice. This was perhaps the most significant sacrifice ever made.

Even though the Buddha is dead but 2,500 years later his teachings still help and save a lot of people, his example still inspires people, his words still continue to change lives. Only a Buddha could have such power centuries after his death. The Buddha did not claim that he was a god, the child of god or even the messenger from a god. He was simply a man who perfected himself and taught that if we followed his example, we could perfect ourselves also. He never asked his followers to worship him as a god. In fact, He prohibited his followers to praise him as a god. He told his followers that he could not give favors to those who worship him with personal expectations or calamities to those who don't worship him. He asked his followers to respect him as students respect their teacher. He also reminded his followers to worship a statue of the Buddha to remind ourselves to try to develop peace and love within ourselves. The perfume of incense reminds us of the pervading influence of virtue, the lamp reminds us of the light of knowledge and the followers which soon fade and die, remind us of impermanence. When we bow, we express our gratitude to the Buddha for what his teachings have given us. This is the core nature of Buddhist worship. A lot of people have misunderstood the meaning of "worship" in Buddhism, even sincere Buddhists. Buddhists do not believe that the Buddha is a god, so in no way they could possibly believe that a piece of wood or metal is a god. In Buddhism, the statue of the Buddha is used to symbolize human perfection. The statue of the Buddha also reminds us of the human dimension in Buddhist teaching, the fact that Buddhism is man-centered, not god-centered, that we must look within not without to find perfection and understanding. So in no way one can say that Buddhists worship god or

idols. In fact, a long time ago, when primitive man found himself in a dangerous and hostile situations, the fear of wild animals, of not being able to find enough food, of diseases, and of natural calamities or phenomena such as storms, hurricanes, volcanoes, thunder, and lightning, etc. He found no security in his surroundings and he had no ability to explain those phenomena, therefore, he created the idea of gods in order to give him comfort in good times, courage in times of danger and consolation when things went wrong. They believed that god arranged everything. Generations after generations, man continues to follow his ancestors in a so-called “faith in god” without any further thinkings. Some says they in believe in god because god responds to their prayers when they feel fear or frustration. Some say they believe in god because their parents and grandparents believed in god. Some others say that they prefer to go to church than to temple because those who go to churches seem richer and more honorable than those who go to temples.

IV. The Meanings of Buddhism:

To someone it can be only life of the Buddha; the example that the Buddha and his immediate disciples set, that glorious feat of a man, who stood before men as a man and declared a path of deliverance. To others, Buddhism would mean the massive doctrine as recorded in the Buddhist Tripitaka (literature), and it is described a very lofty, abstruse, complex and learned philosophy of life. The name Buddhism comes from the word “Bodhi” which means “waking up,” and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of Awakening. Therefore, the real definition of Buddhism is Noble Truth. The Buddha did not teach from theories. He always taught from a practical standpoint based on His understanding, His enlightenment, and His realization of the Truth. This philosophy has its origins in the experience of the man named Siddhartha Gotama, known as the Buddha, who was himself awakened at the age of 36. Buddhism is now older than 2,500 years old and has more than 800 million followers world wide (including Chinese followers in Mainland China). People in the West had heard of the Buddha and his teaching as early as the thirteenth century when Marco Polo (1254-1324), the Italian traveler who explored Asia, wrote accounts on Buddhism in his book, “Travels of Marco Polo”. From the eighteenth century onwards,

Buddhist text were brought to Europe and translated into English, French and German. Until a hundred years ago, Buddhism was mainly an Asian philosophy but increasingly it is gaining adherents in Europe and America.

To the Buddha, man is a supreme being, thus, he taught: “Be your own torch and your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person.” This was the Buddha’s truthful word. He also said: “All realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one’s own experience. Man is the master of his destiny, since he can make his life better or worse. If he tries his best to cultivate, he can become a Buddha.” Buddhism is the only way that leads people from the evil to the virtuous, from deluded to fully enlightened sagehood. Buddhism is a philosophy, a way of life or a religion. The religion of the awakened one. One of the three great world religions. It was founded by the historical Buddha Sakyamuni over 25 centuries ago. Sakyamuni expounded the four noble truths as the core of his teaching, which he had recognized in the moment of his enlightenment. He had shown people how to live wisely and happily and his teachings soon spread from India throughout Asia, and beyond.

Buddhism is a philosophy, a way of life or a religion. The teaching of Buddha. This is not important. Buddhism is what the Buddha taught. His teaching was based on human inner wisdom. Buddhism always values reason. Blindly believing in everything is contrary to Buddha’s teaching. The Buddha taught: “Do not believe blindly in my teachings. Always test them like using fire to test gold to determine whether it is authentic or counterfeit.” Buddhism is not a religion versed in worshipping and imploring favors from deities. It is different from other religions and doctrines in that it respects personal opinions, beliefs, and intellectual development. Buddhism does not prevent its disciples from learning other religious teachings. The Buddha said that if there were reasonable and rational teachings in other religions, His followers were free to respect such things. From that basic principle, the Buddha declared that there was nothing hidden in the sleeve of His saffron robe when referring to His teachings. He also added that His doctrine was consistent with how people understood the Truth. It did not depend on the favors bestowed by any deity or any other spiritual power. The Buddha emphasized the concept of free inquiry when He asked His

disciples to judge even the Tathagata in order to have an utter trustfulness in Him. He asked them to study, understand, and believe latter on. Whoever has not yet understood or still has doubt but blindly believes has thus defamed the Buddha. Doubt is not a sin because Buddhism has no creed to be believed. Doubt will automatically dissipate when people fully understand or perceive the Truth. In short, whether the Buddha wanted or not, His teachings and the way of life preached by Him became a religion called "Buddhism." However, Buddhism is not a religion just for discussion, but it is a religion of deliverance for those who diligently cultivate. One needs not be a scholar or a blind devotee to become a Buddhist, all you need is your sincerity of cultivation. In Buddhism, blind faith has no ground, each one of us must know how to find and absorb what is relevant and what is not to our life and to our problems. If we pay a little attention we'll see that Buddhist doctrines are boundless and timeless, but they are the inconceivable truth for all time. Messages handed down to us by the Buddha remain eternally valuable. No one can argue against or deny the doctrine of impermanence in Buddhism. Impermanence does not mean that things are not existing. Impermanence means that everything continues in a flux, in a process of continuing change and evolution. Thus, Buddhism is able to adjust to different civilizations in different times in the world. Even in modern world, Buddhism is always appropriate in all circumstances. In fact, if you approach any aspect of Buddhism, you will immediately find out that it is something relevant, beneficial and applicable to your daily life. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that in Buddhism there is no such so-called bonds of supernatural ties, nor Godhead, nor creation, nor sin inherited from anyone else, other than what you yourself have done.

V. Summaries of the Very Cores of Buddhism:

As mentioned in the preface, after the Buddha's Enlightenment at Buddha Gaya, he moved slowly across India until he reached the Deer Park near Benares, where he preached to five ascetics his First Sermon. The Sermon preached about the Middle Way between all extremes, the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. In the Deer Park, Benares, at first the Buddha was ignored by the five brothers of Kaundinya, but as the Buddha approached them, they felt

that there was something very special about him, so they automatically stood up as He drew near. Then the five men, with great respect, invited the Buddha to teach them what He has enlightened. So, the Buddha delivered His First Teaching: Turning the Wheel of the Dharma. He began to preach: “O monk! You must know that there are Four Noble Truths. The first is the Noble Truth of Suffering. Life is filled with the miseries and afflictions of old age, sickness, unhappiness and death. People chase after pleasure but find only pain. Even when they do find something pleasant they soon grow tired of it. Nowhere is there any real satisfaction or perfect peace. The second is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering. When our mind is filled with greed and desire and wandering thoughts, sufferings of all types follow. The third is the Noble Truth of the End of Suffering. When we remove all craving, desire, and wandering thoughts from our mind, sufferings will come to an end. We shall experience undescribable happiness. And finally, the Noble Truth of the Path. The Path that helps us reach the ultimate wisdom.” The path leading to the end (extinction) of suffering, the fourth of the four axioms, i.e. the eightfold noble path. The truth of the PATH that leads to the cessation of suffering (the way of cure). To practice the Eight-fold Noble Truths. The Buddha taught: “Whoever accepts the four dogmas, and practises the Eightfold Noble Path will put an end to births and deaths. In short, finally, the Buddha already discovered supportive conditions leading to bodhi or Buddhahood. The Noble Truth of the Right Way includes the following Noble Paths: The Eightfold Noble Truth, Seven Bodhi Shares, Four Right Efforts, Four Sufficiencies, Five Faculties, Five Powers, Four Elements of Popularity, Four Immeasurable Minds, and Four Kinds of Mindfulness.

To someone, all that the Buddha said can only be considered as life of the Buddha Himself. However, in fact, the example that the Buddha and his immediate disciples set, that glorious feat of a man, who stood before men as a man and declared a path of deliverance. To others, Buddhism would mean the massive doctrine as recorded in the Buddhist Tripitaka (literature), and it is described a very lofty, abstruse, complex and learned philosophy of life. The name Buddhism comes from the word “Bodhi” which means “waking up,” and thus Buddhism is the philosophy of Awakening. Therefore, the real definition of Buddhism is Noble Truth. The Buddha did not teach from theories. He

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historical Buddha Sakyamuni over 25 centuries ago. Sakyamuni expounded the four noble truths as the core of his teaching, which he had recognized in the moment of his enlightenment. He had shown people how to live wisely and happily and his teachings soon spread from India throughout Asia, and beyond.

The Buddha admitted the presence of sufferings and afflictions in human life because of the ignorant attachment to all things. But it is trully wrong to believe that Buddhism a religion of pessimism. This is not true even with a slight understanding of basic Buddhism. When the Buddha said that human life was full of sufferings and afflictions, he did not mean that life was pessimistic. In this manner, the Buddha admitted the presence of sufferings and afflictions in human life, and by a method of analysis he pointed out to his disciples that attachment to things without a correct view as to their nature is the cause of sufferings and afflictions. Impermanence and change are inherent in the nature of all things. This is their true nature and this is the correct view. He concluded: "As long as we are at variance with this truth, we are bound to run into conflicts. We cannot alter or control the nature of things. The result is 'hope deferred made the heart sick'. The only solution lies in correcting our point of view." In fact, the thirst for things begets sorrow. When we like someone or something, we wish that they belonged to us and were with us forever. We never think about their true nature, in other words, or we refuse to think about their true nature. We expect them to survive forever, but time devours everything. Eventually we must yield to old age and freshness of the morning dew disappears before the rising sun. In the Nirvana Sutra, when Ananda and other disciples were so sad and cried when the Buddha lay on his death-bed, the Buddha taught: "Ananda! Lament not. Have I not already told you that from all good things we love and cherish we would be separated, sooner or later... that they would change their nature and perish. How then can Tathagata survive? This is not possible!" This is the philosophy which underlies the doctrine of the "Three Marks" (impermanence, suffering and no-self) of existence of the Buddhist view of life and the world. All Buddhist values are based on this. The Buddha expected of his disciples, both laity and clergy, good conduct and good behavior and decent standard of living in every way. With him, a simple living did not amount to degenerate

human existence or to suffer oneself. The Buddha advised his disciples to follow the “Middle Path”. It is to say not to attach to things nor to abandon them. The Buddha does not deny the “beauty”, however, if one does not understand the true nature of the objects of beauty, one may end up with sufferings and afflictions or grief and disappointment. In the “Theragatha”, the Buddha brought up the story of the Venerable Pakka. One day, going to the village for alms, Venerable Pakka sat down beneath a tree. Then a hawk, seizing some flesh flew up into the sky. Other hawks saw that attacked it, making it drop the piece of meat. Another hawk grabbed the fallen flesh, and was flundered by other hawks. And Pakka thought: “Just like that meat are worldly desires, common to all, full of pain and woe.” And reflecting hereon, and how they were impermanent and so on, he continued to contemplate and eventually won Arahanship. The Buddha advised his disciples not to avoid or deny or attach to objects of beauty. Try not to make objects of beauty our objects of like or dislike. Whatever there is in the world, pleasant or unpleasant, we all have a tendency to attach to them, and we develop a like or dislike to them. Thus we continue to experience sufferings and afflictions. Buddhists recognize beauty where the sense can perceive it, but in beauty we should also see its own change and destruction. And Buddhist should always remember the Buddha’s teaching regarding to all component things: “Things that come into being, undergo change and are eventually destroyed.” Therefore, Buddhists admire beauty but have no greed for acquisition and possession.

Chapter Three

Buddhist Cosmology & Buddhist Outlook on Life

I. Buddhist Cosmology:

According to the Buddhist view on the universe, the universe is infinite. However, if we speak about the formation of our world system, we can speak about the formation process as follows: “In terms of elements that form the universe, wind is the first one. Its basis is space. Then the wind moves, and in dependence on the moving of the wind, heat occurs; then moisture, then solidity or earth.” Buddhist cosmology not only takes into account the existence of innumerable systems of worlds grouped into what we should call galaxies, but has equally vast conceptions of cosmic time. The Buddha proclaimed that on the highest level of understanding the entire cosmos is the original pure mind. However, on the ordinary level of understanding he painted a picture of a cosmos filled with countless world systems where countless of living beings of every sort reside. Thus, our world system is not the only unique or the only one world system in the universe. Other world systems also have their Buddhas who also teach the path of enlightenment. The most ancient Buddhist texts speak of the various phases in the evolution and devolution over enormous time-periods of these galaxies, how they gradually formed and how after a period of relative stability during which life may be found on their worlds, how, inevitably having come into existence, they must in due course decline and go to destruction. All this is the working of processes, one vent leading quite naturally to another. As you know that although the Buddha discovered the presence of numerous Gods throughout the universe, he never tried to diminish the importance of the God worshipped by the people of his time. He simply preached the truth and that truth does not affect the importance of any Gods. Similarly, the fact that there are numerous suns in the universe does not diminish the importance of the sun of our solar system, for our sun continues to provide us with light every day. To some other religions, Gods can be very powerful compared to human beings, but to Buddhism, they are still not free from sufferings and afflictions, and they can still be very

angry. The life of Gods may be very long, but not eternal as many other religions believe.

Outlook on life and universe has been discussed by a lot of famous scholars in the world. Examination of the origin or nature of life and universe is the task of the metaphysic experts. This problem has a very important position in philosophy. It was examined from the beginning of the Egyptian, Indian and Chinese civilizations. This book is designed to give you only an overview of the Buddhist cosmology. Buddhist cosmology not only takes into account the existence of innumerable systems of worlds grouped into what we should call galaxies, but has equally vast conceptions of cosmic time. According to Buddhist cosmology, the earth goes through periodic cycles. In some of the cycles it improves, in others it degenerates. The average age of a man is an index of the quality of the period in which the person lives. It may vary between 10 years and many hundreds of thousands of years. At the time of Sakyamuni Buddha, the average life-span was 100 years. After him, the world becomes more depraved, and the life of man shortens. The peak of sin and misery will be reached when the average life has fallen to 10 years. The Dharma of Sakyamuni Buddha will then be completely forgotten. But after that the upward swing begins again. When the life of man reaches 80,000 years, Maitreya Buddha from the Tusita Heaven will appear on the earth. Besides, the most ancient Buddhist texts speak of the various phases in the evolution and devolution over enormous time-periods of these galaxies, how they gradually formed and how after a period of relative stability during which life may be found on their worlds, how, inevitably having come into existence, they must in due course decline and go to destruction. All this is the working of processes, one vent leading quite naturally to another. The Buddha was the Teacher who discovered the real nature of the universal cosmic law and advised us to live in accordance with this law. The Buddha confirmed that it is impossible for anyone to escape from such cosmic laws by praying to an almighty god, because this universal law is unbiased. However, the Buddha has taught us how to stop bad practices by increasing good deeds, and training the mind to eradicate evil thoughts. According to the Buddha, a man can even become a god if he leads a decent and righteous way of life regardless of his religious belief. It is to say a man someday can obtain peace,

mindfulness, wisdom and liberation if he is willing to cultivate to perfect himself. The Buddha Sakyamuni himself realized the Noble Truths, considered all metaphysical questions are empty. He often kept silent and gave no answers to such metaphysical questions, because for Him, those questions do not realistically relate to the purpose of Buddhists, the purpose of all Buddhists is the final freedom. According to the Buddha, how can a man know what the universe really is when he cannot understand who he really is? Therefore, the Buddha taught: "The practical way for a man is turning back to himself and seeing where and who he is and what he is doing so that he can overcome the destruction of all hindrances to the truth of all things. That is to say, he has to cultivate to purify his body and mind." For the universe, the Buddha declared that the material world is formed by the Four Great Elements as many Indian thinkers before Him did. These are Earth element, Water element, Fire element and Air element. These elements are dynamic and impermanent, therefore, all existing things compounded by them must be impermanent too. The problem about the origin of the four elements becomes completely senseless to the truth of Dependent Origination which was discovered and taught by the Buddha.

II. Buddhist Outlook on Life:

It is wrong to imagine that the Buddhist outlook on life and the world is a gloomy one, and that the Buddhist is in low spirit. Far from it, a Buddhist smiles as he walks through life. He who understands the true nature of life is the happiest individual, for he is not upset by the evanescent (extremely small) nature of things. He tries to see things as they are, and not as they seem to be. Conflicts arise in man when he is confronted with the facts of life such as aging, illness, death and so forth, but frustration and disappointment do not vex him when he is ready to face them with a brave heart. This view of life is neither pessimistic nor optimistic, but the realistic view. The man who ignores the principle of unrest in things, the intrinsic nature of suffering, is upset when confronted with the vicissitudes of life. Man's recognition of pleasures as lasting, leads to much vexation, when things occur quite contrary to his expectations. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a detached outlook towards life and things pertaining to life. Detachment

can not bring about frustration, disappointment and mental torment, because there is no clinging to one thing and another, but letting go. This indeed is not easy, but it is the sure remedy for controlling, if not eradicating, unsatisfactoriness. The Buddha sees suffering as suffering, and happiness as happiness, and explains that all cosmic pleasure, like all other conditioned attachings, is evanescent, is a passing show. He warns man against attaching too much importance to fleeing pleasures, for they sooner or later beget discontent. Equanimity is the best antidote for both pessimism and optimism. Equanimity is evenness of mind and not sullen indifference. It is the result of a calm, concentrated mind. It is hard, indeed, to be undisturbed when touched by the realities of life, but the man who cultivates truth is not upset. Absolute happiness can not be derived from things conditioned and compounded. What we hug in great glee this moment, turns into a source of dissatisfaction the next moment. Pleasures are short-lived, and never lasting. The mere gratification of the sense faculties we call pleasure and enjoyment, but in the absolute sense of the world such gratification is not happy. Joy too is suffering, unsatisfactory; for it is transient. If we with our inner eye try to see things in their proper perspective, in their true light, we will be able to realize that the world is but an illusion that leads astray the beings who cling to it. All the so-called mundane pleasures are fleeting, and only an introduction to pain. They give temporary relief from life's miserable ulcers. This is what is known as suffering produced by change. Thus, we see that suffering never ceases to work, it functions in some form or other and is always at work.

Regarding all beings in general, Buddhism considers all the living, which includes the vegetable kingdom; however, the term "sattva" limits the meaning to those endowed with reason, consciousness, and feeling. Those who are sentient, sensible, animate, and rational (sentient beings which possess magical and spiritual powers). According to Buddhism, what we call the self is simply the collection of mental facts, experiences, ideas and so forth which would normally be said to belong to self but there is no self over and above the experiences. So mentioned does not mean that people are not important. In fact, Buddhism which preached by the Buddha is totally built on human wisdom. The Buddha taught: "Be your own torch, your own refuge. Do not seek refuge in any other person." The Buddha

added: “I am the Buddha fully realized, sentient beings will become Buddha.” To Buddhism, all realizations come from effort and intelligence that derive from one’s own experience. The Buddha asked his disciples to be the master of their destiny, since they can make their lives better or worse. They can even become Buddha if they study and practice his teachings.

Regarding the point of view on Human Beings and Deva Vehicle, according to the Mahayana, rebirth among men conveyed by observing the five commandments (Panca-veramani). However, there are many differences on human destinies in the world. For example, one is inferior and another superior, one perishes in infancy and another lives much longer, one is sick and infirm and another strong and healthy, one is brought up in luxury and another in misery, one is born a millionaire and another in poverty, one is a genius and another an idiot, etc. According to the Buddhist point of view on human life, all of the above mentioned results are not the results of a “chance.” Science nowadays is indeed against the theory of “chance.” All scientists agree on the Law of Cause and Effect, so do Buddhists. Sincere and devoted Buddhists never believe that the unevenness of the world is due to a so-called Creator and/or God. Buddhists never believe that happiness or pain or neutral feeling the person experiences are due to the creation of a Supreme Creator. According to the Buddhist point of view on human life, the above mentioned unevenness that exists in the world are due to the heredity and environment, and to a greater extent, to a cause or causes which are not only present but proximate or remotely past. Man himself is responsible for his own happiness and misery. He creates his own heaven and hell. He is the master of his own destiny. He is his own child of his past and his own parents of his future. Regarding the point of view on Deva, this is only one of the five vehicles, the deva vehicle or Divine Vehicle. It transports observers of the ten good qualities (thập thiện) to one of the six deva realms of desire, and those who observe dhyana meditation to the higher heavens of form and non-form. Sentient beings are to be reborn among the deva by observing the ten forms of good actions or Ten Commandments (Dasa-kusala).

Regarding the point of view on the Kaya and Citta, Buddhism talks about the theory of impermanence of the body and mind. Some people

wonder why Buddhism always emphasizes the Theory of Impermanence? Does it want to spread in the human mind the seed of disheartenment, and discourage? In their view, if things are changeable, we do not need to do anything, because if we attain a great achievement, we cannot keep it. This type of reasoning, a first, appears partly logical, but in reality, it is not at all. When the Buddha preached about impermanence, He did not want to discourage anyone, but warning his disciples about the truth. A true Buddhist has to work hard for his own well being and also for the society's. Although he knows that he is facing the changing reality, he always keeps himself calm. He must refrain from harming others, in contrast, strive to perform good deeds for the benefit and happiness of others. All things have changed and will never cease to change. The human body is changeable, thus governed by the law of impermanence. Our body is different from the minute before to that of the minute after. Biological researches have proved that the cells in our body are in constant change, and in every seven years all the old cells have been totally renewed. These changes help us quickly grow up, age and die. The longer we want to live, the more we fear death. From childhood to aging, human life is exactly like a dream, but there are many people who do not realize; therefore, they continue to launch into the noose of desire; as a result, they suffer from greed and will suffer more if they become attached to their possessions. Sometimes at time of death they still don't want to let go anything. There are some who know that they will die soon, but they still strive desperately to keep what they cherish most. Not only our body is changeable, but also our mind. It changes more rapidly than the body, it changes every second, every minute according to the environment. We are cheerful a few minutes before and sad a few minutes later, laughing then crying, happiness then sorrow.

According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, Manjusri Bodhisattva obeyed the Buddha's command to call on Upasaka Vimalakirti to enquire after his health, there was a conversation about the "body". Manjusri asked Vimalakirti: "What should a Bodhisattva say when comforting another Bodhisattva who falls ill?" Vimalakirti replied: "He should speak of the impermanence of the body but never of the abhorrence and relinquishment of the body. He should speak of the suffering body but

never of the joy in nirvana. He should speak of egolessness in the body while teaching and guiding all living beings (in spite of the fact that they are fundamentally non-existent in the absolute state). He should speak of the voidness of the body but should never cling to the ultimate nirvana. He should speak of repentance of past sins but should avoid slipping into the past. Because of his own illness he should take pity on all those who are sick. Knowing that he has suffered during countless past aeons he should think of the welfare of all living beings. He should think of his past practice of good virtues to uphold (his determination for) right livelihood. Instead of worrying about troubles (klesa) he should give rise to zeal and devotion (in his practice of the Dharma). He should act like a king physician to cure others' illnesses. Thus a Bodhisattva should comfort another sick Bodhisattva to make him happy." Manjusri, a sick Bodhisattva should look into all things in this way. He should further meditate on his body which is impermanent, is subject to suffering and is non-existent and egoless; this is called wisdom. Although his body is sick he remains in (the realm of) birth and death for the benefit of all (living beings) without complaint; this is called expedient method (upaya). Manjusri! He should further meditate on the body which is inseparable from illness and on illness which is inherent in the body because sickness and the body are neither new nor old; this is called wisdom. The body, though ill, is not to be annihilated; this is the expedient method (for remaining in the world to work for salvation).

Regarding the point of view on the impurity of the Kaya and the Citta. Impurity is the nature of our bodies and minds. Impurity means the absence of an immaculate state of being, one that is neither holy nor beautiful. From the psychological and physiological standpoint, human beings are impure. This is not negative or pessimistic, but an objective perspective on human beings. If we examine the constituents of our bodies from the hair on our head to the blood, pus, phlegm, excrement, urine, the many bacteria dwelling in the intestines, and the many diseases present waiting for the opportunity to develop, we can see clearly that our bodies are quite impure and subject to decay. Our bodies also create the motivation to pursue the satisfaction of our desires and passions. That is why the sutra regards the body as the place where misleads gather. Let us now consider our psychological

state. Since we are unable to see the truth of impermanence, suffering, and the selfless nature of all things, our minds often become the victims of greed and hatred, and we act wrongly. So the sutra says, “The mind is the source of all confusion.”

Here is another point of view of the Buddhism on the Kaya is “It is difficult to be reborn as a human being”. Of all precious jewels, life is the greatest; if there is life, it is the priceless jewel. Thus, if you are able to maintain your livelihood, someday you will be able to rebuild your life. However, everything in life, if it has form characteristics, then, inevitably, one day it will be destroyed. A human life is the same way, if there is life, there must be death. Even though we say a hundred years, it passes by in a flash, like lightening streaking across the sky, like a flower’s blossom, like the image of the moon at the bottom of a lake, like a short breath, what is really eternal? Sincere Buddhists should always remember when a person is born, not a single dime is brought along; therefore, when death arrives, not a word will be taken either. A lifetime of work, putting the body through pain and torture in order to accumulate wealth and possessions, in the end everything is worthless and futile in the midst of birth, old age, sickness, and death. After death, all possessions are given to others in a most senseless and pitiful manner. At such time, there are not even a few good merits for the soul to rely and lean on for the next life. Therefore, such an individual will be condemned into the three evil paths immediately. Ancient sages taught: “A steel tree of a thousand years once again blossom, such a thing is still not bewildering; but once a human body has been lost, ten thousand reincarnations may not return.” Sincere Buddhists should always remember what the Buddha taught: “It is difficult to be reborn as a human being, it is difficult to encounter (meet or learn) the Buddha-dharma; now we have been reborn as a human being and encountered the Buddha-dharma, if we let the time passes by in vain we waste our scarce lifespan.”

Part Two
Afflictions In
Buddhist Point of View
(Phần Hai: Phiên Nã Theo
Quan Điểm Phật Giáo)

Chapter Four

An Overview of Afflictions In Buddhist Point of View

I. An Overview of Afflictions In Buddhist Point of View:

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Sanskrit term "Agantuklesa" means guest-dust. Let's explain in details for "Guest-dust". According to Buddhism, affliction means guest or the foreign atom, or intruding element, which enters the mind and causes distress and delusion. Also according to Buddhism, affliction means worldly dust for the mind is naturally pure or innocent till the evil element enters. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. "Klesa" literally means "pain," "external dust," "affliction," or "something tormenting" and is translated as "affliction." As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust for agantuklesa. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such

troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration.

According to Buddhism, mulaklesa means fundamental illusions or passions, or afflictions, including: Panca-klesa or Panca-klesa-dula means five dull, unintelligent, or stupid vices or temptations or five envoys of stupidity caused by the illusion of the body or self: greed, anger, stupidity, arrogance, and doubt. It should be reminded that the suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. Panca-tiksna-dula means the five higher wholesome deeds: no greed, no hatred (hate), no stupidity, nor pride nor arrogance, and no doubt. While Sequent, or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. The twenty-four consequent klesas arising out of the six senses. The consequent or secondary afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions. They include: Klesas arising from false reasoning. Klesa that which is natural to all. Ordinary passions or temptations. Firece or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the

Law of Cause and Effect. According to Vasubandhu's Trimsika, there are twenty-four secondary afflictions: impatience or anger (krodha (skt), hatred or resentment (upanada (skt), hypocrisy or concealment (mraksha (skt), stinging talk or worry (pradasa (skt), envy or jealousy (irshya (skt), stinginess (matsarya (skt), deceit or manipulation (maya (skt), duplicity or undully flattering (sathya (skt), arrogance or conceitedness (mada and mana (skt), hurting others or destructive (vihimsa (skt), shamelessness, self-shameless, or have no shame of self (ahri (skt), recklessness, or have no shame around other people (atrapa (skt), torpidity or drowsiness (styana (skt), fluctuations, or instability of mind and body (uddhava (skt), unbelief or faithlessness (asraddha (skt), indolence or laziness (kausidya (skt), thoughtlessness, uninhibitedness, or lack of self-mastery (pramada (skt), senselessness (mushitasmritita (skt), uncollected state or unsteadiness (vikshepa (skt), inaccuracy of knowledge, or do not understand in a proper manner (asamprajanya (skt), evil doing (kaukritya (skt), drowsiness (middha (skt), investigation (vitarka (skt), and reflection (vicara (skt).

II. Even the Buddha Still Encountered Nine Distresses While He Was Alive:

Nine distresses borne by the Buddha while he was still alive. *First*, He was badly slandered by Sundara. *Second*, Canca tried to dishonor him by pretending to pregnant and falsely accusing him. *Third*, Devadatta, his cousin, plotted to assassinate him by rolling stones down hill when he passed by the creek. *Fourth*, He was pierced by an arrow accidentally. *Fifth*, son of King Prasenajit killed all people in the Sakya tribe. *Sixth*, due to his compassion, the Buddha accepted an invitation from a Brahman; however, when the Buddha and his order arrived, the Brahman refused to serve them. As a result, the Buddha and his order had to accept offering from the stable-keeper. *Seventh*, cold wind to cause back pain. *Eighth*, six years of ascetics. *Ninth*, entering the village for alms for three consecutive days without receiving any food (returning with empty bowl).

Chapter Five

A Summary of Categories of Afflictions

Klesa is generally divided into two groups, primary and secondary. The primary comprises of such evil impulses that lie at the foundation of every tormenting thought and desire. The passions and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. Besides, according to Buddhism, there are many different kinds of afflictions. According to Buddhist teachings, there are two kinds of affliction: First, the six fundamental or primary afflictions (klesas) arising from the six senses. Second, the twenty consequent klesas arising out of the six senses. The consequent or secondary afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions.

There are also two other kinds of affliction: First, klesas arising from false reasoning. Second, klesa that which is natural to all. There are two more kinds of affliction: First, the six great klesas: ignorance, distracted (unrestrained), idle (lazy), unfaithful (disbelieved), torpor, and restlessness. Second, the ten minor afflictions. There are also two other kinds of affliction: First, ordinary passions or temptations. Second, fierce or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the Law of Cause and Effect. Also according to Buddhism, there are three kinds of afflictions: the illusion or misleading views and thoughts, delusion of “dust and sand”, and the illusion arising from primal ignorance.

There are also three other kinds of afflictions: First, defilements of transgression, which occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. Second, defilements of obsession, which is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one’s mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. Third, dormant or latent afflictions, which are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden,

waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day's activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

The four big distresses observed during the Buddha's wandering around Kapilavastu when he was a prince. They are: Birth, old age, diseases (sicknesses) and death. Besides, these four are regarded as the fundamental evil passions originating from the view that there is really an eternal substance known as ego-soul: the belief in the existence of an ego-substance, ignorance about the ego, conceit about the ego, and self-love.

According to Buddhism, there are five great passions or disturbers or Klesas: desire, anger or hatred, stupidity or ignorance, pride, and doubt. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five kinds of begrudging: begrudging as to dwelling-place, begrudging as to family, begrudging as to gains, begrudging as to beauty, and begrudging as to Dhamma. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five bonds in the lower desire-realms or the lower fetters which hold the individual in the realms of desire: desire (sensual desire or sensuality), dislike (ill-will or resentment), wrong view on personality-belief (self, identity view, or egoism), heretical ideals (attachment to rite and ritual or distorted grasp of rules and vows), doubt about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha and the cultivation on the three studies of discipline, concentration and wisdom. According to Abhidharma, there are five bonds of desires: desire, dislike, pride, envy, and stinginess.

There are six great afflictions or the six great klesa, passion or distressers: First, afflictions caused by desire or desire to have. Second, afflictions caused by resentment or anger. Third, afflictions caused by stupidity or ignorance. Fourth, afflictions caused by pride or self-conceit. Fifth, afflictions caused by doubt. Sixth, afflictions caused by False views. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha and Kosa Sastra, there are five higher bonds of desire still exist in the upper realms of form and formlessness, for they fetter beings to aggregates, etc., produced in the higher forms of becoming:

First, Rupa-raga (p) or lust or desire for form. Attachment to the world of forms (greed for the fine-material, love in the realm of form, craving for the world of form). Second, Arupa-raga (p) or lust or desire for formlessness. Attachment to the formless world (greed for the immaterial, love in the realm of formlessness, craving for the formless world). Third, Uddhacca (p) or restlessness. Fourth, Mana (p) or pride or conceit. Fifth, ignorance. When talking about afflictions, according to Buddhism, there are six cauras or robbers or six bandits or bandits of the six sense-organs, such as the six senses, the six sense organs are the match-makers, or medial agents of the six robbers. The six robbers are also likened to the six pleasures of the six sense organs. The only way to prevent them is by not acting with them: the eye avoiding beauty, the ear avoiding melodious sound, the nose avoiding fragrant scent, the tongue avoiding tasty flavour, the body avoiding seductions, and the mind should always control thoughts.

According to Buddhist legend, there are nine distresses borne by the Buddha while he was still alive. *First*, He was badly slandered by Sundara. *Second*, Canca tried to dishonor him by pretending to pregnant and falsely accusing him. Third, Devadatta, his cousin, plotted to assassinate him by rolling stones down hill when he passed by the creek. *Fourth*, He was pierced by an arrow accidentally. *Fifth*, son of King Prasenajit killed all people in the Sakya tribe. *Sixth*, due to his compassion, the Buddha accepted an invitation from a Brahman; however, when the Buddha and his order arrived, the Brahman refused to serve them. As a result, the Buddha and his order had to accept offering from the stable-keeper. *Seventh*, cold wind to cause back pain. *Eighth*, six years of ascetics. *Ninth*, entering the village for alms for three consecutive days without receiving any food (returning with empty bowl).

There are ten fetters (Dasa-samyojana) which bind sentient beings to the cycle of births and deaths. They are personality belief, sceptical doubt, clinging to mere rules and rituals, sensuous craving, ill-will, craving for fine material existence, craving for immaterial existence, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. According to The Path of Purification, so called because they are themselves defiled and because they defile the states associated with them: greed, hate, delusion, deceit (pride), doubt (uncertainty), wrong or false view,

stiffness of mind, agitation, consciencelessness, shamelessness. There are ten disrupters or the ten disturbers of the religious life: domineering spirit, heretical ways, dangerous amusements, a butcher's or other low occupations, asceticism or selfish Hinayana salvation, the condition of an eunuch, lust, endangering the character by improper intimacy, contempt, and breeding animals for slaughter.

Chapter Six

Leakage Is Also A Kind of Affliction

General meanings of leaking is an opening on the roof allows rain water to descend through it. In Buddhism, leakage means afflictions. Whatever is in the stream of births and deaths. Conditioned merits and virtues lead to rebirth within samsara. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, Asrava has the following meanings: taint, corruption, mania, anfatuation, addiction (to alcohol or drugs), defilement, and so on. Leaking (asrava) is some thing which oozes or flows out of the mind and spoils the upward career of the Buddhist life; to get rid of asrava is the aim of our cultivation. In the contrary, anasrava is a state free from these impurities. Leaking is also anything which serves to divert beings away from inherent Budha-nature. Outflows are so called because they are turning of energy and attention outward rather than inward. According to the Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification), cankers, a term for greed for sense-desire, greed for becoming, wrong view, and ignorance, because of the exuding of these defilements from unguarded sense-doors like water from cracks in a pot in the sense of constant trickling, or because of their producing the suffering of the round of rebirths. First, the floods are so called in the sense of sweeping away into the ocean of becoming, and in the sense of being hard to cross. Second, the bonds are so called because they do not allow disengagement from an object and disengagement from suffering. Both “Floods” and “bonds” are terms for the “Cankers” already mentioned. According to Buddhism, leakage is the conditioned dharma which produces afflictions (passions and delusions). Whatever is in the stream of births and deaths. Even conditioned merits and virtues lead to rebirth within samsara. There are many kinds of outflows. Anger is an outflow, so are greed and ignorance. Outflows are the root of birth and death, and the reason for us not to end the cycle of birth and death is that we still have outflows.

Besides, in Buddhism there are other definitions that are related to Leaking. Leaking in precepts means to make a leak in the commandments, i.e. break them. Karma of ordinary rebirth means the

deeds of the sinner in the stream of transmigration, which produces his karma. Ending of leakage means the end of the passions or the exhaustion of the stream of transmigration. The assurance of ending of leakage means the assurance or realization that the stream of transmigration is ended and nirvana attained. The realization of ending of leakage means the realization that the stream of transmigration is ended. Another word, Nirvana insight into present mortal sufferings so as to overcome all passions or temptations, or the deliverance of mind from passions. The insight of ending of the leakage means the supernatural insight into the ending of the stream of transmigration, one of the six abhijnas. The wisdom of ending of the leakage means the wisdom of the arhat (all passions and afflictions ended). Ending-of-leakage Bhiksu means the monk who has ended the stream of transmigration, or the arhat. The mind of ending of the leakage means the passions ended and the mind freed, or the state of the arhat. The confidence of ending of the leakage means absolute confidence of Buddha that transmigration would cease forever.

There are two basic aspects of illusion. The first illusion is the illusion connected with views. These are perplexities or illusions and temptations arise from false views or theories. The second illusion is the illusion connected with thoughts. These illusions arise through contact with the world or by habit, such as desire, anger, infatuation, etc. Besides, there are also illusion connected with principles and illusion arising in practice. According to the T'ien-T'ai Sect, there are three delusions. The first illusion is connected with thoughts. Things seen and thought illusions from imperfect perception, with temptation to love, hate, etc., to be rid of these false views and temptations, one must cultivate and observe moral precepts. The second illusion is the illusion connected with affliction. Illusion and temptation through the immense variety of duties in saving others. The third illusion is the illusion connected with ignorance. Illusions and temptations that arise from failure philosophically to understand things in their reality. Illusion arising from primal ignorance which covers and hinders the truth. In the Differentiated Teaching, this illusion is overcome by the bodhisattva from the first stage; in the Perfect Teaching, it is overcome by the Bodhisattva in the first resting-place. According to the Hinayana Buddhism, there are three groups of delusions. The first illusion is the

illusion connected with desires (kamasava p). Intoxicant of worldly desires or sensual pleasures. The second illusion is the illusion connected with existence (bhavasava p). The love of existence in one of the conditioned realms. The third illusion is the illusion connected with ignorance (avijjasava p). The defilements of ignorance in mind. Besides, some considers the fourth delusion: the corruption of views. According to The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, Chapter Esanavaggo (Searches), there are three affluences or taints that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. The first illusion is the illusion connected with desires, or the taint of sensuality. The second illusion is the illusion connected with material or phenomenal existence, or the taint of existence. The third illusion is the illusion connected with ignorance (ignorance of the way of escape), or the taint of ignorance.

For these reasons, from the moment to moment Enlightening Beings enter absorption in extinction and exhaust all contamination, yet they do not experience ultimate reality and do not end roots of goodness with contamination; though they know all things are free from contamination, yet they know the end and extinction of contaminations; though they know the principles of Buddhas are identical to the things of the world, and the things of the world are identical to the principles of Buddhas, yet they do not form notions of worldly things within the principles of Buddhas, and do not form notions of principles of Buddhas in the things of the world. All things enter the realm of reality because there is nothing entered; they know all things are nondual because there is no change.

According to Bhikkhu Bodhi in Abhidhamma, there are sixty-three entities. There are four taints of the unwholesome: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of attachment to existence, the taint of wrong views, and the taint of ignorance. There are four floods: the flood of sensual desire, the flood of attachment to existence, the flood of wrong views, and the flood of ignorance. Four bonds: the bond of sensual desire, the bond of attachment to existence, the bond of wrong views, and the bond of ignorance. There are four bodily knots or ties: the bodily knot of covetousness, the bodily knot of ill-will, the bodily knot of adherence to rites and ceremonies, and the bodily knot of dogmatic belief that “This alone is the truth.” Four bodily clings: clinging to

sense pleasures, clinging to wrong views, clinging to rites and ceremonies, and clinging to a doctrine of self. Six hindrances: the hindrance of sensual desire, the hindrance of ill-will, the hindrance of sloth and torpor, the hindrance of restlessness and worry, the hindrance of doubt, and the hindrance of ignorance. Seven latent dispositions: sensual lust, attachment to existence, aversion, conceit, wrong views, doubt, and ignorance. Ten fetters, according to the Suttanta method: the fetter of sensual lust, attachment to fine-material existence, attachment in immaterial existence, the fetter of aversion, the fetter of conceit, the fetter of wrong views, adherence to rites and ceremonies, the fetter of doubt, the fetter of restlessness, and the fetter of ignorance. Ten fetters, according to the Abhidhamma: the fetter of sensual lust, attachment to existence, the fetter of aversion, the fetter of conceit, the fetter of wrong views, adherence to rites and ceremonies, the fetter of doubt, the fetter of envy, the fetter of avarice, and the fetter of ignorance. Ten defilements: the defilement of Greed, the defilement of Hatred, the defilement of Delusion, the defilement of Conceit, the defilement of Wrong views, nghi hoặc: the defilement of Doubt, the defilement of Sloth, the defilement of restlessness, and the defilement of shamelessness.

Chapter Seven

The Present World With Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions

I. A Summary of the Present World:

The world today is not what it was half a century ago. Ideas of good and bad are fast changing, attitudes toward moral and immoral conduct are different and the general outlook on men and things is also very different. We are living in an age of rush and speed. It is tension, tension everywhere. If you stand at the corner of a busy street and scan the faces of the people hurrying feverishly by, you will notice that most of them are restless. They carry with them an atmosphere of stress. They are most pictures of rush and worry. Rarely will you find a picture of calm, content and repose in any of these faces. Such is the modern world. The world of today is characterized by inordinate haste leading to quick decisions and imprudent actions. Some shout when they could speak in normal tones and other talk excitedly at a forced pitch for long periods and finish a conversation almost exhausted. Any kind of excitement is a stress in the psychologist's sense of the word, and stress causes the speeding up of bodily processes. It is not seldom that a person driving a vehicle gets agitated on seeing the green color of the traffic lights giving place to amber. The anxious man regards even a minor event as if it were a crisis or a threat. As a result man is worried and unhappy. Another feature of the modern world is its noisiness. "Music hatch charms," they say, but today, even such music is not agreeable to many if there is no noise; louder the noise greater is the music to them. Those of us who live in big cities have no time to think of the noise, we are conditioned by it and accustomed to it. This noise, this stress, and strain have done much damage by way of ailments: heart disease, cancer, ulcers, nervous tension and insomnia. Most of our illnesses are caused by psychological anxiety states, the nervous tension of modern life, economic distress and emotional unrest.

Nervous exhaustion in man is increasing with the speeding up of life leading to delirious excitement. People often return home after work showing signs of nervous exhaustion. As a consequence, man's

concentration is weakened and mental and physical efficiency is lowered. Man becomes easily irritated and is quick to find fault and pick a quarrel. He becomes morbidly introspective and experiences aches and pains and suffers from hyper-tension and sleeplessness. These symptoms of nervous exhaustion clearly show that modern man's mind and body require rest, rest of a high quality. Let us bear in mind that a certain aloofness, a withdrawing of the mind from business of life is a requisite to mental hygiene. Whenever you get an opportunity try to be away from the town and engage yourself in quiet contemplation, call it "yoga," Concentration or meditation. Learn to observe the silence. Silence does so much good to us. It is quite wrong to imagine that they alone are powerful who are noisy, garrulous and fussily busy. Silence is golden, and we must speak only if we can improve on silence. The greatest creative energy works in silence. Observing silence is important. We absolutely do that in our meditation.

Thus in the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Look upon the world as one would look upon a bubble, just as one would look upon a mirage. If a man thus looks down upon the world, the king of death does not see him (Dharmapada 170). Supposed this world is like a brilliantly ornamented royal chariot; the foolish are immersed in it, but the wise do not attach to it (Dharmapada 171). Whoever was formerly heedless and afterwards overcomes his sloth; such a person illuminates this world just like the moon when freed from clouds (Dharmapada 172). Whoever was formerly heedless and afterwards does good deeds; such a person illuminates this world just like the moon when freed from clouds (Dharmapada 173). This work is so dark that only a few can see it clearly, like birds escape from a net but very few of them fly up straight (Dharmapada 174)."

II. Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions in This Life:

According to Buddhism, all existence is characterized by suffering and does not bring satisfaction. There is no equivalent translation in English for the word "Dukkha" in both Pali and Sanskrit. So the word "Dukkha" is often translated as "Suffering". However, this English word is sometimes misleading because it connotes extreme pain. When the Buddha described our lives as "Dukkha", he was referring to any

and all unsatisfactory conditions. These range from minor disappointments, problems and difficulties to intense pain and misery. Therefore, Dukkha should be used to describe the fact that things are not completely right in our lives and could be better. Both Duhkha (skt) or Dukkha (p) are Sanskrit and Pali terms for “suffering” or “unsatisfactoriness.” This is the first of the four noble truths of Buddhism, which holds that cyclic existence is characterized by unsatisfactoriness or suffering. This is related to the idea that since the things of the world are transitory, beings are inevitably separated from what they desire and forced to endure what is unpleasant. The main stated goal of Buddhism from its inception is overcoming “duhkha.” There are three main types of dukkha: 1) the suffering of misery (duhkha-dukkhata), which includes physical and mental sufferings; 2) the suffering of change (viparinama-dukkhata), which includes all contaminated feelings of happiness. These are called sufferings because they are subject to change at any time, which leads to unhappiness; and 3) compositional suffering (samskara-dukkhata), the suffering endemic to cyclic existence, in which sentient beings are prone to the dissatisfaction due to being under the influence of contaminated actions and afflictions.

After the Great Enlightenment, the Buddha declared His first Discourse at the Deer Park: “Life is nothing but suffering” and “The five aggregates are suffering”. At other time in the Sravasti, the Buddha repeated the same discourse: “I will teach you, Bhiksus, pain and the root of pain. Do you listen to it. And what, Bhiksus, is pain? Body, Bhiksus, is pain, feeling is pain, perception is pain, the activities are pain, and consciousness is pain. That, Bhiksus, is the meaning of pain. And what, Bhiksus, is the root of pain? It is this craving that leads downward to rebirth, along with the lure of lust, that lingers longingly now here and there: namely, the craving for sense, the craving for rebirth, the craving to have done with rebirth.” In other words, human beings’ suffering is really the result of the arising of Dependent Origination, also the arising of the Five Aggregates. And thus, it is not the five aggregates, or human beings and the world that cause suffering, but a person’s craving for the five aggregates that causes suffering. The Buddha described three main characteristics of Dukkha which we face in our daily lives. First, the suffering of pain occurs

whenever we are mentally or physically miserable. Physical suffering includes headaches and scraped knees as well as torment of cancer and heart attacks. Mental suffering occurs whenever we fail to get what we want, when we lose something we are attached to, or when misfortune comes our way. We are sad when our career goal cannot be achieved, we're depressed when we part from loved ones, we are anxious when we are waiting to obtain a letter from our children, etc... Second, the suffering of change indicates that activities we generally regard as pleasurable in fact inevitably change and become painful. When we first buy a new shirt, we like it because it looks gorgeous; however, three years later, we may be suffering or feeling uncomfortable when we wear it because it is old and becomes worn out. No matter how much we like a person and we feel happy when we are with that person; however, when we spend too much time with that person, it makes us uncomfortable. Thus, happiness was never inherent in the person we like, but was a product of the interaction between us and that person. Third, the pervasive compounded suffering refers to our situation of having bodies and minds prone to pain. We can become miserable simply by the changing of external conditions. The weather changes and our bodies suffer from the cold; how a friend treats us changes and we become depressed. Our present bodies and minds compound our misery in the sense that they are the basis for our present problems. Our present bodies are the basis upon which we experience bad health. If we did not have a body that was receptive to pain, we would not fall ill no matter how many viruses and germs we were exposed to. Our present minds are the basis upon which we experience the pain and hurt feelings. If we had minds that were not contaminated by anger, then we would not suffer from the mental anguish of conflict with others.

In Buddhism, there are two categories of sufferings: physical and mental sufferings. Sufferings from within such as sickness or sorrow. First, physical sufferings or sufferings caused by diseases, including the suffering of birth, old age, sickness and death. The suffering of the body means that our body is not only impure, it is subject to birth, old age, disease and death, as well as to heat and cold, hunger and thirst, and other hardships that cause us to suffer, preventing us from being free and happy. Yes, indeed, birth is inevitably suffering for both the

mother and the infant, and because it is from birth, other forms of suffering, such as old age, sickness and death inevitably follow. Physical suffering takes many forms. People must have observed at one time or another, how their aged relatives suffer. Most of them suffer aches and pains in their joints and many find it hard to move about by themselves. With advancing age, the elderly find life difficult because they cannot see, hear or eat properly. The pain of disease, which strikes young and old alike, can be unbearable. The pain of death brings much suffering. Even the moment of birth gives pain, both to the mother and the child who is born. The truth is that the suffering of birth, old age, sickness and death are unavoidable. Some fortunate people may now be enjoying happy and carefree lives, but it is only a matter of time before they too will experience suffering. What is worse, nobody else can share this suffering with the one that suffers. For example, a man may be very concerned that his mother is growing old. Yet he cannot take her place and suffer the pain of aging on her behalf. Also, if a boy falls very ill, his mother cannot experience the discomfort of his illness for him. Finally, neither mother nor son can help each other when the moment of death comes. Second, the mental sufferings or the sufferings of the mind. Besides physical suffering, there are also various forms of mental suffering. Mental suffering such as sadness, distress, jealousy, bitterness, unsatisfaction, unhappiness, etc. People feel sad, lonely or depressed when they lose someone they love through separation or death. They become irritated or uncomfortable when they are forced to be in the company of those whom they dislike or those who are unpleasant. People also suffer when they are unable to satisfy their needs and wants, etc. The suffering of the mind means that when the mind is afflicted, it is necessarily consumed by the fire of afflictions, bound by the ropes of afflictions, struck, pursued and ordered about by the whip of afflictions, defiled and obscured by the smoke and dust of afflictions. Thus, whoever develops afflictions is lacking in wisdom, because the first person he has caused to suffer is himself. Besides, there is also the suffering of the environment. The suffering of the environment means that this earth is subject to the vagaries of the weather, scorching heat, frigid cold and pouring rain, while sentient beings must toil and suffer

day in and day out to earn a living. Tragedies occur every day, before our very eyes.

In this world, worries and miseries are twin evils that go hand in hand. They co-exist in this world. If you feel worried, you are miserable, and vice-versa; when you are miserable, you are worried. Devout Buddhists should always remember that worries are made by our own minds and by nothing else. We create them in our own minds for we fail to understand the danger of attachment and egoistic feelings. To be able to overcome these problems, we must try to contemplate and to train our minds carefully because an untrained mind is the main cause of all the problems including worries and miseries. The most important fact is that we should always have a smile for ourselves as well as for others in any circumstances. The Buddha taught: "Worries only arise in the fool, not in the wise." Worries and miseries are nothing but states of mind. Negative thoughts produce worries and miseries, while positive thoughts produce happiness and peace. The Buddha teaches that suffering is everywhere, suffering is already enclosed in the cause, suffering from the effect, suffering throughout time, suffering pervades space, and suffering governs both normal people and saint. From internal sufferings to external sufferings. Internal sufferings include both physical and mental sufferings. Physical sufferings are sufferings from within such as sickness or sorrow. Mental sufferings are spiritual sufferings such as sadness, distress, jealousy, bitterness, unsatisfaction, unhappiness, etc. External sufferings include sufferings from outside circumstances such as calamities, wars, etc. The Buddha said that whatever is impermanent is suffering because although impermanence is not a cause for suffering, it creates occasions for suffering. For not understanding of impermanence, we crave and cling to objects in the hope that they may be permanent, that they may yield permanent happiness. Failing to understand that youth, health, and life itself are impermanent, we crave them and cling to them. We desperately hold onto our youth and try to prolong our life, yet because they are impermanent by nature, they keep changing rapidly and we will surely one day become old and sick. When this occurs, impermanence is the main agent which creates occasions for suffering. According to The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, Chapter Esanavaggo (Searches),

there are three aspects of Dukkha that all sentient beings experience. They are suffering due to pain, suffering due to change, and suffering due to formations. First, dukkha as ordinary suffering, or suffering due to pain, or suffering that produce by direct causes or suffering of misery, Including physical sufferings such as pain, old age, death; as well as mental anxieties. The suffering within suffering is experienced when people do not have a place to live, clothes to keep out the cold or heat, or food to eat to survive, etc. Dukkha as produced by change, or suffering due to change, or suffering by loss or deprivation or change, for example, people who are rich, who have a good life, but then a sudden fire burns up all their property, leaving them destitute. Or maybe they die in a plane crash or a shipwreck. These are the sufferings of decay. Third, dukkha as conditioned states, or suffering due to formations, or suffering by the passing or impermanency of all things, body and mind are impermanent. Everybody of us experiences childhood, young days of life, then grows old and dies. Our thoughts flow on in a continuous succession, and we cannot control them. When we grow old, our eyes get blurry, our ears become deaf, and our hands and feet are no longer nimble, but start to tremble. These are the sufferings of process.

The Buddha's teachings on suffering, above all, offers a solution to the fundamental problem of the human condition. According to Buddhism, human existence is distinguished by the fact that nothing is permanent: no happiness will last forever, and whatever else there is, there will always be suffering and death. The first step in the Buddhist path to awakening is to recognize this as the foremost problem of human existence, to see that all is dukkha. However, this is not a pessimistic observation, because while acknowledging the ubiquity of dukkha, Buddhism offers a solution in the form of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Dukkha. The Buddha himself characterized his teaching by saying: "I teach only Dukkha and the cessation of dukkha." Dukkha can be experienced in three ways. The first is simply the ordinary suffering that affects people when the body is in pain. Ordinary suffering is also mental pain: it is the grief of not getting what one wants or the distress caused by separation from loved ones or from pleasant conditions. It is also the many other painful situations that one inevitably encounters by virtue of being born, ageing and dying.

Underlying any happiness is the knowledge that whenever there is pleasure or delight, it will not be permanent. Sooner or later the vicissitudes of life will bring about a change. There is a Buddhist saying that even in laughter there is “duhkha,” because all laughter is impermanent. This instability underlies the second kind of duhkha, which is dissatisfaction arising from change. It might seem that only death can bring about the cessation of suffering, but in fact death is also a form of suffering. In Buddhism the cosmos extends far beyond the immediate physical world perceptible by the senses, and death is merely part of the endless cycle of rebirth. Death in itself offers no respite because actions have consequences in future lives far beyond death, just as deeds from previous lives have affected the present. The third kind of suffering is the inherent interconnectedness of actions and deeds, which exceeds human vision and experience. In this sense, suffering applies to the universe in its totality, and no imaginable beings, humans, gods, demons, animals or hell beings, are exempt from it. Suffering thus refers not only to everyday suffering but also to the whole infinite world of possible and seemingly endless forms of suffering. No simple translation can capture its full significance. The goal of Buddhism is the complete and final cessation of every form of duhkha, and thereby the attainment of nirvana, the eradication of greed, hatred and delusion, which ties beings to the cycle of rebirth. Accordingly, Buddhas and those who reach enlightenment do not experience duhkha, because strictly speaking they are not “beings”, nor do they “roll” in the samsara: they will never again be reborn. Duhkha characterizes the cosmos as a whole, but its predominance varies among the different “spheres of existence.” In the world of Pure Form, where the great gods dwell, there is less suffering than in the world of Sense-Desire, inhabited by lesser gods, humans and other beings. Just the Buddha when he walked the earth could enter the World of the Sense-Desire, so too can humans enter the World of Pure Form. This is ordinarily accomplished in meditation, through different kinds of absorptions (dhyana). The characteristic form of suffering in this situation is impermanence, caused by the meditator’s inability to remain eternally in trance. To attain more abiding happiness, an individual must strive to understand the processes that govern

movement in the cosmos as a whole, namely, rebirth and karma, and how they can be affected.

Human beings have countless sufferings. Suffering that produce by direct causes or suffering of misery, Including physical sufferings such as pain, old age, death; as well as mental anxieties. According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha’s Ancient Path,” all mental and bodily sufferings such as birth, aging, disease, death, association with the unloved, dissociation from the loved, not getting what one wants are the ordinary sufferings of daily life and are called Dukkha-Dukkata. In the Four Noble Truths, Sakyamuni Buddha explained the eight basic causes of suffering. *The first suffering is the Suffering of Birth, or birth is suffering.* If we did not have bodies, we would not feel pain and suffering. We experience all sorts of physical suffering through our bodies. While still in the womb, human beings already have feelings and consciousness. They also experience pleasure and pain. When the mother eats cold food, the embryo feels as though it were packed in ice. When hot food is ingested, it feels as though it were burning, and so on. During pregnancy, the embryo, living as it is in a small, dark and dirty place; the mother lose her appetite and sleep, she often vomits and feels very weary. At birth, she suffers from hemorrhage or her life may be in danger in some difficult cases. From then on, all it can do is cry when it feels cold, hot, hungry, thirsty, or suffers insect bites. At the moment of birth, both mother and baby suffer. The mother may suffer from hemorrhage or her life may be in danger in some difficult cases. Sakyamuni Buddha in his wisdom saw all this clearly and in detail and therefore, described birth as suffering. The ancient sages had a saying in this regard:

“As soon as sentient beings escape one
Womb, they enter another,
Seeing this, sages and saints are deeply
Moved to such compassion!
The illusory body is really full of filth,
Swiftly escaping from it, we return to our
Original Nature.”

(The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and
Practice—Most Ven. Thích Thiện Tâm).

The second suffering is the suffering of old age (old age is suffering). We suffer when we are subjected to old age, which is natural. As we reach old age, human beings have diminished their faculties; our eyes cannot see clearly anymore, our ears have lost their acuity, our backs ache easily, our legs tremble, our eating is not easy and pleasurable as before, our memories fail, our skin dries out and wrinkles, hair becomes gray and white, their teeth ache, decay and fall out. We no longer have much control over our body. In old age, many persons become confused and mixed up when eating or dressing or they become uncontrollable of themselves. Their children and other family members, however close to them, soon grow tired and fed up. The human condition is like that of a flower, ruled by the law of impermanence, which, if it can bring beauty and fragrance, also carries death and decay in its wake. In truth, old age is nothing but suffering and the human body has nothing worth cherishing. For this reason, Sakyamuni Buddha said: old age is suffering! Thus, he advised Buddhists to strive to cultivate so they can bear the sufferings of old age with equanimity. *The third suffering is the Suffering of Disease* (sickness) or sickness is suffering. The human body is only a temporary combination of the four elements: earth, water, fire, and wind. Once the four elements are not in balance, we become sick. Sicknesses cause both physical and mental pains and/or sufferings. To have a body is to have disease for the body is open to all kinds of diseases. So the suffering of disease is inevitable. Those with small ailments which have an external source to those dreadful diseases coming from inside. Some people are afflicted with incurable diseases such as cancers or debilitating ailments, such as osteoporosis, etc. In such condition, they not only experience physical pain, they also have to spend large sums of money for treatment. Should they lack the required funds, not only do they suffer, they create additional suffering for their families. The sufferings caused by diseases is more painful than the sufferings due to old age. Let imagine, even the slightest toothache or headache is sometimes unbearable. However, like or dislike, we have no choice but bearing the suffering of sickness. Even the Buddha, a perfect being, who had destroyed all defilements, had to endure physical suffering caused by disease. The Buddha was constantly subjected to headaches. His last illness caused him much physical suffering was a wound in his

foot. As a result of Devadatta's hurling a rock to kill him, his foot was wounded by splinter which necessitated an operation. When his disciples disobeyed his teachings, he was compelled to retire to a forest for three months. In a forest on a couch of leaves on a rough ground, facing fiercing cold winds, he maintained perfect equanimity. In pain and happiness, He lived with a balanced mind. ***The fourth suffering is the Suffering of Death*** or death is suffering. Birth leads inevitably to death. When a person dies, the four elements disperse and his psirit is dragged off by the karmic wind. Death entails undescribable suffering. All human beings desire an easy birth and a peaceful death; however, very few of us can fulfill these conditions. At the time of death, when the physical body is generally stricken by disease and in great pain. With the body in this state, the mind is panic-stricken, bemoaning the loss of wealth and property, and saddened by the impending separation from loved ones as well as a multitude of similar thoughts. This is indeed suffering. Sentient beings are born with a cry of pain and die with even more pain. The death is unwanted, but it still comes, and nobody knows when it comes. As fruits fall from a tree, ripe or old even so we die in our infancy, prime of mankind, or old age. As the sun rises in the East only to set in the West. As Flowers bloom in the morning to fade in the evening. The Buddha taught: "Death is inevitable. It comes to all without exception; we have to cultivate so that we are able to face it with perfect equanimity." ***The fifth suffering is the Suffering due to separation from loved ones*** (parting with what we love). Parting with what we love is suffering. No one wants to be separated from the loved ones; however, this is inevitable. We still lose our loved ones to the demon of death, leaving them helpless and forsaken. Separation from loved ones, whether in life or through death, is indeed suffering. If we listen to the Buddha's teaching "All association in life must end with separation." Here is a good opportunity for us to practice "equanimity." ***The sixth suffering is the suffering due to meeting with the uncongennial*** (meeting with what we hate), or meeting with what we hate is suffering. People who get along well can work together without any conflict. But sometimes we may detest a person and want to get away from him. Yet, no matter where we go, we keep meeting up with him. The more we hate him, the more we run into him. This is also a form of psychological suffering. To

endure those to whom we are opposed, whom we hate, who always shadow and slander us and look for a way to harm us is very hard to tolerate; however, we must confront this almost daily in our life. There are many families in which relatives are not of the same mind, and which are constantly beset with disputes, anger and acrimony. This is no different from encountering enemies. This is indeed suffering! Thus, the Buddha advised us to try to bear them, and think this way “perhaps we are reaping the effects of our karma, past or present.” We should try to accommodate ourselves to the new situation or try to overcome the obstacles by some other means. ***The seventh suffering is the suffering due to unfulfilled wishes*** (unattained aims). The suffering of not obtaining what we want. If we seek something, we are greedy for it. If we cannot obtain what we want, we will experience all afflictions and sufferings. That is a kind of psychological suffering. Whether we desire fame, profit, wealth, or sex, if we cannot obtain it, we suffer. Unabling to obtain what we wish is suffering: Our greed is like a container without the bottom. We have so many desires and hopes in our lives. When we want something and are able to get it, this does not often leads to happiness either because it is not long before we feel bored with that thing, lose interest in it and begin to want something else. In short, we never feel satisfied with what we have at the very moment. The poor hope to be rich; the rich hope to be richer; the ugly desire for beauty; the beauty desire for beautier; the childless pray for a son or daughter. Such wishes and hopes are innumerable that no way we can fulfill them. Even if we do obtain what we want, we will not feel happy. Before obtaining it, we are anxious to get it. Once we have got it, we constantly worry about losing it. Our mind is never peaceful or happy. We always feel uneasy. Thus, either obtaining what we wish or not obtaining what we wish is a source of suffering. When we want something but are unable to get it, we feel frustrated. When we expect someone to live or to work up to our expectation and they do not, we feel disappointed. When we want others like us and they don’t, we feel hurt. ***The eighth suffering is the suffering due to the raging aggregates*** (all the ills of the five skandhas). The five skandhas are forms, feeling, thinking, formations, and consciousness. It is very difficult for us to overcome them. If we lack in meditation practices, it is extremely difficult for us to see their temporary nature. All the illnesses of the

five skandhas is suffering. To have a body means to experience pain and diseases on a daily basis. Pain and disease also means suffering. The five skandas or aggregates are form, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness. The skandas of form relates to the physical body, while the remaining four concern the mind. Simply speaking, this is the suffering of the body and the mind. The suffering of the skandas encompasses the seven kinds of suffering mentioned above. Our physical bodies are subject to birth, old age, disease, death, hunger, thirst, heat, cold and weariness. Our mind, on the other hand, are afflicted by sadness, anger, worry, love, hate and hundreds of other vexations. It once happened that Prince Siddhartha having strolled through the four gates of the city, witnessed the misfortunes of old age, disease and death. Endowed with profound wisdom, he was touched by the suffering of human condition and left the royal palace to find the way of liberation.

The end of sufferings and affliction is the most important goal of Buddhism; however, this cannot be done through studying, but one must practice with your personal experiences. When we speak of the end of sufferings and afflictions in Buddhism, we mean the end of sufferings and afflictions in this very life, not waiting until a remote life. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that Nirvana in Buddhism is simply a place where there are no sufferings and afflictions. So if we can cultivate ourselves to eliminate sufferings and afflictions, we reach what we call “Nirvana in this very life.” To end sufferings and afflictions, selfish desire must be removed. Just as a fire dies when no fuel is added, so unhappiness will end when the fuel of selfish desire is removed. When selfish desire is completely removed, our mind will be in a state of perfect peace. We shall be happy always. Buddhists call the state in which all suffering is ended “Nirvana”. It is an everlasting state of great joy and peace. It is the greatest happiness in life. The Eightfold Path to the Cessation of Dukkha and afflictions, enumerated in the fourth Noble Truth, is the Buddha’s prescription for the suffering experienced by all beings. It is commonly broken down into three components: morality, concentration and wisdom. Another approach identifies a path beginning with charity, the virtue of giving. Charity or generosity underlines morality or precept, which in turn enables a person to venture into higher aspirations. Morality,

concentration and wisdom are the core of Buddhist spiritual training and are inseparably linked. They are not merely appendages to each other like petals of a flower, but are intertwined like “salt in great ocean,” to invoke a famous Buddhist simile.

Chapter Eight

Afflictions: The Most Dangerous Robbers in Human Life

According to Buddhism, afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, they are robbers that cause sentient beings with consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. The suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance.

There are six fundamental afflictions: The first fundamental affliction is the greed (raga): Greed for wealth, sex, fame, food, sleep or greed for forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch. The second fundamental affliction is the anger (pratigha): Not obtaining what one is greedy for leads to anger. The third fundamental affliction is the ignorance (moha): Once anger arises, one has nothing but “ignorance.” The fourth fundamental affliction is the arrogance (mana): Arrogance means pride and conceit which causes one to look down on others. The fifth fundamental affliction is the doubt (vicikitsa): Cannot believe or make up one’s mind on something. The sixth fundamental affliction is the improper views (drishti). *There are twenty Derivative Afflictions (upaklesha):* Derivative Afflictions include ten minor grade

afflictions, two intermediate grade afflictions, and eight major grade afflictions. *Ten minor grade afflictions include wrath, hatred, covering, rage, deceit, conceit, harming, flattery, jealousy, and stinginess:* The first minor grade affliction is the wrath (krodha): Wrath which comes suddenly and is a combination of anger and hatred. The second minor grade affliction is the hatred (upanaha): Hatred happens when one represses the emotional feelings deep inside. The third minor grade affliction is the rage (pradasa): Rage, of which the emotional reaction is much more severe than hatred. The fourth minor grade affliction is the hiding (mraksha): Hiding means covering or concealing something inside. The fifth minor grade affliction is the deceit (maya): Deceit means false kindness or phone intention. The sixth minor grade affliction is the flattery (shathya). The seventh minor grade affliction is the conceit (mada): Conceit means to think high of self and low of others. The eighth minor grade affliction is the harming (vihimsa): Harming means to want to harm other people. The ninth minor grade affliction is the jealousy (irshya): Jealousy means to become envious of the who surpass us in one way or other. The tenth minor grade affliction is the stinginess (matsarya): One is tight about one's wealth, not wishing to share it with others. *Two intermediate grade afflictions include lack of shame and lack of remorse:* The first intermediate grade affliction is the lack of shame (ahrikya): Lack of shame means to do wrong, but always feel self-righteous. The second intermediate grade affliction is the lack of remorse (anapatrapya): Lack of remorse means never examine to see if one is up to the standards of others. *Eight major grade afflictions include lack of faith, laziness, laxiness, torpor, restlessness, distraction, improper knowledge and scatteredness:* The first major grade affliction is the lack of faith (ashraddhya): Lack of faith means not trust or believe in anyone, not to believe in the truth. The second major grade affliction is the laziness (kausidya): Laziness means not to try to eliminate unwholesome deeds and to perform good deeds. The third major grade affliction is the laxiness (pramada): Laxiness means not to let the body and mind to follow the rules but does whatever one pleases. The fourth major grade affliction is the torpor (styana): Torpor means to feel obscure in mind or to fall asleep in the process. The fifth major grade affliction is the restlessness (auddhatya): One is agitated and cannot keep still. The sixth major

grade affliction is the distraction (mushitasmriti): Distraction means to lose proper mindfulness. The seventh major grade affliction is the improper knowledge (asamprajanya): One become obsessed with defilement. The eighth major grade affliction is the scatteredness (vikshepa). *There are four afflictions of unfixed mental states (aniyata):* The first mental state is the falling asleep to obscure the mind (middha). The second mental state is the regret (kaudritya) or repent for wrong doings in the past. The third mental state is the investigation (vitarka means to cause the mind unstable). The fourth mental state is the correct Examination (vicara means to pacify the mind).

Practitioners of mindfulness subdue afflictions in four basic ways: Subduing afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation. Subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Subduing afflictions with phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Subduing afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha.

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind.

Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions.

The term “Klesa” literally means “pain,” “external dust,” “affliction,” or “ something tormenting” and is translated as “affliction.” As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust for agantuklesa. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis.

Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration. According to the Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, all afflictions, wrath, and folly are weapons of enlightening beings because they liberate sentient beings through afflictions. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can annihilate the afflictions, bondage, and compulsion accumulated by all sentient beings in the long night of ignorance. Bodhisattvas utilize

“Giving” to destroy all stinginess; “Self-control” to get rid of all crime; Impartiality to remove all discrimination; Wisdom to dissolve all ignorance and afflictions; Right livelihood to lead away from all wrong livelihood; Skill in means to manifest in all places; All afflictions, wrath, and folly to liberate sentient beings through afflictions; Birth-and-death to continue enlightening practices and teach sentient beings; Teaching the truth to be able to break up all clinging; All knowledge to not give up the avenues of practice of enlightening beings.

Afflictions are the barrier of temptation, passion or defilement, which obstructs the attainment of the nirvana. Klesa is also means hindrance of the afflictions. Klesa is generally divided into two groups, primary and secondary. The primary comprises of such evil impulses that lie at the foundation of every tormenting thought and desire. The passions and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. The suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. Defilements of transgression occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. Defilements of obsession is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one’s mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. Dormant or latent afflictions are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden, waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day’s activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

Besides, there are other kinds of afflictions, such as afflictions caused by desire or desire to have; afflictions caused by resentment or anger; afflictions caused by stupidity or ignorance; afflictions caused by pride or self-conceit; afflictions caused by doubt; afflictions caused by False views. Afflictions are considered six cauras or robbers, such as the six senses, the six sense organs are the match-makers, or medial agents of the six robbers. The six robbers are also likened to the six pleasures of the six sense organs. The only way to prevent them is by not acting with them: the eye avoiding beauty; the ear avoiding melodious sound; the nose avoiding fragrant scent; the tongue avoiding tasty flavour; the body avoiding seductions; and the mind should always control thoughts.

The passion or moral afflictions are bodhi. The one is included in the other. According to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Once we thoroughly understand the real meaning of "Afflictions are bodhi", we've already subdued our own afflictions. The Buddha witnessed that all sentient beings undergo great sufferings, so He resolved to leave the home-life, to cultivate and find the way to help sentient beings escape these sufferings. Afflictions manifest themselves through our ignorance. Sometimes they show in our appearance; sometimes they are hidden in our minds, etc. In our daily life, we cannot do without sufferings and afflictions. However, if we know how to cultivate, we always consider "afflictions is Bodhi". If we know how to use it, affliction is Bodhi; on the contrary, if we do not know how to use it, then Bodhi becomes affliction. According to Late Most Venerable Hsuan-Hua in Talks on Dharma, volume 7, Bodhi is analogous to water, and affliction to ice. Ice and water are of the same substance; there is no difference. In freezing weather, water will freeze into ice, and in hot weather, ice will melt into water. When there are afflictions, water freezes into ice; and when the afflictions are gone, ice melts into water. It is to say, having afflictions is having the affliction-ice of ignorance; having no afflictions is having the Bodhi-water of wisdom.

In short, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Zen vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Practitioners of mindfulness can subdue afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation; or subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Practitioners of mindfulness can also subdue afflictions with phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Practitioners of mindfulness can also subdue afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha.

Chapter Nine

Two Kinds of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

Sentient beings, especially, human beings, have been being suffered all kinds of suffering that arise out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. There are many different kinds of afflictions, but in general, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing on a regular basis in daily life.

I. Two Main Kinds of Afflictions:

Klesa is generally divided into two groups, primary and secondary. The primary comprises of such evil impulses that lie at the foundation of every tormenting thought and desire. The passions and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. Besides, according to Buddhism, there are many different kinds of afflictions. According to Buddhist teachings, there are two kinds of affliction: First, the six fundamental or primary afflictions (klesas) arising from the six senses. Second, the twenty consequent klesas arising out of the six senses. The consequent or secondary afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions.

First, Fundamental Afflictions (Mulaklesa-skt): Passions, or afflictions, including the five envoys of stupidity caused by illusion of

the body or self, the five higher wholesome deeds, and main afflictions such as lust, anger, ignorance, pride, doubt, etc. Five Envoys of Stupidity: Five dull, caused by the illusion of the body or self, unintelligent, or stupid vices or temptations: greed, anger, stupidity, arrogance, and doubt. The Five Higher Wholesome Deeds (Pancatiksna-dula-skt): Five good karmas which include no greed, no hatred (hate), no stupidity, nor pride nor arrogance, and no doubt.

Second, Consequent Delusions: Secondary afflictions (parittaklesa-skt), sequent, or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. As mentioned above, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Buddhist cultivation vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. *There Are Twenty-four Secondary Afflictions of the Mahayana One Hundred Dharmas in the Studies of the Vijnaptimatra:* Also called Twenty-Four Secondary Afflictions of Mental Functions. The Idealistic School of Vasubandhu is a reformed Yogacara system and its fundamental text is Vasubandhu's Vijnaptimatratra-trimsika, a versified text on the theory of mere ideation in thirty stanzas, of which the first twenty-four are devoted to the special character (svalaksana) of all dharmas, the next two to the nature (svabhava) of all dharmas, and the last four to the stages of the noble personages. Sequent, or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. Afflictions caused by passions, desires, hate, stupidity, and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. According to Vasubandhu's Trimsika, in the

Vijnaptimatratra-Trimśika, the fifth stanza emphasized on the twenty-four secondary afflictions: impatience or anger (krodha (skt), hatred or resentment (upanada (skt), hypocrisy or concealment (mraksha (skt), stinging talk or worry (pradasa (skt), envy or jealousy (irshya (skt), stinginess (matsarya (skt), deceit or manipulation (maya (skt), duplicity or unduly flattering (sathya (skt), arrogance or conceitedness (mada and mana (skt), hurting others or destructive (vihimsa (skt), shamelessness, self-shameless, or have no shame of self (ahri (skt), recklessness, or have no shame around other people (atrapa (skt), torpidity or drowsiness (styana (skt), fluctuations, or instability of mind and body (uddhava (skt), unbelief or faithlessness (asraddha (skt), indolence or laziness (kausidya (skt), thoughtlessness, uninhibitedness, or lack of self-mastery (pramada (skt), senselessness (mushitasmritya (skt), uncollected state or unsteadiness (vikshepa (skt), inaccuracy of knowledge, or do not understand in a proper manner (asamprajanya (skt), evil doing (kaukritya (skt), drowsiness (middha (skt), investigation (vitarka (skt), and reflection (vicara (skt).

II. There Are Also Two Other Kinds of Affliction:

First, klesas arising from false reasoning. Second, klesa that which is natural to all. ***First, Delusions Arising from Reasoning:*** In Buddhism, Parikalpa-samutthita means Delusions arising from reasoning and teaching of heterodox way or doctrine. Delusions arising from reasoning, teaching and teachers, in contrast with errors that arise naturally among people (Câu sinh khởi). Parikalpa-samutthita-klesa means afflictions or delusions arising from reasoning, teaching and teachers or friends. Parikalpa-samutthita-klesa also means afflictions producing from discrimination. Klesas arising from false reasoning. ***Second, Sahaja-klesa:*** The Sanskrit term "Sahaja" means errors that arise naturally among people (arising and born with one; spontaneous), errors or delusions that arise naturally among people, in contrast with delusions arising from reasoning and teaching (Phân biệt khởi). "To be born together" or 'sahaja' is closely related to Mantrayana. Sahaja-klesa means afflictions or delusions that arise naturally among people or errors that arise naturally among people.

III. There Are Two More Kinds of Affliction:

First, the six great klesas: ignorance, distracted (unrestrained), idle (lazy), unfaithful (disbelieved), torpor, and restlessness. Second, the ten minor afflictions. **Great Afflictions:** Mental conditions that produce passion and great affliction (delusion) such as stupidity, excess sloth, laziness, unbelief, confusion, and restlessness. These are main ground for great affliction or major basic factors of affliction. **Minor Afflictions:** According to the Kosa Sastra, there are ten lesser evils (illusions or temptations) or ten minor moral defects arising from unenlightenment: anger, hidden sin, stinginess, envy, vexation, ill-will, hate, adulation, deceit, and pride.

IV. There Are Also Two Other Kinds of Affliction:

First, ordinary passions or temptations. Second, firece or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the Law of Cause and Effect. **Ordinary Afflictions:** The common passions or temptations and their consequences. According to Buddhist teachings, these are afflictions arise by intoxicant of sensual pleasures. In other words, the stream or flow of existence, evoked by desire interpenetrated by unenlightened views and thoughts (these stimulating desires produce karma which in turn produces reincarnation). **Firece Afflictions:** Firece or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the Law of Cause and Effect. Law of cause and effect or the relation between cause and effect in the sense of the Buddhist law of “Karma”. Cause is a primary force that produces an effect; effect is a result of that primary force. The law of causation governs everything in the universe without exception. The law of causation (reality itself as cause and effect in momentary operation). Every action which is a cause will have a result or an effect. Likewise every resultant action or effect has its cause. The law of cause and effect is a fundamental concept within Buddhism governing all situations. In short, these are retributions of good and evil karma or cause and effect in the moral realm have their corresponding relations. According to Buddhism, whoever denies the rule of “cause and effect” will destroy all moral responsibility. The Moral Causation in Buddhism means that a deed, good or bad, or indifferent, brings its own result on the doer. Good people are happy and bad ones unhappy. But in most cases “happiness” is understood not in its moral or spiritual sense but in the sense of material prosperity, social position, or political influence. For instance, kingship is considered the reward of one’s having faithfully practiced the ten deeds of goodness. If one meets a tragic death, he is thought to have committed something bad in his past lives even when he might have spent a blameless life in the present one.

Chapter Ten

Three Kind of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

I. An Overview of Three Kind of Afflictions:

According to Buddhism, there are three kinds of afflictions: the illusion or misleading views and thoughts, delusion of “dust and sand”, and the illusion arising from primal ignorance. There are also three other kinds of afflictions: *First*, defilements of transgression, which occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. *Second*, defilements of obsession, which is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one’s mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. *Third*, dormant or latent afflictions, which are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden, waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day’s activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

II. A Summary of Three Main Kinds of Afflictions:

According to Buddhist teachings, there are three main kinds of afflictions: the illusion or misleading views and thoughts, delusion of “dust and sand”, and the illusion arising from primal ignorance. According to the T’ien-T’ai Sect, there are three delusions: ***First, Misleading Views and Thoughts:*** Things seen and thought illusions from imperfect perception, with temptation to love, hate, etc., to be rid

of these false views and temptations, one must cultivate and observe moral precepts. These are afflictions that are caused by the bond of the illusion of heterodox opinions which binds men and robs them of freedom (mistaking the seeming for the real). In other words, perplexities or illusions and temptations arise from false views or theories. Perplexities arise from false views or theories or illusory or misleading views and thoughts. Delusions or delusive views in the visible world. **Second, Delusion of “Dust and Sand”:** Dust and sand, i.e. numberless as the atoms. T’ien-T’ai uses the term as one of the three illusions, i.e. the trial of the Bodhisattva in facing the vast amount of detail in knowledge and operation required for his task of saving the world. Afflictions of dust and sand mean illusion and temptation through the immense variety of duties in saving others. **Third, Delusion of Ignorance:** In Buddhism, Avidya is ignorance or noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampanna), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In Madhyamaka, “Avidya” refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. “Avidya” is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world, which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its appearances. In the Yogachara’s view, “avidya” means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it. Ignorance is one of the three fires which must be allowed to die out

before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self. Delusion of Ignorance means illusions and temptations that arise from failure philosophically to understand things in their reality. Illusion arising from primal ignorance which covers and hinders the truth. In the Differentiated Teaching, this illusion is overcome by the Bodhisattva from the first stage; in the Perfect Teaching, it is overcome by the Bodhisattva in the first resting-place. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance is only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Affliction of ignorance is also a delusive mind or the mind of darkness without illumination, the ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities.

III. Three Other Kinds of Afflictions:

First, defilements of transgression, which occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. *Second*, defilements of obsession, which is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one's mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. *Third*, dormant or latent afflictions, which are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden, waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day's activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

According to the Hinayana Buddhism, there are three groups of delusions: *First*, kamasava or intoxicant of worldly desires or sensual pleasures. *Second*, bhavasava or the love of existence in one of the conditioned realms. *Third*, avijjasava or the defilements of ignorance in

mind. Besides, some considers the fourth delusion: the corruption of views.

Chapter Eleven

Four Kinds of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

I. Four Kinds of Great Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings:

According to Buddhist teachings, there are four big kinds of afflictions. These four are regarded as the fundamental evil passions originating from the view that there is really an eternal substance known as ego-soul: the belief in the existence of an ego-substance, ignorance about the ego, conceit about the ego, and self-love. As mentioned above, afflictions (disturbing emotions) include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Zen vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. There are four fundamental evil passions. These four are regarded as the fundamental evil passions originating from the view that there is really an eternal substance known as ego-soul. **First, *Atmadrishti (skt)*:** The belief in the existence of an ego-substance. i) Believing in the existence of an ego-substance (holding to the idea of the existence of a permanent ego). ii) View of there is a real and permanent body: False view that every man has a permanent lord within; wrong view on the existence of a permanent ego. The erroneous doctrine that the ego or self composed of the temporary five skandhas, is a reality and permanent. iii) Thought of an ego, one of the three knots. There are two ways in which one comes to conceive the real existence of an ego, the one is subjective imagination and the other the objective conception of reality. iv) Believe that our self is our greatest and most precious possession in a nix in our eyes. We try by all means to satisfy

to our self, irrespective of others' interest of rights. v) Holding to the idea of the existence of a permanent ego. In the Four Noble Truth, Sakyamuni Buddha taught that "attachment to self" is the root cause of suffering. From attachment springs grief; from grief springs fear. For him who is wholly free from attachment, there is no grief and much less fear. If you don't have attachments, naturally you are liberated. **Second, Atmamoha (skt):** Ignorance about the ego; confused by the belief in the reality of the ego. Atmamoha is ignorance in regard to the ego or delusion of the Ignorance in the ego. Afflictions of an ego-infactuation mean afflictions of the ignorance in the ego. **Third, Atmamana (skt):** Conceit about the ego. Conceit about the ego or conceit about the self-superiority, self-sufficiency, or the pride of self. Pride of self means exalting self and depreciating others, or self-intoxication or pride of self. Pride of self also means ego-conceit or egotism. Pride of self means false belief of individuality; that the self contains some immortal and unchanging faculty or soul. **Fourth, Atmasukha (skt):** Self-love or attachment to the ego. Self-love; the love of or attachment to the ego, arising with the eighth vijnana. Cause of all pursuit or seeking, which in turn causes all sufferings. All Buddhas put away self-love and all pursuit, or seeking, such elimination being nirvana.

II. Four Other Kinds of Great Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings:

Besides, there are still four other big distresses (afflictions) observed during the Buddha's wandering around Kapilavastu when he was a prince. They are: Birth, old age, diseases (sicknesses) and death. **The First Kind of Afflictions Is the Suffering of Birth:** Birth is suffering and afflictions. If we did not have bodies, we would not feel suffering of pain and afflictions. We experience all sorts of physical suffering through our bodies. While still in the womb, human beings already have feelings and consciousness. They also experience pleasure, pain, and afflictions. When the mother eats cold food, the embryo feels as though it were packed in ice. When hot food is ingested, it feels as though it were burning, and so on. During pregnancy, the embryo, living as it is in a small, dark and dirty place; the mother lose her appetite and sleep, she often vomits and feels very

weary. At birth, she suffers from hemorrhage or her life may be in danger in some difficult cases. From then on, all it can do is cry when it feels cold, hot, hungry, thirsty, or suffers insect bites. At the moment of birth, both mother and baby suffer. The mother may suffer from hemorrhage or her life may be in danger in some difficult cases. Sakyamuni Buddha in his wisdom saw all this clearly and in detail and therefore, described birth as suffering. The ancient sages had a saying in this regard:

“As soon as sentient beings escape one
womb, they enter another,
Seeing this, sages and saints are deeply
moved to such compassion!
The illusory body is really full of filth,
Swiftly escaping from it, we return to our
Original Nature.”

(The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and
Practice—Most Ven. Thích Thiện Tâm).

The Second Kind of Afflictions Is the Suffering of Old Age: Old age is suffering and affliction. We suffer when we are subjected to old age, which is natural. As we reach old age, human beings have diminished their faculties; our eyes cannot see clearly anymore, our ears have lost their acuity, our backs ache easily, our legs tremble, our eating is not easy and pleasurable as before, our memories fail, our skin dries out and wrinkles, hair becomes gray and white, their teeth ache, decay and fall out. We no longer have much control over our body. In old age, many persons become confused and mixed up when eating or dressing or they become uncontrollable of themselves. Their children and other family members, however close to them, soon grow tired and fed up. The human condition is like that of a flower, ruled by the law of impermanence, which, if it can bring beauty and fragrance, also carries death and decay in its wake. In truth, old age is nothing but suffering and the human body has nothing worth cherishing. For this reason, Sakyamuni Buddha said: old age is suffering! Thus, he advised Buddhists to strive to cultivate so they can bear the sufferings of old age with equanimity. ***The Third Kind of Afflictions Is the Suffering of Disease:*** Sickness or illness is suffering and afflictive. The human body is only a temporary combination of the four elements: earth, water,

fire, and wind. Once the four elements are not in balance, we become sick. Sickesses cause both physical and mental pains and/or sufferings. To have a body is to have disease for the body is open to all kinds of diseases. So the suffering of disease is inevitable. Those with small ailments which have an external source to those dreadful diseases coming from inside. Some people are afflicted with incurable diseases such as cancers or debilitating ailments, such as osteoporosis, etc. In such condition, they not only experience physical pain, they also have to spend large sums of money for treatment. Should they lack the required funds, not only do they suffer, they create additional suffering for their families. The sufferings caused by diseases is more painful than the sufferings due to old age. Let imagine, even the slightest toothache or headache is sometimes unbearable. However, like or dislike, we have no choice but bearing the suffering of sickness. Even the Buddha, a perfect being, who had destroyed all defilements, had to endure physical suffering caused by disease. The Buddha was constantly subjected to headaches. His last illness caused him much physical suffering was a wound in his foot. As a result of Devadatta's hurling a rock to kill him, his foot was wounded by splinter which necessitated an operation. When his disciples disobeyed his teachings, he was compelled to retire to a forest for three months. In a forest on a couch of leaves on a rough ground, facing fiercing cold winds, he maintained perfect equanimity. In pain and happiness, He lived with a balanced mind. ***The Fourth Kind of Afflictions Is the Suffering of Death:*** Death is suffering and afflictive. Birth leads inevitably to death. When a person dies, the four elements disperse and his psirit is dragged off by the karmic wind. Death entails undescribable suffering. All human beings desire an easy birth and a peaceful death; however, very few of us can fulfill these conditions. At the time of death, when the physical body is generally stricken by disease and in great pain. With the body in this state, the mind is panic-stricken, bemoaning the loss of wealth and property, and saddened by the impending separation from loved ones as well as a multitude of similar thoughts. This is indeed suffering. Sentient beings are born with a cry of pain and die with even more pain. The death is unwanted, but it still comes, and nobody knows when it comes. As fruits fall from a tree, ripe or old even so we die in our infancy, prime of mankind, or old age. As the sun rises in the East only to set in the West. As Flowers bloom in the morning to fade in the evening. The Buddha taught: "Death is inevitable. It comes to all without exception; we have to cultivate so that we are able to face it with perfect equanimity."

Chapter Twelve

Five Kinds of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

I. An Overview of Five Kinds of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings:

As mentioned above, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by cultivating on a regular basis. Affliction obstacles or hindrances of affliction are hinderers or barriers caused by passions, desires, hate, stupidity. Afflictive hindrances or affliction obstacles. The passions and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. The suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. According to Buddhism, there are five great passions or disturbers or Klesas: desire, anger or hatred, stupidity or ignorance, pride, and doubt. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five kinds of begrudging: begrudging as to dwelling-place, begrudging as to family, begrudging as to gains, begrudging as to beauty, and begrudging as to Dhamma. The five fundamental passions and delusions: wrong views, clinging or attachment to the desire-realm, clinging or attachment to the form-realm, clinging or attachment to the formless-realm, and the state of unenlightenment or ignorance. According to the Abhidharma, there are five bonds which bind men to mortality: desire, hate, pride, envy, grudging.

II. A Summary of Five Kinds of Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings:

Five Lower Fetters: According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five kinds of begrudging: begrudging as to dwelling-place, begrudging as to family, begrudging as to gains, begrudging as to beauty, and begrudging as to Dhamma. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five bonds in the lower desire-realms or the lower fetters which hold the individual in the realms of desire: desire (sensual desire or sensuality), dislike (ill-will or resentment), wrong view on personality-belief (self, identity view, or egoism), heretical ideals (attachment to rite and ritual or distorted grasp of rules and vows), doubt about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha and the cultivation on the three studies of discipline, concentration and wisdom. According to Abhidharma, there are five bonds of desires: desire, dislike, pride, envy, and stinginess.

Five Higher Bonds: According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha and Kosa Sastra, there are five higher bonds of desire still exist in the upper realms of form and formlessness, for they fetter beings to aggregates, etc., produced in the higher forms of becoming: First, Rupa-raga (p) or lust or desire for form. Attachment to the world of forms (greed for the fine-material, love in the realm of form, craving for the world of form). Second, Arupa-raga (p) or lust or desire for formlessness. Attachment to the formless world (greed for the immaterial, love in the realm of formlessness, craving for the formless world). Third, Uddhacca (p) or restlessness. Fourth, Mana (p) or pride or conceit. Fifth, ignorance.

Five Dull, Unintelligent, or Stupid Vices or Temptations: It should be reminded that Satkayadrsti (skt) is heresy of individuality. The illusion of the body or self, one of the five wrong views. Thought of an ego, one of the three knots. There are two ways in which one comes to conceive the real existence of an ego, the one is subjective imagination and the other the objective conception of reality. Believe that our self is our greatest and most precious possession in our eyes. We try by all means to satisfy to our self, irrespective of others' interest of rights.

The fetter of personality belief is Panca-klesa (skt) or Panca-klesa-dula (skt) or five envoys of stupidity caused by the illusion of the body or self: greed, anger, stupidity, arrogance, and doubt.

The First Envoy of Stupidity That Causes Afflictions Is Craving: Craving (greed, affection, desire) means desire for and love of the things of this worldly life. Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Only if we have no desire for ourselves; if we are working and earning money in order to help other people; if we make cultivation our business and our business is cultivation only, then how clear and happy our life will be! However, most people don't understand this. They are only interested in making a lot of money or becoming successful in worldly business. Remember, this is only a small 'I'. Devout Buddhists should make a lot of money to help all people, then even we create our worldly business, it is a good business. It is a selfish desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings' greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings' lives, especially, those of human beings' are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency

to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. Cultivation helps us balance 'Lust' by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from lust. Furthermore, through cultivation, we can see the string of craving and attachment confines us to samsara's prison. In other words, craving and attachment are not only roots that prevent us from being sufficiently moved to renounce samsara, but they are also two of the main things that bind us to samsara. In order to overcome craving and attachment, we should contemplate on the impurity of the body. When we are attached to someone, for example, consider how that person is just a sack full of six kinds of filthy substances. Then our attachment and craving will diminish. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when we get rid of greed and desires or when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. The Buddha taught: "Craving and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness." Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. As a matter of fact, once, we, Buddhist practitioners get rid of greed and desire also means that we have already pushed away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. In conclusion for this chapter, on the path of cultivation, practitioners should always remember the Buddha's teaching in the Sutra in Forty Two Chapters taught: "Though a person with a state of

mind filled with desires dwells in heaven, still that is not enough for him; though a person who has ended desire dwells on the ground, still he is happy.” We are living in a material world where we must encounter all kinds of objects such as sights, sounds, tastes, sensations, thoughts and ideas, etc. Desire arises from contact with these pleasing objects. Buddhists should always remember that “Desire” not only obscures our mind, but it is also a main cause of grasping which causes sufferings and afflictions, forces us to continue to wander in the samsara.

The Second Envoy of Stupidity That Causes Afflictions Is Ill Will: Ill-will or anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Ill-will or Hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: “Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger.

Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha’s teachings, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it’s not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus the Buddha taught: “When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own.”

A man was rowing his boat upstream on a very misty morning. Suddenly, he saw another boat coming downstream, not trying to avoid him. It was coming straight at him. He shouted, "Be careful!" but the boat came right into him, and his boat was almost sunk. The man became very angry, and began to shout at the other person, to give him a piece of his mind. But when he looked closely, he saw that there was no one in the other boat. Charlotte Joko Beck wrote in 'Nothing Special': "There's a killer shark in everybody. And the killer shark is unexperienced fear. Your way of covering it up is to look so nice and do so much and be so wonderful that nobody can possibly see who you really are, which is someone who is scared to death. As we uncover these layers of rage, it's important not to act out; we shouldn't inflict our rage on others. In genuine practice, our rage is simply a stage that passes. But for a time, we are more uncomfortable than when we started. That's inevitable; we're becoming more honest, and our false surface style is beginning to dissolve. The process doesn't go on forever, but it certainly can be most uncomfortable while it lasts. Occasionally we may explode, but that's better than evading or covering our reaction." Zen practitioners should always remember that hatred is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to

die for fuelling. Anger is also one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. As in the case of lust or sense-desire, it is unwise or unsystematic attention that brings about ill-will, which when not checked propagates itself, saps the mind and clouds the vision. It distorts the entire mind and its properties and thus hinders awakening to truth, and blocks the path to freedom. Lust and ill-will based on ignorance, not only hamper mental growth, but act as the root cause of strife and dissension between man and man and nation and nation. Besides, Zen practitioner should always pay close attention to your breathing because there is surely a so-called reciprocal character of mind and breathing (Prana), which means that a certain type of mind or mental activity is invariably accompanied by a breathing of corresponding character, whether transcendental or mundane. For instance, a particular mood, feeling, or thought is always accompanied, manifested, or reflected by a breathing of corresponding character and rhythm. Thus anger produces not merely an inflamed thought-feeling, but also a harsh and accentuated "roughness" of breathing. On the other hand, when there is a calm concentration on an intellectual problem, the thought and the breathing exhibit a like calmness.

The Third Envoy of Stupidity That Cause Afflictions Is Ignorance: According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In other words, Avidya is noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampada), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In Madhyamaka, "Avidya" refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. "Avidya" is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world, which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the

nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its appearances. In the Yogachara’s view, “avidya” means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it. In Zen, ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not develop our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the tru nature of things. In short, delusion or ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not develop our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the tru nature of things. According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance os only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Ignorance of the way of escape from sufferings, one of the three affluences that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. Sometimes ignorance means “Maya” or “Illusion.” It means complete darkness without illumination. The ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance is one of the three fires which must be allowed to die out before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self. Due to ignorance, people do not see things as they really are, and cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They become blind under the delusion of self, clinging to things which are impermanent, changeable, and perishable. Once anger arises, one has nothing but “ignorance.”

The Fourth Envoy of Stupidity That Causes Afflictions Is Arrogance: Arrogance or Elevated Pride means arrogance or haughtiness. Arrogance and pride, a kind of klesa, one of the five higher bonds of desire. Pride is asserting superiority over inferiors and equality with equals. Looking down on others. Haughty people are self-aggrandized and boasting. They tend to bully their superiors and trample the inferior. They refuse to learn any more or listen to advice

or explanations; and as a result commit regrettable errors. Pride is also the inflated opinion of ourselves and can manifest in relation to some good or bad object, one of the most considerable demonic obstructions on the practitioners' path of cultivation. When we look down from a high mountain, everyone below seems to have shrunk in size. When we hold ourselves to be superior to others, and have an inflated opinion of ourselves, we take on a superior aspect. It is extremely difficult to develop any good qualities at all when one has pride, for no matter how much the teacher may teach that person, it will do no good. Haughtiness means false arrogance, thinking oneself correct in spite of one's wrong conduct, thinking oneself is good in spite of one's very bad in reality. Buddhist practitioners should always remember that conceit and ingratitude belong to the eighth army of Mara. Conceit arises when practitioners begin to experience joy, rapture, delight, and other interesting things in practice. At this point they may wonder whether their teacher has actually attained this wondrous stage yet, whether other practitioners are practicing as hard as they are, and so forth. Conceit most often happens at the stage of insight when practitioners perceive the momentary arising and passing away of phenomena. It is a wonderful experience of being perfectly present, seeing how objects arise and pass away at the very moment when mindfulness alights on them. At this particular stage, a series of defilements can arise. They are specifically known as the "vipassana kilesas," defilements of insight. Since these defilements can become a harmful obstacle, it is important for practitioners to understand them clearly. The scriptures tell us that mana or conceit has the characteristic of bubbly energy, of a great zeal and enthusiasm arising in the mind. One overflows with energy and is filled with self-centered, self-glorifying thoughts like, "I'm so great, no one can compare with me." A prominent aspect of conceit is "stiffness and rigidity." One's mind feels stiff and bloated, like a python that has just swallowed some other creature. This aspect of mana is also reflected as tension in the body and posture. Its victims get big-headed and stiff-necked, and thus may find it difficult to bow respectfully to others. Conceit is really a fearsome mental state. It destroys gratitude, making it difficult to acknowledge that one owes any kind of debt to another person. Forgetting the good deeds others have done for us in the past, one belittles them and denigrates their

virtues. Not only that, but one also actively conceals the virtues of others so that no one will hold them in esteem. All of us have had benefactors in our lives, especially in childhood and younger days. Our parents, for example, gave us love, education and necessities of life at a time when we were helpless. Our teachers gave us knowledge. Friends helped us when we got into trouble. Remembering our debts to those who have helped us, we feel humble and grateful, and we hope for a chance to help them in turn. The Buddha taught: there are two types of rare and precious people in the world. The first type is a benefactor, one who is benevolent and kind, who helps another person for noble reasons, sparing no effort to help beings liberate themselves from the sufferings of samsara. The second type is the one who is grateful, who appreciates the good that has been done for him or her, and who tries to repay it when the time is ripe.”

The Fifth Envoy of Stupidity That Cause Afflictions Is Doubt: Doubt signifies spiritual doubt, from a Buddhist perspective the inability to place confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the training; doubt if there really is a so called “you reap what you sow”, and so on. Doubt is one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Doubt, as wavering uncertainty, a hindrance and fetter to be removed, one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Skepticism, one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Vichikiccha is a Pali term, a combination of “vi”, means without; and “cikiccha” means medicine. One who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. In fact, one who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. As long as man is subject to this mental itch, this sitting on the fence, he will continue to take a skeptical view of things which is most detrimental to mental ability to decide anything definitely; it also includes doubt with regard to the possibility of attaining the jhanas.

In order to subdue the five envoys of stupidity (Panca-klesa (skt), the Buddha taught his disciples on the five higher wholesome deeds (Panca-tiksna-dula (skt): no greed, no hatred (hate), no stupidity, nor pride nor arrogance, and no doubt.

Chapter Thirteen

Six Great Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

I. An Overview of Fundamental Afflictions:

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Sanskrit term "Agantuklesa" means guest-dust. Let's explain in details for "Guest-dust". According to Buddhism, affliction means guest or the foreign atom, or intruding element, which enters the mind and causes distress and delusion. Also according to Buddhism, affliction means worldly dust for the mind is naturally pure or innocent till the evil element enters. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. "Klesa" literally means "pain," "external dust," "affliction," or "something tormenting" and is translated as "affliction." As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust for agantuklesa. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such

troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration. According to Buddhism, mulaklesa means fundamental illusions or passions, or afflictions, including: Panca-klesa or Panca-klesa-dula means five dull, unintelligent, or stupid vices or temptations or five envoys of stupidity caused by the illusion of the body or self: greed, anger, stupidity, arrogance, and doubt. It should be reminded that the suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. Panca-tiksna-dula means the five higher wholesome deeds: no greed, no hatred (hate), no stupidity, nor pride nor arrogance, and no doubt.

II. A Summary of Six Great Afflictions in Buddhist Teachings:

Afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, a Buddhist adherent vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and

wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. The suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. According to most Buddhist Schools, there are six great klesas, passions or distressers. According to Buddhism, the suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. According to the Mahayana One Hundred Dharmas in the Studies of the Vijnaptimatra, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, a Buddhist adherent vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. There are six great afflictions of mental functions (six great klesa, passion or distressers). **First**, afflictions caused by desire or desire to have. **Second**, afflictions caused by resentment or anger. **Third**, afflictions caused by stupidity or ignorance. **Fourth**, afflictions caused by pride or self-conceit. **Fifth**, afflictions caused by doubt. **Sixth**, afflictions caused by False views.

III. Six Sense-Organs: Six Bandits of Afflictions:

When talking about afflictions, according to Buddhism, there are six cauras or robbers or six bandits or bandits of the six sense-organs, such as the six senses, the six sense organs are the match-makers, or medial agents of the six robbers. The six robbers are also likened to the six pleasures of the six sense organs. In Buddhist teachings, Six sense-organs or six bases of mental activities include: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Practitioners should always remember that food for six bases of mental activities: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Food for the eyes is the sleep; for the ears is the sound; for the nose is the smell; for the tongue is the taste; for the body is the smooth touch; and for the mind is the dharma. Practitioners should always remember that the six senses or six organs of sense are likened to six wild creatures in confinement and always struggling to escape. Only when they are domesticated will they be happy. So is it with the six senses and the taming power of Buddha-truth. So is it with the six senses and the taming power of Buddha-truth. One of the most important purposes of practitioners is to keep the six sense organs pure. The six organs and their purification in order to develop their unlimited power and interchange (in the case of Buddha). This full development enables the eye to see everything in a great chiliocosm from its highest heaven down to its lowest hells and all the beings past, present, and future with all the karma of each. According to Bikkhu Piyananda in *The Gems Of Buddhism Wisdom*, you must always be aware of the sense organs such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and body and the contact they are having with the outside world. You must be aware of the feelings that are arising as a result of this contact: eye is now in contact with forms (rupa), ear is now in contact with sound, nose is now in contact with smell, tongue is now in contact with taste, body is now in contact with touching, and mind is now in contact with all things (dharma). Practitioners should always remember that the six faculties are the main reasons that cause human beings to fall into hells, to be reborn in the realm of the hungry ghosts, or animals, asuras, devas, or human beings, etc. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. They are the main agents that cause us to create unwholesome karma, and eventually we will fall into evil ways because of them. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because

they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, the Buddha advised his disciples thus: “You should cultivate until you are unaware of heaven above, people in between, and earth below.” If we cultivate until the time heaven, earth, people, east, west, south, north, etc., can no longer impact our six faculties, then at that point we are liberated from all hindrances. In short, the only way to prevent them is by not acting with them: the eye avoiding beauty, the ear avoiding melodious sound, the nose avoiding fragrant scent, the tongue avoiding tasty flavour, the body avoiding seductions, and the mind should always control thoughts. According to the Samannaphala Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, the Buddha taught about “a guardian of the sense-door.” How does a monk become a guardian of the sense-door? Here a monk, on seeing a visible object with the eye, does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics. Because greed and sorrow, evil unskilled states, would overwhelm him if he dwelt leaving this eye-faculty unguarded, so he practises guarding it, he protects the eye-faculty, develops restraint of the eye-faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear...; on smelling an odour with the nose...; on tasting a flavour with the tongue...; on feeling an object with the body...; on thinking a thought with the mind, he does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics, he develops restraint of the mind-faculty. He experiences within himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Ariyan guarding of the faculties.

Chapter Fourteen

Lesser Functions of Defilement

In Buddhism, delusion of ignorance or lesser functions of defilement that arises from unenlightenment. These are illusions and temptations that arise from failure philosophically to understand things in their reality. Illusion arising from primal ignorance which covers and hinders the truth. In the Differentiated Teaching, this illusion is overcome by the Bodhisattva from the first stage; in the Perfect Teaching, it is overcome by the Bodhisattva in the first resting-place. It should be reminded that in Buddhist teachings, fundamental Consciousness is the functioning mind and the functioning mind is its qualities or conditions. The qualities of the functioning mind are the qualities or conditions of the functioning mind or the fundamental consciousness, such as lust, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, and lying, and so on. The qualities of the functioning mind is also called the conditions (mental actions) of the functioning mind are also called the mental factors, also called psychic factors or jhana factors, that help raise the practitioner from lower to higher levels of mental purity. There are five jhana factors: initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness of mind. Mental conditions or emotions; the attributes of the mind, especially the moral qualities, emotions, love, hate, etc. Mental factor intention includes all of our desires develop because of the thoughts of our mental factor intention. When we see an attractive object, we develop a wish to obtain that object. In contrary, when we see an unattractive object, we develop a wish not to obtain that object; sometimes we hate the object. According to the Kosa Sastra, there are ten lesser evils or illusions or temptations (minor functions of defilement). ***Ten Lesser Functions of Defilement or Ten Minor Moral Defects Arising From Unenlightenment:*** anger, hidden sin, stinginess, envy, vexation, ill-will, hate, adulation, deceit, and pride. They are those of ordinary compassionate character. They always accompany evil mind and also the mental mind which hinders the Noble Path, and

they are to be eliminated gradually by the way of self-culture, not abruptly by the way of insight.

Chapter Fifteen

Secondary Afflictions In Buddhist Teachings

I. An Overview of Secondary Afflictions in Buddhist Teachings:

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Sanskrit term "Agantu-klesa" means guest-dust. Let's explain in details for "Guest-dust". According to Buddhism, affliction means guest or the foreign atom, or intruding element, which enters the mind and causes distress and delusion. Also according to Buddhism, affliction means worldly dust for the mind is naturally pure or innocent till the evil element enters. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. "Klesa" literally means "pain," "external dust," "affliction," or "something tormenting" and is translated as "affliction." As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust

for agantuklesa. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration. In Buddhist teachings, sequent or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. The twenty-four consequent klesas arising out of the six senses. The consequent or secondary afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions. They include: Klesas arising from false reasoning. Klesa that which is natural to all. Ordinary passions or temptations. Firece or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the Law of Cause and Effect.

II. A Summary of Twenty Secondary Afflictions in the Teachings of the Vijnaptimatra:

The Idealistic School of Vasubandhu is a reformed Yogacara system and its fundamental text is Vasubandhu’s Vijnaptimatratrimika, a versified text on the theory of mere ideation in thirty stanzas, of which the first twenty-four are devoted to the special character (svalaksana) of all dharmas, the next two to the nature (svabhava) of all dharmas, and the last four to the stages of the noble

personages. Sequent, or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. Afflictions caused by passions, desires, hate, stupidity, and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. According to Vasubandhu's Trimsika, in the Vijnaptimatratrimika, the fifth stanza emphasized on the **twenty secondary afflictions**: impatience or anger (krodha (skt), hatred or resentment (upanada (skt), hypocrisy or concealment (mraksha (skt), stinging talk or worry (pradasa (skt), envy or jealousy (irshya (skt), stinginess (matsarya (skt), deceit or manipulation (maya (skt), duplicity or undully flattering (sathya (skt), arrogance or conceitedness (mada and mana (skt), hurting others or destructive (vihimsa (skt), shamelessness, self-shameless, or have no shame of self (ahri (skt), recklessness, or have no shame around other people (atrapa (skt), torpidity or drowsiness (styanam (skt), fluctuations, or instability of mind and body (uddhava (skt), unbelief or faithlessness (asraddha (skt), indolence or laziness (kausidya (skt), thoughtlessness, uninhibitedness, or lack of self-mastery (pramada (skt), senselessness (mushitasmritita (skt), uncollected state or unsteadiness (vikshepa (skt), inaccuracy of knowledge, or do not understand in a proper manner (asamprajanya (skt).

III.A Summary of Twenty-Four Secondary Afflictions in the Teachings of the Vijnaptimatratratrimika:

The Idealistic School of Vasubandhu is a reformed Yogacara system and its fundamental text is Vasubandhu's Vijnaptimatratratrimika, a versified text on the theory of mere ideation in thirty stanzas, of which the first twenty-four are devoted to the special character (svalaksana) of all dharmas, the next two to the nature (svabhava) of all dharmas, and the last four to the stages of the noble personages. Sequent, or associated klesa-trials, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. Afflictions caused by passions, desires, hate, stupidity, and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. According to Vasubandhu's Trimsika, in the Vijnaptimatratratrimika,

Trimsika, the fifth stanza emphasized on the twenty-four secondary afflictions: impatience or anger (krodha (skt), hatred or resentment (upanada (skt), hypocrisy or concealment (mraksha (skt), stinging talk or worry (pradasa (skt), envy or jealousy (irshya (skt), stinginess (matsarya (skt), deceit or manipulation (maya (skt), duplicity or undully flattering (sathya (skt), arrogance or conceitedness (mada and mana (skt), hurting others or destructive (vihimsa (skt), shamelessness, self-shameless, or have no shame of self (ahri (skt), recklessness, or have no shame around other people (atrapa (skt), torpidity or drowsiness (styanam (skt), fluctuations, or instability of mind and body (uddhava (skt), unbelief or faithlessness (asraddha (skt), indolence or laziness (kausidya (skt), thoughtlessness, uninhibitedness, or lack of self-mastery (pramada (skt), senselessness (mushitasmritita (skt), uncollected state or unsteadiness (vikshepa (skt), inaccuracy of knowledge, or do not understand in a proper manner (asamprajanya (skt), evil doing (kaukritya (skt), drowsiness (middha (skt), investigation (vitarka (skt), and reflection (vicara (skt).

Chapter Sixteen

Three Kinds of Afflictions in General Marks

General marks mean marks in common, or marks in totality (generality, the whole), as contrasted with individuality, or component parts. General marks mean shared characteristics or marks that are common to all things conditioned, such as impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and egolessness, etc. Affliction in general marks (Samanyalakshana-klesa), as contrast with afflictions of particular marks (Svalaksana-klesa (skt)). Affliction in general marks are delusions arising from observing things as a whole, or apart from their relationships. In Buddhist teachings, afflictions in general marks include Ignorance, Doubt, and Wrong Views. ***The First Robber That Cause Afflictions Is Ignorance:*** According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In other words, Avidya is noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampada), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In Madhyamaka, “Avidya” refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. “Avidya” is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world, which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its appearances. In the

Yogachara's view, "avidya" means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it. In Zen, ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not develop our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the true nature of things. In short, delusion or ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not develop our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the true nature of things. According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance is only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Ignorance of the way of escape from sufferings, one of the three affluences that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. Sometimes ignorance means "Maya" or "Illusion." It means complete darkness without illumination. The ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance is one of the three fires which must be allowed to die out before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self. Due to ignorance, people do not see things as they really are, and cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They become blind under the delusion of self, clinging to things which are impermanent, changeable, and perishable. Once anger arises, one has nothing but "ignorance."

In order to eliminate "ignorance," you should meditate on causality. All of our psychological problems are rooted in ignorance, in delusion. Ignorance is the crowning corruption. Our greeds, hates, conceits and a host of other defilements go hand in hand with our ignorance. The solutions are to be found in the problems themselves and hence we should not run away from our problems. Analyze and scrutinize the problems, and you will see that they are human problems, so do not attribute them to non-humans. Our real problems can be solved only by giving up illusions and false concepts and bringing our lives into harmony with reality and this can be done only through meditation. Just as the Buddha described in His discourses how He would exclaim, "Mara! I see you." Zen practitioners should remember that the purpose of disciplined meditation practice is to

eliminate ignorance, to open the essential nature of mind, and to stabilize awareness. Through meditation, we concentrate on things with an undistracted awareness. We are not thinking about anything, not analyzing, not getting lost in flux of things, but just seeing the nature of what is happening in the mind. Through practices of meditation, our mind becomes clearer and clearer; it is to say 'ignorance' is gradually eliminated through the course of meditation. If you think that your mind can only be opened by a certain master out there, you are never cultivating in accordance with Buddhism at all. If you think someone out there can eliminate ignorance for you, you are not a devout Buddhist.

The Second Robber That Cause Afflictions Is Doubt: Doubt signifies spiritual doubt, from a Buddhist perspective the inability to place confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the training; doubt if there really is a so called "you reap what you sow", and so on. Doubt is one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Doubt, as wavering uncertainty, a hindrance and fetter to be removed, one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Skepticism, one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Vichikiccha is a Pali term, a combination of "vi", means without; and "cikiccha" means medicine. One who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. In fact, one who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. As long as man is subject to this mental itch, this sitting on the fence, he will continue to take a skeptical view of things which is most detrimental to mental ability to decide anything definitely; it also includes doubt with regard to the possibility of attaining the jhanas.

According to Buddhism, there are three doubts: Doubt of self, doubt of teacher, and doubt of dharma. According to Venerable Thích Hải Quang in the Letters to Buddhist Followers, there are four types of doubts: *First, Doubts of the Body:* Doubting that whether in the past one had a body or not? Doubting that whether at the present this body really exists or not? Doubting that whether in the future one will have another body or not (one will be reincarnated or not)? Doubting that in

the past and in the future, whether one will have a male's or female's body? *Second, Doubts of Life:* Doubting that whether there is life and body or there is body but no life? Doubting that life and body are permanent or impermanent? Doubting about who created this life and body, such as: Was it created by Isvaradeva (God of Free-Will)? Was it created through time or evolution? Was it naturally created? Was it created by the nature of life? Was it created from the soil? Doubting that if the body was not formed from the soil, then how come once it deteriorates it returns to the soil? Doubting that the body was created by dharma or not dharma. Doubting that this body was created by karma or not karma. Doubting that this body was created by afflictions. Doubting that whether this body was created by parents or not. *Third, Doubts of Self:* Doubting where does the Self come from and where will it go? Doubting if there is a Self, then does that Self have form or doesn't have form? Doubting if there is Self, then does that Self have characteristics or doesn't it have characteristics? Doubting whether the Self exists within the body or outside the body? Doubting whether the Self exists within the mind or within the eyes? Doubting about what type of the Self in the past (was it an animal, a human, and how did it behave, etc)? Doubting about what will be the type of the Self in the future? *Fourth, Doubts about Transgressions:* Doubting if killing living things (animals) is considered transgressions or not? Doubting if drinking alcohol or other substances is considered a transgression or not? Doubting one's transgressions are created by the individual or created by someone else? Doubting if transgressions are created will one reap the retribution or will the Self reap those retributions?

According to Buddhism, there are five doubts that lurk in the shadows of the human mind and tend to discourage faith. First, doubt in the Buddha's wisdom. Second, doubt in the Buddha's Teachings. Third, doubt in the person who explains the Buddha's teachings. Fourth, doubt as to whether the ways and methods suggested for following the Noble Path are reliable. Fifth, there are some people, may doubt in the sincerity of others who understand and follow the Buddha's teachings. There are five more kinds of doubt: Doubts that cause the practitioner to be filled with anger and resistance, but also cause his or her mind become deluded. There are five kinds of doubt that lead to a deluded mind: The first doubt is regarding the Buddha, the great master who

showed the path to enlightenment. The second doubt is regarding the Dharma, the path that leads to liberation. The third doubt is regarding the Sangha, the noble ones who have uprooted some or all of the afflictions. The fourth is the doubt of oneself, of one's own morality and method of practice. The last is the doubt of other people, including one's master and other fellow practitioners.

As mentioned above, doubt signifies spiritual doubt, from a Buddhist perspective the inability to place confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the training. Bernard Glassman and Rick Fields wrote in 'Instructions to the Cook': "Doubt is a state of openness and unknowing. It's a willingness to not be in charge, to not know what is going to happen next. The state of doubt allows us to explore things in an open and fresh way. Like water, doubt is fluid. It had no fixed position. If you pour water into a round container, it becomes round, and if you pour water into a square container, it becomes square. In the same way, doubt or unknowing flows in accordance with the situation. It's the state of surrender, of being open to what is. Only when we raise sufficient doubt and questioning can we go further. Our problem with doubt is that we take it to be a negative thing. We think that because we don't understand or because we are not sure, there is something wrong. When we get caught by the negative aspects of doubt, we wallow in self-pity. 'How come I can't see it?' we say. But this doubt can be positive. Positive doubt can allow us to see what this life is about. It can help us get rid of our complacency." Doubting is natural. Everyone starts with doubts. We can learn a great deal from them. What is important is that we do not identify with our doubts. That is, do not get caught up in them, letting our mind spin in endless circles. Instead, watch the whole process of doubting, of wondering. See who it is that doubts. See how doubts come and go. Then we will no longer be victimized by our doubts. We will step outside of them, and our mind will be quiet. We can see how all things come and go. Let go of our doubts and simply watch. This is how to end doubting.

The Third Robber That Cause Afflictions Is Wrong View: Improper views or Wrong views in Buddhism means not recognizing the doctrine of normal karma. Perverted (wrong) views or opinions, not consistent with the dharma, one of the five heterodox opinions and ten evils. In fact, there is no specific definition for the term "wrong views"

(micchaditthi) in Buddhism. During the Buddha's time, the Buddha confirmed his disciples that even the validity of the Buddha's own statements could be questioned." The Buddha claimed no authority for his doctrine except his own experience. Perverted (wrong) views or opinions arises from a misconception of the real characteristic of existence. There were at least sixty-two heretical views (views of the externalist or non-Buddhist views) in the Buddha's time. Buddhism emphasizes on theory of causation. Understanding the theory of causation means to solve most of the question of the causes of sufferings and afflictions. Not understanding or refuse of understanding of the theory of causation means a kind of wrong view in Buddhism. According to the Buddha, sentient beings suffer from sufferings and afflictions because of desires, aversions, and delusion, and the causes of these harmful actions are not only from ignorance, but also from wrong views. Wrong views according to Hinayana Buddhism: "Wrong view is the acausality view, which states that there is no cause or condition for the defilement and purification of beings, that beings are defiled and purified by chance, or necessity. The inefficacy of action view, which claims that deeds have no efficacy in producing results and thus invalidates moral distinctions. Annihilationism, which denies the survival of the personality in any form after death, thus negating the moral significance of deed. Also according to the Hinayana Buddhism, there are another ten kinds of wrong views: There is no such virtue and generosity. This means that there is no good effect in giving alms: There is no such virtue as liberal alms-giving: There is no such virtue as offering gifts to guests. This means there is no effect in such charitable actions. There is neither fruit, nor result of good or evil deeds. There is no such belief as "this world." There is no such belief as "a world beyond," i.e. those born here do not accept a past existence, and those living here do not accept future life. There is no "mother." There is no father, i.e. there is no effect in anything done to them. There are no beings that died and are reborn. There are no righteous and well-disciplined recluses and Brahmins who, having realized by their own super-intellect this world and the world beyond, make known the same (Buddhas and Arahants). According to Bhikkhu Bodhi in *Abhidhamma*, there are three kinds of wrong views: Nihilism (natthika-ditthi), which denies the survival of the personality in any

form after death, thus negating the moral significance of deeds. The causality view (ahetuka-ditthi), which states that there is no cause or condition for the defilement and purification of beings, that beings are defiled and purified by chance, fate, or necessity. The inefficacy of action view (akiriya-ditthi), which claims that deeds have no efficacy in producing results and thus invalidates moral distinctions. In Buddhism, perverted views also means holding to the real existence of material things or viewing the seeming as real and the ego as real, or not recognizing the doctrine of causality and karma. Perverted (wrong) views or opinions, not consistent with the dharma, one of the five heterodox opinions and ten evils. “Wrong views” are attitudes and doctrines that are antithetical to the teachings and practices of Buddhism. In Indian Buddhism, seven false views are commonly enumerated: 1) belief in a truly existent self (atman); 2) rejection of the working of cause and effect (karma); 3) eternalism or belief that there is a soul that exists after death; 4) annihilationism or belief that the soul perishes after death; 5) adherence to false ethics; 6) perceiving negative actions as good; and 7) doubt regarding the central tenets of Buddhism. There were at least sixty-two heretical views (views of the externalist or non-Buddhist views) in the Buddha’s time. Practitioners should always remember that only Right understanding alone can help remove these inverted wrong views and helps us to cognize the real nature that underlies all appearance. It is only when we come out of this cloud of illusions and perversions that we shine with true wisdom like the full moon that emerges brilliant from behind a black cloud.

Through cultivation, we can see that holding wrong views involves vigorously and hostilely denying the existence of such things as past and future lives, the possibility of attaining Nirvana. Wrong views mean the false belief that the skandhas, or constituents of personality, contain an immortal soul. False view also means seeing wrongly. Wrong views also means denying a substantial reality to the phenomenal universe and holding to the view of total annihilation, or the view that death ends life, or world-extinction and the end of causation, in contrast with the view that body and soul are eternal, both views being heterodox. Its characteristic is unwise or unjustified interpretation or belief. Its function is to preassume. It is manifested as a wrong interpretation or belief. Its proximate cause is unwillingness to

see the noble ones. Holding wrong views in Buddhism involves vigorously and hostilely denying the existence of such things as past and future lives, the possibility of attaining nirvana, the existence of the Buddhas, Dharma and Sangha. Doubt about these subjects does not constitute wrong views; however, if we neglect to resolve our doubts by asking questions and investigating these issues, we could later generate wrong views by believing in deceptive doctrines. As a matter of fact, unless Buddhist practitioners see the real nature of wrong views, if not, we can never let them go. Practitioners should always listen to the Buddha's teachings on wrong views to prevent us from sufferings and afflictions on our path of cultivation. However, we never lose wrong views by saying it has to go, only cultivation and practicing can help us see that we the real nature of wrong views. Through cultivation, we will have the opportunity to destroy the veil of ignorance to see that there have been many things that we used to stubbornly held in the past are wrong. For wrong views could not help us nothing, but on the contrary, they caused us to derail farther and farther from the Buddha's teachings. Buddhist cultivators should always remember that unless we, Buddhist practitioners, see the real nature of wrong views, if not, we can never let them go. In short, we, Buddhist practitioners should try to see the real nature of all wrong views. To be able to do this also means we push away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. This is one of the most wonderful methods of letting go for practitioners.

Chapter Seventeen

Three Kinds of Afflictions in Particular Marks

Individuality or particular, or personal as contrast with general or common. Individuality, or individual marks which distinguish one class of beings from another; for instance, matter has its own characteristics as distinguished from mind, and mind from matter, etc. In Buddhist teachings, afflictions of particular marks (Svalaksana-klesa (skt) include Greed, Anger, and Arrogance. Calling these Afflictions robbers because they usually plunder the virtues and murder the wisdom-life of cultivators. Three robbers that we are going to mention, both internal and external include: greed, anger, and arrogance... always take turns watching practitioners constantly and without interruption, waiting for the opportunity. These robbers are always waiting to infiltrate, to harm and to destroy completely our path of cultivation. If the Buddhist practitioner has a delusive thought, they pounce on him or steer him toward things contrary to the Way. The practitioner's entire lifetime of cultivation is then over, for all practical purposes. The worldly way is letting the doors of the six sense organs widely opened and outgoing exuberant. The way of the devoted Buddhist's life is to close the doors of the six sense organs, restrained and controlled. The ancient have said: "If inside the door there are mean-spirited people, mean-spirited people will arrive at the door; if inside the door there are virtuous, superior people, noble superior people will arrive at the door." As an example, when thieves try to enter a house through the side door, if the owner calmly scolds them in a loud voice, they will naturally be frightened and leave. If on the other hand, he is terrified and panic-stricken, and begs them to desist, he will unwittingly be inviting them into his house. Generally speaking, when the doors are wide opened, robbers are encouraged to freely enter, while closed doors can delay or slow down robbers' infiltration. According to Buddhist teachings, ten robbers of afflictions of greed, anger, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and unwholesome thoughts... are unwholesome or negative Karmas. Unwholesome or evil karmas of greed, hatred and ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong

views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying... are all created by body, mouth and speech. Unwholesome or harmful actions, or conduct in thought, word, or deed (by the body, speech, and mind) to self and others which leads to evil recompense (negative path, bad deeds, or black path). In other words, evil actions are those that result in suffering and whose consequences are perceived as painful for beings who experience them. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, there are four causes of unwholesome or evil actions: unwholesome action springs from attachment, ill-will, ignorance, and fear. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, the Buddha taught: "If the Ariyan disciple does not act out of attachment, ill-will, folly or fear, he will not do evil from any one of the four above mentioned causes." From the earliest period, Buddhist thought has argued that the reasons these robbers mentioned above can infiltrate sentient beings are the result of ignorance (avidya), which cause sentient beings to open widely doors of their six sense-organs for these robbers come and go freely. It means these robbers can no longer come and go freely once ignorance is overcome.

The First Robber That Causes Afflictions Is Craving: Craving (greed, affection, desire) means desire for and love of the things of this worldly life. Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Only if we have no desire for ourselves; if we are working and earning money in order to help other people; if we make cultivation our business and our business is cultivation only, then how clear and happy our life will be! However, most people don't understand this. They are only interested in making a lot of money or becoming successful in worldly business. Remember, this is only a small 'I'. Devout Buddhists should make a lot of money to help all people, then even we create our worldly business, it is a good business. It is a selfish desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various

emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings' greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings' lives, especially, those of human beings' are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. Cultivation helps us balance 'Lust' by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from lust. Furthermore, through cultivation, we can see the string of craving and attachment confines us to samsara's prison. In other words, craving and attachment are not only roots that prevent us from being sufficiently moved to renounce samsara, but they are also two of the main things that bind us to samsara. In order to overcome craving and attachment, we should contemplate on the impurity of the body. When we are attached to someone, for example, consider how that person is just a sack full of six kinds of filthy substances. Then our attachment and craving will diminish. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when we get rid of greed and desires or when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of

liberation. The Buddha taught: “Craving and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness.” Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. As a matter of fact, once, we, Buddhist practitioners get rid of greed and desire also means that we have already pushed away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. In conclusion for this chapter, on the path of cultivation, practitioners should always remember the Buddha's teaching in the Sutra in Forty Two Chapters taught: “Though a person with a state of mind filled with desires dwells in heaven, still that is not enough for him; though a person who has ended desire dwells on the ground, still he is happy.” We are living in a material world where we must encounter all kinds of objects such as sights, sounds, tastes, sensations, thoughts and ideas, etc. Desire arises from contact with these pleasing objects. Buddhists should always remember that “Desire” not only obscures our mind, but it is also a main cause of grasping which causes sufferings and afflictions, forces us to continue to wander in the samsara.

At this very moment in daily life, content with few desires and satisfy with what we have is one of the most efficient way to subdue demonic obstruction of greed and desire. Content with few desires. “Thiểu Dục” means having few desires; “tri túc” means being content. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to practice the Way. “Knowing how to feel satisfied and being content with material conditions” is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of body and mind and accomplish our supreme goal of cultivation. Being content with few desires means having few desires. Here “desires” include not only the desire for money and material things but also the wish for status and fame. It also indicates seeking the love and service of others. In Buddhism, a person who has attained the mental stage of deep faith has

very few desires and is indifferent to them. We must note carefully that though such a person is indifferent to worldly desires, he is very eager for the truth, that is, he has a great desire for the truth. To be indifferent to the truth is to be slothful in life. To be content with few desires also means to be satisfied with little material gain, that is, not to feel discontented with one's lot and to be free from worldly cares. Nevertheless, this does not mean to be unconcerned with self-improvement but to do one's best in one's work without discontent. Such a person will never be ignored by those around him. But even if people around him ignored him, he would feel quite happy because he lives like a king from a spiritual point of view. We must have few desires in two areas: the desires for food and sex. Food and sex support ignorance in perpetrating all sort of evil. Thus, Confucius taught: "Food and sex are part of human nature." That is to say we are born with the craving for food and sex. Why is that we have not been able to demolish our ignorance, eliminate our afflictions, and reveal our wisdom? Because we always crave for food and sex. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that food gives rise to sexual desire, and sexual desire gives rise to ignorance. Once the desire for food arises, the desire for sex arises as well. Men are attracted to beautiful women, and women are charmed by handsome men. People become infatuated and obsessed and cannot see through their desires. The nourishment from the food we eat is transformed into reproductive essence; and once that essence is full, sexual desire arises. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that the less tasty the food is, the better. Food should not be regarded as too important. Sincere Buddhists should practice moderation and eat only enough to sustain ourselves. We should neither eat very rich food, nor eat spoiled food, for either one could ruin our health. To be satisfied with what we have at this very moment means satisfaction or contentment is a characteristic of the really happy individual. The ordinary people seem to think that it is difficult to cultivate and develop contentment. However, with courage and determination to control one's evil inclination, as well as to understand the consequences of these evil thoughts, one can keep the mind from being soiled and experience happiness through contentment. For those who have wisdom, know how to apply themselves and are able to endure life, and are able to think cleverly, will find peace in his fate

under whatever circumstances. With the conditions of wealth, one satisfies and is at peace with being wealthy; with the conditions of poverty, one satisfies and is at peace with being impoverished. In fact, in our lifetime, we engage in all kinds of activities, think and calculate every imaginable method without abandoning any plot, so long as it is beneficial, but whether or not our actions affect others we never care. We have been doing all these for what? For a better life, clothes, house, and for storing more money. If we think carefully, we will see that the sun rises, reaches its stand still, and then it will set and disappears in the evening; a full moon will soon become half, quarter, then lose its brightness; mountains become deep canyons; oceans become hills of berries, etc. The way of life has always been rise and fall, success and failure, victory and defeat, lost and found, together and apart, life and death, etc., goes on constantly and there is absolutely nothing that remain unchanged and eternal. People with wisdom should always satisfy with their current circumstances. The Buddha extols simple living as being more conducive to the development of one's mind. Thus, the Buddha always preaches the self-contentment for the benefit of the Bhikkhus as follow: The robes or clothes they receive, whether coarse or fine; alms or food they receive, whether unpalatable or delicious; the abodes or houses they receive, whether simple or luxurious. Those who satisfy with these three conditions can reduce the desires, and at the same time develop the habits and values of simple living.

Devout Buddhists should always remember that to Buddhism, sensual pleasure are something fleeting, something that comes and goes. Can something be really called "Happiness" when it is here one moment and gone the next? Is it really so enjoyable to go around hunting for something so ephemeral, which is changing all the time? Look at the amount of trouble we have to go through to get all those sensual pleasures which we think will bring us happiness. Some people have such strong desire for pleasure that they will break the law, commit brutal crimes and cause others to suffer just so they can experience these pleasures. They may not understand how much suffering they themselves will have to endure in the future as a consequence of the unwholesome acts they have committed. Even ordinary people may become aware that a disproportionate amount of

suffering is necessary to bring together a few moments of happiness so much that it really is not worth it. Devout Buddhists should always remember that suffering will always follow craving. All the problems in this world are rooted in the desire for pleasure. It is on account of the need for pleasure that quarrels occur within the family that neighbors do not get along well, that states have conflict and nations go to war. It is also on account of sense-based pleasures that sufferings, afflictions, and all kinds of problems plague our world, that people have gone beyond their humanness into great cruelty and inhumanity.

According to the first patriarch Bodhidharma, the 28th Patriarch from India and also the 1st Patriarch in China, “Not to seek after anything” is one of the four disciplinary processes. By ‘not seeking after anything’ is meant this: “Men of the world, in eternal confusion, are attached everywhere to one thing or another, which is called seeking. The wise, however, understand the truth and are not like the vulgar. Their minds abide serenely in the uncreated while the body turns about in accordance with the laws of causation. All things are empty and there is nothing desirable and to be sought after. Wherever there is nothing merit of brightness there follows the demerit of darkness. The triple world there one stays too long is like a house on fire; all that has a body suffers, and who would ever know what is rest? Because the wise are thoroughly acquainted with this truth, they get neer attached to anything that becomes, their thoughts are quieted, they never seek. Says the sutra: ‘Wherever there is seeking, there you have sufferings; when seeking ceases you are blessed. Thus we know that not to seek is verily the way to the truth. Therefore, one should not seek after anything.’” Bodhidharma taught about three Non-seeking practices or three doors of liberation: Emptiness, signlessness or to get rid of the idea of form, or externals. There are no objects to be perceived by sense-organs, one of the three emancipations, and wishlessness or to get rid of all wishes or desires until no wish of any kind whatsoever remains in the cultivator’s mind, for he no longer needs to strive for anything, one of the three emancipations. Truly speaking, worldly phenomena are dharmas are illusory and dream-like, born and destroyed, destroyed and born. So what is there which is true ever-lasting and worth seeking? Furthermore, worldly phenomena are all relative, in calamities are found blessings, in blessings there is

misfortune. Therefore, Buddhist cultivators should always keep their minds calm and undisturbed in all situations, rising or falling, unfortunate or blessed. For example, when a monk cultivates alone in a deserted hut with few visitors. Although his living conditions are miserable and lonely, his cultivation is diligent. After a while, virtuous people learn of his situation and come to offer and seek for his guidance, his used-to-be hut now become a huge magnificent temple, filled with monks and nuns. By then, his blessings may be great, his cultivation has not only obviously declined, sometimes external events may attract him to causing more bad karma. Therefore, Buddhist cultivators should always keep in mind these three Non-seeking practices. According to the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, “A Sramana asked the Buddha: ‘What are the causes and conditions by which one come to know past lives and also by which one’s understanding enables one to attain the Way?’ The Buddha said: ‘By purifying the mind and guarding the will, your understanding can achieve (attain) the Way. Just as when you polish a mirror, the dust vanishes and brightness remains; so, too, if you cut off and do not seek desires, you can then know past lives.’”

The Second Robber That Causes Afflictions Is Ill Will: Ill-will or anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Ill-will or Hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time.

Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: "Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles." In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha's teachings, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus the Buddha taught: "When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own." A man was rowing his boat upstream on a very misty morning. Suddenly, he saw another boat coming downstream, not trying to avoid him. It was coming straight at him. He shouted, "Be careful!" but the boat came right into him, and his boat was almost sunk. The man became very angry, and began to shout at the other person, to give him a piece of his mind. But when he looked closely, he saw that there was no one in the other boat. Charlotte Joko Beck wrote in 'Nothing Special': "There's a killer shark in everybody. And the killer shark is unexperienced fear. Your way of covering it up is to look so nice and do so much and be so wonderful that nobody can possibly see who you really are, which is someone

who is scared to death. As we uncover these layers of rage, it's important not to act out; we shouldn't inflict our rage on others. In genuine practice, our rage is simply a stage that passes. But for a time, we are more uncomfortable than when we started. That's inevitable; we're becoming more honest, and our false surface style is beginning to dissolve. The process doesn't go on forever, but it certainly can be most uncomfortable while it lasts. Occasionally we may explode, but that's better than evading or covering our reaction." Zen practitioners should always remember that hatred is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger is also one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. As in the case of lust or sense-desire, it is unwise or unsystematic attention that brings about ill-will, which when not checked propagates itself, saps the mind and clouds the vision. It distorts the entire mind and its properties and thus hinders awakening to truth, and blocks the path to freedom. Lust and ill-will based on ignorance, not only hamper mental growth, but act as the root cause of strife and dissension between man and man and nation and nation. Besides, Zen practitioner should always pay close attention to your breathing because there is surely a so-called reciprocal character of mind and breathing (Prana), which means that a certain type of mind or mental activity is invariably accompanied by a breathing of corresponding character, whether transcendental or mundane. For instance, a particular mood, feeling, or thought is always accompanied, manifested, or reflected by a breathing of corresponding character and rhythm. Thus anger produces not merely an inflamed thought-feeling, but also a harsh and accentuated "roughness" of breathing. On the other hand, when there is a calm concentration on an intellectual problem, the thought and the breathing exhibit a like calmness.

The Buddha taught that in order to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry

and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves.

The Third Robber That Causes Afflictions Is Arrogance:

Arrogance or Elevated Pride means arrogance or haughtiness. Arrogance and pride, a kind of klesa, one of the five higher bonds of desire. Pride is asserting superiority over inferiors and equality with equals. Looking down on others. Haughty people are self-aggrandized and boasting. They tend to bully their superiors and trample the inferior. They refuse to learn any more or listen to advice or explanations; and as a result commit regrettable errors. Pride is also the inflated opinion of ourselves and can manifest in relation to some good or bad object, one of the most considerable demonic obstructions on the practitioners' path of cultivation. When we look down from a high mountain, everyone below seems to have shrunken in size. When we hold ourselves to be superior to others, and have an inflated opinion of ourselves, we take on a superior aspect. It is extremely difficult to develop any good qualities at all when one has pride, for no matter how much the teacher may teach that person, it will do no good. Haughtiness means false arrogance, thinking oneself correct in spite of one's wrong conduct, thinking oneself is good in spite of one's very bad in reality.

Buddhist practitioners should always remember that conceit and ingratitude belong to the eighth army of Mara. Conceit arises when practitioners begin to experience joy, rapture, delight, and other interesting things in practice. At this point they may wonder whether their teacher has actually attained this wondrous stage yet, whether other practitioners are practicing as hard as they are, and so forth. Conceit most often happens at the stage of insight when practitioners perceive the momentary arising and passing away of phenomena. It is a wonderful experience of being perfectly present, seeing how objects

arise and pass away at the very moment when mindfulness alights on them. At this particular stage, a series of defilements can arise. They are specifically known as the “vipassana kilesas,” defilements of insight. Since these defilements can become a harmful obstacle, it is important for practitioners to understand them clearly. The scriptures tell us that mana or conceit has the characteristic of bubbly energy, of a great zeal and enthusiasm arising in the mind. One overflows with energy and is filled with self-centered, self-glorifying thoughts like, “I’m so great, no one can compare with me.” A prominent aspect of conceit is “stiffness and rigidity.” One’s mind feels stiff and bloated, like a python that has just swallowed some other creature. This aspect of mana is also reflected as tension in the body and posture. Its victims get big-headed and stiff-necked, and thus may find it difficult to bow respectfully to others. Conceit is really a fearsome mental state. It destroys gratitude, making it difficult to acknowledge that one owes any kind of debt to another person. Forgetting the good deeds others have done for us in the past, one belittles them and denigrates their virtues. Not only that, but one also actively conceals the virtues of others so that no one will hold them in esteem. All of us have had benefactors in our lives, especially in childhood and younger days. Our parents, for example, gave us love, education and necessities of life at a time when we were helpless. Our teachers gave us knowledge. Friends helped us when we got into trouble. Remembering our debts to those who have helped us, we feel humble and grateful, and we hope for a chance to help them in turn. The Buddha taught: there are two types of rare and precious people in the world. The first type is a benefactor, one who is benevolent and kind, who helps another person for noble reasons, sparing no effort to help beings liberate themselves from the sufferings of samsara. The second type is the one who is grateful, who appreciates the good that has been done for him or her, and who tries to repay it when the time is ripe.”

Arrogance is generated by one’s feeling of inferiority, while pride, haughtiness, and arrogance are born from a false sense of superiority. These kinds of pride and arrogance are caused by looking at things from a distorted, self-centered point of view. Those who have truly understood the Buddha’s teachings and been able to obtain a right view of things will never succumb to such warped thinking. *There are four*

different kinds of arrogance: The first kind of pride is the arrogance in progress and the delusion that one has attained Nirvana. This is one of the ten stages or objects in meditation. *The second kind of pride* is the self-superiority, or self-sufficiency, or the pride of self. *The third kind of pride* is the exalting self and depreciating others, or the self-intoxication or pride of self. *The fourth kind of pride* is the ego-conceit or the egotism. *According to the Kosa Sastra, there are seven pretensions or arrogances: First*, asserting superiority over inferiors and equality with equals. *Second*, the pride which among equals regards self as superior and among superiors as equal (superiority over equals and equality with superiors). *Third*, superiority over manifest superiors. *Fourth*, egotism or overweening pride. *Fifth*, vaunting assertion of possessing the truth. self-conceit, or high opinion of one's self, or haughtiness. Haughtiness means vaunting assertion of possessing the truth. Pride (of superior knowledge), haughtiness, self-conceit, high opinion of one's self. A monk who thinks to have attained more than is the fact. A Supremely (lofty/haughty) arrogant monk who has high opinion of one's self (self-conceit/self pride/haughtiness) and refuses to hear the Buddha's Teachings, one of the seven arrogances. When the Buddha preached about the Lotus Sutra, there were 5,000 disciples who, in their Hinayana superiority, thought they had gained all wisdom and refused to hear the Lotus sutra. *Sixth*, vaunting one's inferiority or false humility. The pride of regarding self as little inferior to those who far surpass one. *Seventh*, vaunting lack of virtue for virtue. The Pride in false views or doings. This is one of the eight kinds of pride, mana, arrogance or self-conceit. To hold to heterodox views and not to reverence Triratna. False views also means perverse or evil pride or doing evil for self-advancement, vaunting lack of virtue for virtue.

There are also eight kinds of pride or arrogance: First, arrogance because of strength. *Second*, pride because of clan or name. *Third*, arrogance because of wealth. *Fourth*, arrogance because of independence or high position. *Fifth*, pride because of years of age. *Sixth*, arrogance because of cleverness. *Seventh*, pride because of good or charitable deeds. *Eighth*, arrogance because of good looks. *According to the Mahayana Buddhism, there are other eight kinds of arrogance: First*, though inferior, to think oneself equal to others (in

religion). *Second*, thought superior, to think oneself superior among manifest superiors. *Third*, to think oneself not so much inferior among manifest superiors. *Fourth*, to think one has attained more than is the fact. *Fifth*, self-superiority, or self-sufficiency. *Sixth*, pride in false views or doings. *Seventh*, arrogance. *Eighth*, extreme arrogance. *According to Abhidharma, there are nine forms of pride: First*, that I surpass those who are equal to me. *Second*, I am equal to those who surpass me. The pride of thinking oneself equal to those who surpass us. *Third*, that I am not so bad as others. *Fourth*, that others surpass me. *Fifth*, none are equal to me. *Sixth*, none are inferior to me. *Seventh*, none surpass me. *Eighth*, that are equal to me. *Ninth*, that are worse than me. *According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of conceited action of Great Enlightening Beings: Enlightening Beings who can get rid of these ten kinds of conceited action will attain ten kinds of actions of knowledge. First*, not respecting teachers, parents, mendicants, people on the right Path, people aiming for the right Path, or honorable fields of blessings, is conceited action. *Second*, if there are teachers who have attained to supreme truth, who ride the Great Vehicle of universal enlightenment, who know the way to emancipation, who have attained mental command and expound the great principles of the scriptures, to be haughty toward them or their teachings and to be disrespectful is conceited action. *Third*, when in an audience hearing the sublime Teaching expounded, to be unwilling to laud its excellence and cause others to believe and accept it, is conceited action. *The fourth conceited action: habitually conceiving the illusion of superiority, elevating oneself and looking down on others, not seeing one's own faults, and not knowing one's own shortcoming. The fifth conceited action: habitually imagining that one is better than those who are better than oneself; not praising virtuous people who are praiseworthy; not being happy when others praise virtuous people. Sixth*, when seeing someone preach, in spite of knowing it is the norm, the rule, the truth, the word of Buddha, to despise the teaching because of disliking the person, to slander it and incite others to slander it, is conceited action. *The seventh conceited action: seeking a high seat for oneself; edeclaring oneself to a teacher; declaring oneself to be worthy of receiving offerings; not supposed to work; failing to rise to greet old people who have cultivated spiritual*

practice for a long time; being unwilling to serve and make offerings to enlightening beings. *Eighth*, frowning unhappily on seeing people with virtue, speaking to them harshly and looking for faults in them, is conceited action. *The ninth conceited action*: When seeing intelligent people who know the truth, not being willing to approach and attend them, not respecting and honoring them, being unwilling to ask them what is good and what is not good, what should be done and what should not be done, what acts result in various benefits and comforts in the long night, being foolish and deluded, stubborn and contentious, swallow by self-importance, never able to see the way of emancipation. *The tenth conceited action*: minds shrouded by conceit; when Buddhas appear in the world are unable to approach, respect, and honor them; no new good arises, and goodness from the past evaporates and vanishes; they say what they should not; they contend where they should not; in the future they will surely fall into a deep pit of danger and; will not even encounter Buddha; much less hearing the Teaching for hundreds of thousands of eons; though because of having once conceived the aspiration for enlightenment they will in the end wake up on their own.

Besides, pride has many different kinds including: *First*, the pride of thinking oneself is superior to others. *Second*, the Pride in progress and the delusion that one has attained Nirvana. This is one of the ten stages or objects in meditation. *Third*, the Pride as a banner rearing itself aloft. *Fourth*, the Pride because of clan or name. This is one of the eight kinds of pride or arrogance. *Fifth*, the Pride because of good or charitable deeds. This is one of the eight kinds of pride or arrogance. *Sixth*, the Pride because of years of age. This is one of the eight kinds of pride or arrogance. *Seventh*, the Pride in false views or doings, one of the eight kinds of pride, mana, arrogance, or self-conceit. Doing evil for self-advancement, vaunting lack of virtue for virtue. *Eighth*, the Pride of regarding self as little inferior to those who far surpass one. Vaunting one's inferiority or false humility. *Ninth*, the Pride of regarding self as little inferior to those who far surpass one. Pride of thinking oneself is not much inferior to those who surpass us. The pride of regarding self as little inferior to those who far surpass one. This is one of the seven kinds of pride. The pride of thinking myself not much inferior to those who far surpass me, one of the nine kinds of pride.

Tenth, the Pride of self, or the pride of self-superiority. It is to say exalting self and depreciating others, or self-intoxication or pride of self, or the ego-conceit (egotism). *Eleventh*, the Pride of thinking oneself is equal to those who surpass us. The pride which among superiors regards self as equal, one of the seven arrogances. The pride of thinking oneself equal to those who surpass us, this is also one of the nine kinds of pride. *Twelfth*, the Pride of thinking oneself is superior to equals. The pride which among equals regards self as superior, one of the seven arrogances. The pride which among equals regards self as superior and among superiors as equal. Superiority over equals and equality with superiors.

Pride is the inflated opinion of ourselves and can manifest in relation to some good or bad object. When we look down from a high mountain, everyone below seems to have shrunk in size. When we hold ourselves to be superior to others, and have an inflated opinion of ourselves, we take on a superior aspect. It is extremely difficult to develop any good qualities at all when one has pride, for no matter how much the teacher may teach that person, it will do no good. Haughtiness means false arrogance, thinking oneself correct in spite of one's wrong conduct, thinking oneself is good in spite of one's very bad in reality. Haughtiness also means arrogance and conceit due to one's illusion of having completely understood what one has hardly comprehended at all. Haughtiness is one of the main hindrances in our cultivation. In cultivating the Way, we must have genuine wisdom. Those who have genuine wisdom never praise themselves and disparage others. These people never consider themselves the purest and loftiest, and other people common and lowly. Once, we, Buddhist practitioners, get rid of pride and arrogance also means that we have already pushed away one of the great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. In Buddhism, those who praise themselves have no future in their cultivation of the Way. Even though they are still alive, they can be considered as dead, for they have gone against their own conscience and integrity.

Chapter Eighteen

Other Poisonous Robbers of Afflictions: Killing-Stealing-Sexual Misconduct-Lying

I. An Overview of Other Robbers of Killing, Stealing, Sexual Misconduct, Lying:

Ordinarily speaking, for monks and nuns in temples, cultivation is relatively simple and easy than that of lay people, who, everyday, have to deal with ten robbers in the society, both internal and external: greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconducts, and lying... that are always waiting to harm and to destroy completely our path of cultivation. However, according to Buddhist teachings, there are eight teachers that help us contemplate avoidable sins and unavoidable things in our daily life: murder, the Robbery, the adultery, the lying, the drunkard, the aged, the sick, and the death. Therefore, among these ten robbers mentioned above, four of them are considered practitioners' teachers according to Buddhist teachings. For those who cultivate wisdom, if we don't eliminate these robbers, it is difficult to attain a real wisdom. Truly speaking, not only Buddhists but the whole world also are indebted to the Buddha for it is He who first showed the Way to free human beings from the obstructive ghosts of lust, anger, stupidity, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying... We call them robbers because they usually plunder the virtues and murder the wisdom-life of cultivators. In Buddhist teachings, robbers also represent the destructive conditions or influences that cause practitioners to retrogress in their cultivation. Demons can render cultivators insane, making them lose their right thought, develop erroneous views, commit evil karma and end up sunk in the lower realms. Beside trying to prevent robbers of lust, anger, ignorance... Buddhist practitioners should keep the precepts strictly; they should have a clear understanding of the Dharma, skillfully distinguishing the correct from the deviant, the true from the false; they should be firm and stable in his determination; they should be guided

by a good advisor, who has a thorough understanding of the sutras and many years experience in cultivation.

Broadly speaking, there are 84,000 robbers of afflictions. But after analysis, we can say there are only 10 serious ones which are ten robbers or disturbers of the religious life. According to Buddhism, there are innumerable kinds of robbers of afflictions, but generally speaking, there are ten robbers of Desires-Anger-Ignorance-Arrogance-Doubt-Wrong Views-Killing-Stealing-Sexual Misconduct-Lying that cause a lot of hinders to practitioners. These are ten most poisonous enemies in our life and cultivation for these ten robbers do not only cause our afflictions, but also prevent us from tasting the pure and cool flavor of emancipation (liberation). We already mentioned six robbers of afflictions of Desires-Anger-Ignorance-Arrogance-Doubt-Wrong Views in two chapters: Three Kinds of Afflictions in General Marks and Three Kinds of Afflictions in Particular Marks. Therefore, in this chapter, we only mention about the rest four robbers of afflictions of Killing-Stealing-Sexual Misconduct-Lying.

The First Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing "Killing": This is one of the ten kinds of evil karma, to kill living beings, to take life, kill the living, or any conscious being. According to The Buddha and His Teaching, written by Most Venerable Narada, killing means the intentional destruction of any living being. The Pali term pana strictly means the psycho-physical life pertaining to one's particular existence. The wanton destruction of this life-force, without allowing it to run its due course, is panatipata. Pana also means that which breathes. Hence all animate beings, including animals, are regarded as pana. Plants are not considered as "living beings" as they possess no mind. Monks and nuns, however, are forbidden to destroy even plant life. This rule, it may be mentioned, does not apply to lay-followers. According to the Buddhist laws, the taking of human life offends against the major commands, of animal life against the less stringent commands. Suicide also leads to severe penalties in the next lives. *The Second Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing "Stealing":* Stealing means taking possession of anything that has not been given by its owner or stealing, is also wrong, even legally speaking. Stealing, one of the four grave prohibitions or sins in Buddhism. Stealing is taking what isn't given to us. It includes not

paying taxes or fees that are due, borrowing things and not returning them, and taking things from our workplace for our own personal use. A Bhiksu or Bhiksuni who steals or violates the property of another, whether the property is privately or publicly owned, breaks the second of the Four Degradation Offences. He or she is no longer worthy to remain a Bhiksu or Bhiksuni and cannot participate in the activities of the Order of Bhiksus or Order of Bhiksunis. *The Third Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing "Sexual Intercourse"*: This is the third commandment of the five basic commandments for lay people, and the third precept of the ten major precepts for monks and nuns in the Brahma Net Sutra. Monks or nuns who commit this offence will be expelled from the Order forever. A Bhiksu or Bhiksuni who has sexual intercourse with another person, whether a female or male, and whether that person has given consent or not, breaks the first of the Four Degradation Offences. He or she is no longer worthy to remain a Bhiksu or Bhiksuni and cannot participate in the activities of the Bhiksu or Bhiksuni Sangha. A Bhiksu who, when motivated by sexual desire, tells a woman or a man that it would be a good thing for her or him to have sexual relations with him, commits a Sangha Restoration Offence. A Bhiksuni who is intent upon having sexual relations with someone, whether male or female, breaks one of the eight Degradation Offences. She is no longer worthy to remain a Bhiksuni and cannot participate in the activities of the Order of Bhiksunis. Through word or gesture arouses sexual desire in that person, breaks the seventh of the Eight Degradation Offences. Says to that person that she is willing to offer him or her sexual relations, breaks the Degradation Offences. *The Fourth Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing "Lying"*: Lying means verbally saying or indicating through a nod or a shrug something we know isn't true. However, telling the truth should be tempered with compassion. For instance, it isn't wise to tell the truth to a murderer about a potential victim's whereabouts, if this would cause the latter's death. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 306, the Buddha taught: "The speaker of untruth goes down; also he who denies what he has done, both sinned against truth. After death they go together to hells."

II. Summaries of Other Robbers of Killing-Stealing-Lying:

The First Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing Killing: Killing is one of the ten kinds of evil karma, to kill living beings, to take life, kill the living, or any conscious being. In other words, killing is intentionally taking the life of any being, any living beings or conscious beings, including animals. The advice of not killing challenges us to think creatively of alternate means to resolve conflict besides violence. In Buddhism, killing is considered to be demonic obstructions for Buddhist practitioners. So the Buddha established the five basic prohibitions binding on all Buddhists, monks and laymen alike; however, these are especially for lay disciples. The observance of these five precepts can help prevent evil thoughts, evil speech as well as evil actions and ensure rebirth in the human realm. Not to take life or not to kill or injure any living being means refraining from taking life. This is the first of the five commandments. *Pranatipata-viratih* also means not to have any intention to kill any living being; this includes animals, for they feel pain just as human do. On the contrary, one must lay respect and save lives of all sentient beings. The Buddha always taught in his sutras: “The greatest sin is killing; the highest merit is to save sentient lives.” According to *The Buddha and His Teaching*, written by Most Venerable Narada, killing means the intentional destruction of any living being. The Pali term *pana* strictly means the psycho-physical life pertaining to one’s particular existence. The wanton destruction of this life-force, without allowing it to run its due course, is *panatipata*. *Pana* also means that which breathes. Hence all animate beings, including animals, are regarded as *pana*. However, plants are not considered as “living beings” as they possess no mind. Monks and nuns, however, are forbidden to destroy even plant life. This rule, it may be mentioned, does not apply to lay-followers. Five conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of killing: a living being, knowledge that it is a living being, intention of killing, effort to kill, and consequent death (cause the death of that being). The gravity of the evil deed of killing depends on the goodness and the magnitude of the being concerned. If the killing of a virtuous person or a big animal is regarded as more heinous than the killing of a vicious person or a small animal, because a greater effort is needed to commit the evil and the loss involved is considerably great. The evil effects of killing

include brevity of life, ill-health, constant grief due to the separation from the loved one, and constant fear.

The Buddha always taught in his sutras: “The greatest sin is killing; the highest merit is to save sentient lives. Life is dear to all.” In fact, all beings fear death and value life, we should therefore respect life and not kill anything. This precept forbids not only killing people but also any creature, especially if it is for money or sport. We should have an attitude of loving-kindness towards all beings, wishing them to be always happy and free. Caring for the Earth, not polluting its rivers and air, not destroying its forests, etc, are also included in this precept. Killing is one of the four grave prohibitions or sins in Buddhism. Killing is intentionally taking the life of any being, including animals. The advice of not killing challenges us to think creatively of alternate means to resolve conflict besides violence. Refraining from taking life. According to the Buddhist laws, the taking of human life offends against the major commands, of animal life against the less stringent commands. Suicide also leads to severe penalties in the next lives. According to Most Venerable Dhammananda in the *Gems of Buddhism Wisdom*, the prohibition against the taking of any life applies not only to humanity but also to creatures of every kind, both big and small; black ants as well as red ants. Each day a vast number of animals are slaughtered as food, for most people eat meat, while vegeterians are not common. In the field of science, animals are used in many researches and experiments. In the administrative field, arms are used in crime suppression. Law enforcement agencies punish law breakers. Belligerents at war use arms to destroy one another. The actions cited here as examples are not regarded as illegal or as running counter to normal worldly practice. Indeed, it may even be considered wrong to abstain from them, as is the case when constables or soldiers fail in their police or military duties. Nowadays many kinds of animals are known to be carriers of microbes and, thanks to the microscope, germs and many sorts of microbes have been detected. Almost everything contains them, even drinking water. Only the larger impurities are caught by filter; microbes can pass through. So infinite microbes pass into our throats with each draught of water. It is the same medicines. Whenever they are used, either externally or internally, they destroy myriads of microbes. Are these microbes to be considered as living

beings in the sense of the first sila or are they not? If so, perhaps no one can fully comply with it. Besides, some are of the opinion that people who refrain from taking the life of animals should also refrain from eating meat, because it amounts to encouraging slaughter and is no less sinful according to them.

We are living in an imperfect world where the strong prey on the weak, big animals prey on small animals, and killing is spreading everywhere. Even in the animal world, we can see a tiger would feed on a deer, a snake on a frog, a frog on other small insects, or a big fish on a small fish, and so on. Let us take a look at the human world, we kill animals, and sometimes we kill one another for power. Thus, the Buddha set the first rule for his disciples, “not to kill.” Not to kill the living, the first of the Ten Commandments. Not to kill will help us become kind and full of pity. This is the first Buddhist precept, binding upon clergy and laity, not to kill and this includes not to kill, not to ask other people to kill, not to be joyful seeing killing, not to think of killing at any time, not to kill oneself (commit suicide), not to praise killing or death by saying “it’s better death for someone than life.” Not to kill is also including not to slaughtering animals for food because by doing this, you do not only cut short the lives of other beings, but you also cause pain and suffering for them. “Not to Take Life” is one of the first eight of the Ten Commandments which the Buddha set forth for lay Buddhists to observe 24 hours every fortnight. If we truly believe that all sentient beings are the Buddhas of the future, we would never think of killing or harming them in any way. Rather, we would have feelings of loving-kindness and compassion toward all of them, without exception. Buddhists do not take life out of the pity of others. Besides, not to kill will help us become kind and full of pity. Devout Buddhists should always remember the Buddha’s teachings, not only not to kill, not only do we respect life, we also cherish it. Abstain from killing and to extend compassion to all beings does not entail any restriction. All beings, in Buddhism, implies to all living creatures, or all that breathe. It is an admitted fact that all that live, human or animal, love life and hate death. As life is precious to all, their one aim is to preserve it from harm and prolong it. This implies even to the smallest creatures that are conscious of being alive. According to the Dhammapada (131), “Whoever in his search for happiness harasses those who are fond of

happiness will not be happy in the hereafter.” The happiness of all creatures depends on their being alive. So to deprive them of that which contains all good for them, is cruel and heartless in the extreme. Thus, not to harm and kill others is one of the most important virtue of a Buddhist. Those who develop the habit of being cruel to animal are quite capable of ill treating people as well when the opportunity comes. When a cruel thought gradually develops into an obsession it may well lead to sadism. Those who kill suffer often in this life. After this life, the karma of their ruthless deeds will for long force them into states of woe. On the contrary, those who show pity towards others and refrain from killing will be born in good states of existence, and if reborn as humans, will be endowed with health, beauty, riches, influences, and intelligence, and so forth.

The Buddha said: “Life is dear to all.” In fact, all beings fear death and value life, we should therefore respect life and not kill anything. This precept forbids not only killing people but also any creature, especially if it is for money or sport. We should have an attitude of loving-kindness towards all beings, wishing them to be always happy and free. Caring for the Earth, not polluting its rivers and air, not destroying its forests, etc, are also included in this precept. To Buddhists, especially, lay people, staying away from the demonic obstructions of lying will help us with the followings: Help make our life have more quality; help us obtain dignity and respect from others; help make us a good member of the family, a good father or mother, a filial child; help make us good citizens of the society.

Thus, the rule of not to kill living beings is the top rule in Buddhist precepts. Not to kill will help us become kind and full of pity. This is the first Buddhist precept, binding upon clergy and laity, not to kill and this includes not to kill, not to ask other people to kill, not to be joyful seeing killing, not to think of killing at any time, not to kill oneself (commit suicide), not to praise killing or death by saying “it’s better death for someone than life.” Not to kill is also including not to slaughtering animals for food because by doing this, you do not only cut short the lives of other beings, but you also cause pain and suffering for them. According to Zen Master Philip Kapleau in *Awakening to Zen*: “Sometimes you see people mash a mosquito that has bitten them. I am reminded of the biblical exhortation to take an eye for an eye and

a tooth for a tooth. The same people who speak of such Old Testament morality as archaic in its severity don't hesitate to kill a mosquito that merely stings them. That's surely an unjust exchange! Yet the biblical injunction itself may have more in common with the first precept that one might first think. It meant that even in one's grief or anger, one had to be careful and appropriate, taking no more than 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' It was a way of limiting violence and not an exhortation to it. Yet now often we thoughtlessly kill insects or other small animals, such as squirrels, that merely annoy us! As we know, life is not inviolable. Something often has to die in order for another thing to live. But where it is necessary to take life for a greater good, then doing it with a feeling of contrition lessens the karmic consequences. As your Zen practice deepens, you feel a greater closeness to all forms of life: when a mosquito alights on the hand, you'll simply blow it off, and similarly with ants and other insects. You will not kill them." Helen Tworikov wrote in *Zen In America*, writing on the first precept, 'No Killing,' Robert Aitken recalls "that someone once asked Alan Watts why he was a vegetarian. He said, 'Because cows scream louder than carrots.' This reply may serve as a guidance. Some people will refuse to eat red meat. Some people will not drink milk. Some people will eat what is served to them, but will limit their own purchase of animal products..." Aitken, who generally maintains a vegetarian diet, has said that if he goes to a dinner party and is served meat he will eat it because "the cow is dead and the hostess is not."

The Second Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing Stealing: Stealing means taking possession of anything that has not been given by its owner or stealing, is also wrong, even legally speaking. Stealing, one of the four grave prohibitions or sins in Buddhism. Stealing is taking what isn't given to us. It includes not paying taxes or fees that are due, borrowing things and not returning them, and taking things from our workplace for our own personal use. According to Buddhism, there are five conditions that are necessary for the completion of the evil of stealing: First, another's property. Second, knowledge that it is so. Third, intention of stealing. Fourth, effort to steal. Fifth, actual removal. The consequences of stealing: Poverty, misery, disappointment, and dependent livelihood. Besides the consequences of stealing, Buddhist practitioners should always

remember that stealing is considered to be demonic obstructions for Buddhist practitioners. A Bhiksu or Bhiksuni who steals or violates the property of another, whether the property is privately or publicly owned, breaks the second of the Four Degradation Offences. He or she is no longer worthy to remain a Bhiksu or Bhiksuni and cannot participate in the activities of the Order of Bhiksus or Order of Bhiksunis. In Buddhist teachings, not to take anything which does not belong to you or what is not given to you. Refraining from taking what is not given. Adattadana-viratih means not directly or indirectly taking other's belongings. On the contrary, one should give things, not only to human beings, but also to animals. The Buddha always taught in his sutras "desire brings great misfortune; giving brings great fortune." Not to steal or no stealing is the second of the ten commandments. Not to steal because we have no right to take what is not given. Not to steal will help us become honest.

So the Buddha established the five basic prohibitions binding on all Buddhists, monks and laymen alike; however, these are especially for lay disciples. The observance of these five precepts can help prevent evil thoughts, evil speech as well as evil actions and ensure rebirth in the human realm. Among them, there exists the precept of not stealing. Taking possession of anything that has not been given by its owner or stealing, is also wrong, even legally speaking. Refraining from taking what is not given. Adattadana-viratih means not directly or indirectly taking other's belongings. On the contrary, one should give things, not only to human beings, but also to animals. The Buddha always taught in his sutras "desire brings great misfortune; giving brings great fortune." We all have the same right to own things and give them away as we wish. However, we should not take things that do not belong to us by stealing or cheating. Instead, we should learn to give to help others, and always take good care of the things that we use, whether they belong to us or to the public. In a broader sense, this precept means being responsible. If we are lazy and neglect our studies or work, we are said to be "stealing time" of our own. This precept also encourages us to be generous. Buddhists give to the poor and the sick and make offerings to monks and nuns to practice being good. Buddhists are usually generous to their parents, teachers and friends to show gratitude for their advice, guidance and kindness. Buddhists also

offer sympathy and encouragement to those who feel hurt or discouraged. Helping people by telling them about the Dharma is considered to be the highest form of giving. Six ways of stealing which lead to a Parajaka offense (major offense for a Bodhisattva): Stealing committed by oneself, to encourage others to steal, to steal by expedient means, to praise stealing, to rejoice at witnessing stealing, and to steal through incantation or deviant mantras. To Buddhists, especially, lay people, staying away from the demonic obstructions of stealing will help us with the followings: Help make our life have more quality; help us obtain dignity and respect from others; help make us a good member of the family, a good father or mother, a filial child; help make us good citizens of the society. Thus, the Buddha placed the precept of not stealing in the second rank out of the five basic precepts (not killing, not stealing, not lying, not committing sexual misconduct, not drinking alcohol or taking toxicants). Not to steal because we have no right to take what is not given. Not to steal will help us become honest. Abstain from stealing and to live honestly, taking only what is one's own by right. To take what belongs to another is not so serious as to deprive him of his life, but it is still a grave crime because it deprives him of some happiness. As no one wants to be robbed, it is not difficult to understand that it is wrong to take what is not one's own. The thought that urges a person to steal can never be good or wholesome. Then robbery leads to violence and even to murder.

The Third Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing Lewd: Lewd or sexual misconduct, fornication, or adultery, the third commandment of the five basic commandments for lay people, and the third precept of the ten major precepts for monks and nuns in the Brahma Net Sutra. Monks or nuns who commit this offence will be expelled from the Order forever. Four conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of sexual misconduct: the thought to enjoy, consequent effort, means to gratify, and gratification. According to The Buddha and His Teachings, written by Most Venerable Narada, these are the inevitable consequences of Kamesu-micchacara: Having many enemies, having an undesirable wives and husbands (spouses), and birth as a woman or as a eunuch (thái giám). Lust grows into a habit because of sexual intercourse in which two people caress each other thereby producing heat that in turn stimulates desire. This is like the

heat caused by rubbing the hands together. Adultery results in the iron bed, the copper pillar, and the eight hot hells (the bed stands for sexual desire and the pillar for the partner on whom the sinner depends to stimulate his sexual appetite). The Buddha taught: “Habits of lust and reciprocal interactions which give rise to mutual rubbing. When this rubbing continues without cease, it produces a tremendous raging fire within which movement occurs, just as warmth arises between a person’s hands when he rubs them together. Because these two habits set each other ablaze, there come into being the iron bed, the copper pillar, and other such experiences. Therefore, Thus Come Ones of the ten directions look upon the practice of lust and name it the ‘fire of desire.’ Bodhisattvas avoid desire as they would a fiery pit.” At the time of the Buddha, there was a man who had the habit of committing adultery. Even though he had been arrested a number of times for his misconduct, he did not change his ways. In desperation, his father brought him to the Buddha for advice. The Buddha pointed out that a person who indulges in sexual misconduct creates problems and suffering for himself as well as others. He not only squanders his money and loses his reputation but also creates enemies for himself. These are serious consequences often result from sexual misconduct, but they are usually overlooked at the time when it is being committed. Not to engage in improper sexual conduct. Against lust, not to commit adultery, to abstain from all sexual excess, or refraining from sexual misconduct. This includes not having sexual intercourse with another’s husband or wife, or being irresponsible in sexual relationship. Adultery is wrong. Laypeople should be responsible in sexual matters. If we do not have the great opportunity to renounce the world to become monks and nuns to cultivate obtain liberation, we should keep a good relationship between husband and wife, we should be considerate, loving and faithful to each other, then our family will be happy, and our society will be better. One who commits it does not command respect nor does one inspire confidence. Sexual misconduct involving person with whom conjugal relations should be avoided to custom, or those who are prohibited by law, or by the Dharma, is also wrong. So is coercing by physical or even financial means a married or even unmarried person into consenting to such conduct. The purpose of this third sila is to preserve the respectability of the family of each person

concerned and to safeguard its sanctity and inviolability. According to The Path of Purification, “Bad Ways” is a term for doing what ought not to be done and not doing what ought to be done, out of desire, hate, delusion, and fear. They are called “bad ways” because they are ways not to be traveled by Noble Ones. Adultery is mentioned in Buddhist texts as one of a number of forms of similar sexual misconduct. For monks or nuns who only think about or wish to commit sexual intercourse with any people (not wait until physically committing sexual intercourse) are guilty and violate the Vinaya commandments and must be excommunicated from the Order. For laypeople, thinking or wishing to make love or physically making love with those who are not their husband or wife is forbidden. Avoiding the misuse of sex is respect for people and personal relationships. Much unhappiness arises from the misuse of sex and from living in irresponsible ways. Many families have been broken as a result, and many children have been victims of sexual abuse. For all lay Buddhists, the happiness of others is also the happiness of ourselves, so sex should be used in a caring and loving manner, not in a craving of worldly flesh. When observing this precept, sexual desire should be controlled, and husbands and wives should be faithful towards each other. This will help to create peace in the family. In a happy family, the husband and wife respect, trust and love each other. With happy families, the world would be a better place for us to live in. Young Buddhists should keep their minds and bodies pure to develop their goodness. Devout Buddhists should not commit sexual misconduct (to have unchaste) because first, we don’t want to be a bad person in the society; second, not to have unchaste will help us become pure and good. Not to commit sexual misconduct is the third commandment of the five basic commandments for lay people, and the third precept of the ten major precepts for monks and nuns in the Brahma Net Sutra. Monks or nuns who commit this offence will be expelled from the Order forever. This is one of the first eight of the Ten Commandments which the Buddha set forth for lay Buddhists to observe 24 hours every fortnight. There are four conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of sexual misconduct: the thought to enjoy, consequent effort, means to gratify (gratification or the act of sexual misconduct). For Monks and Nuns, a Bhikṣu who, when motivated by sexual desire, tells a woman or a man that it would be a

good thing for her or him to have sexual relations with him, commits a Sangha Restoration Offence. A Bhiksuni who is intent upon having sexual relations with someone, whether male or female, breaks one of the eight Degradation Offences. She is no longer worthy to remain a Bhiksuni and cannot participate in the activities of the Order of Bhiksunis. Through word or gesture arouses sexual desire in that person, breaks the seventh of the Eight Degradation Offences. Says to that person that she is willing to offer him or her sexual relations, breaks the eighth of the Eight Degradation Offences. According to The Buddha and His Teachings, written by Most Venerable Narada, these are the inevitable consequences of Kamesu-micchacara: having many enemies, union with undesirable wives and husbands (spouses), and birth as a woman or as a eunuch (thái giám). If living beings in the six paths of any mundane world had no thoughts of lust, they would not have to follow a continual succession of births and deaths. According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about “cutting off lust”, one of the four important precepts for monks and nuns in Buddhism: “Ananda! Your basic purpose in cultivating is to transcend the wearisome defilements. But if you don’t renounce your lustful thoughts, you will not be able to get out of the dust. Even though one may have some wisdom and the manifestation of Zen Samadhi, one is certain to enter demonic paths if one does not cut off lust. At best, one will be a demon king; on the average, one will be in the retinue of demons; at the lowest level, one will be a female demon. These demons have their groups of disciples. Each says of himself he has accomplished the unsurpassed way. After my extinction, in the Dharma-Ending Age, these hordes of demons will abound, spreading like wildfire as they openly practice greed and lust. Calming to be good knowing advisors, they will cause living beings to fall into the pit of love and views and lose the way to Bodhi Ananda! When you teach people in the world to cultivate samadhi, they must first of all sever the mind of lust. This is the first clear and unalterable instruction on purity given by the Thus Come Ones and the Buddhas of the past, World Honored Ones. Therefore, Ananda, if cultivators of Zen Samadhi do not cut off lust, they will be like someone who cooks sand in the hope of getting rice, after hundreds of thousands of eons, it will still be just hot sand. Why? It wasn’t rice to begin with; it was only sand. Ananda!

If you seek the Buddha's wonderful fruition and still have physical lust, then even if you attain a wonderful awakening, it will be based in lust. With lust at the source, you will revolve in the three paths and not be able to get out. Which road will you take to cultivate and be certified to the Thus Come One's Nirvana? You must cut off the lust which is intrinsic in both body and mind. Then get rid of even the aspect of cutting it off. At that point you have some hope of attaining the Buddha's Bodhi. What I have said here is the Buddha's teaching. Any explanation counter to it is the teaching of Papiyan.

Not to engage in improper sexual conduct. Against lust, not to commit adultery, to abstain from all sexual excess, or refraining from sexual misconduct. This includes not having sexual intercourse with another's husband or wife, or being irresponsible in sexual relationship. Adultery is wrong. One who commits it does not command respect nor does one inspire confidence. Sexual misconduct involving person with whom conjugal relations should be avoided to custom, or those who are prohibited by law, or by the Dharma, is also wrong. So is coercing by physical or even financial means a married or even unmarried person into consenting to such conduct. The purpose of this third sila is to preserve the respectability of the family of each person concerned and to safeguard its sanctity and inviolability. Avoiding the demonic obstruction of sex is respect for people and personal relationships. Much unhappiness arises from the misuse of sex and from living in irresponsible ways. Many families have been broken as a result, and many children have been victims of sexual abuse. For all lay Buddhists, the happiness of others is also the happiness of ourselves, so sex should be used in a caring and loving manner, not in a craving of worldly flesh. When observing this precept, sexual desire should be controlled, and husbands and wives should be faithful towards each other. This will help to create peace in the family. In a happy family, the husband and wife respect, trust and love each other. With happy families, the world would be a better place for us to live in. Young Buddhists should keep their minds and bodies pure to develop their goodness. To Buddhists, especially, lay people, staying away from the demonic obstructions of sexual misconducts will help us with the followings: Help make our life have more quality; help us obtain dignity and respect from others; help make us a good member of the family, a good father or mother, a filial child; help make us good citizens of the society. Buddhists try not to have unchaste (to have adultery) because we don't want to be a bad person in the society. Besides, not to have unchaste will also help us become pure and good.

The Fourth Robber of Afflictions That Cause Beings Committing Lying: Lying or false speech means nonsense or transgression speaking, or

lying, either slander, false boasting, or deception. Lying also means not to tell the truth. Lying also means tale-bearing speech, or double tongue speech, or slandering speech. Lying also means harsh speech or frivolous talk. Slandering the Buddhist Sutras is considered a serious lying. Slandering the Buddhist sutras means ridiculing Buddhist theories taught by the Buddha and written in the sutras, i.e., saying that the principles in the Buddhist sutras are false, that the Buddhist and Great Vehicle sutras were spoken by demon kings, and so on. This sort of offense cannot be pardoned through repentance. According to The Buddha and His Teachings, there are four conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of lying: an untruth, deceiving intention, utterance, and actual deception. According to Buddhism, “Lying” is the main rationalization for other offenses. Devout Buddhists should always be aware of the following situations: we tell lies when we contend; we tell lies when we are greedy; we tell lies when we seek gratification; we tell lies as we are selfish; we tell lies as we chase personal advantages. We tell lies to deceive people. We commit mistakes but do not want to admit, so we tell lies and try to rationalize for ourselves, and so on, and so on. Also according to The Buddha and His Teachings, written by Most Venerable Narada, there are some inevitable consequences of lying as follow: being subject to abusive speech, vilification, untrustworthiness, and stinking mouth. The Buddha wanted His disciples to be so perfectly truthful that He encouraged us not to lie, but to speak the truth, the whole truth. Against lying, deceiving and slandering. Not to lie includes not saying bad things, not gossiping, not twisting stories, and not lying. On the contrary, one must use the right gentle speech, which gives benefit to oneself and others. However, sometimes they are unable to speak the truth; for instance, they may have to lie to save themselves from harm, and doctors lie to bolster their patients’ morale. Lying under these circumstances may be contrary to the sila, but it is not entirely contrary to the loving-kindness and to its purpose. This sila aims at bringing about mutual benefits by adhering to truth and avoiding verbal offences. Similarly, utterances harmful to another’s well-being, for example, malicious, abusive or slanderous speech intended either to deride others or to vaunt oneself may be truthful, yet they must be regarded as wrong, because they are contrary to the sila. Sincere Buddhists should always respect each other and not tell lies or boast about ourselves. This would result in fewer quarrels and misunderstandings, and the world would be a more peaceful place. In observing the fourth precept, we should always speak the truth. There are four ways of “Mrsavadaviratih”. The first way is “lying”. Lying means verbally saying or indicating through a nod or a shrug something we know isn’t true. However, telling the truth should be tempered and compassion. For instance, it isn’t wise to tell the truth to a murderer about a potential victim’s whereabouts, if this would cause the

latter's death. We should not to lie because if we lie, nobody would believe us. Furthermore, not to lie will help us become truthful and trustful. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 306, the Buddha taught: "The speaker of untruth goes down; also he who denies what he has done, both sinned against truth. After death they go together to hells." The second way is "Tale-bearing" or "Slandering". To slander means to twist stories, or to utilize slandering words. The Pali word means literally 'breaking up of fellowship'. To slander another is most wicked for it entails making a false statement intended to damage someone's reputation. The slanderer often commits two crimes simultaneously, he says what is false because his report is untrue and then he back-bites. In Sanskrit poetry the back-biter is compared to a mosquito which though small is noxious. It comes singing, settles on you, draws blood and may give you malaria. Again the tale-bearer's words may be sweet as honey, but his mind is full of poison. Let us then avoid tale-bearing and slander which destroy friendships. Instead of causing trouble let us speak words that make for peace and reconciliation. Instead of sowing the seed of dissension, let us bring peace and friendship to those living in discord and enmity. The third way is "Harsh speech" (Pharusavaca p). Harsh words include insult, abuse, ridicule, sarcasm, and so on. Sometimes harsh words can be said with a smile, as when we innocently pretend what we have said won't hurt other people. Devout Buddhists should never use harsh words because harsh words hurt others. According to The Buddha and His Teaching, written by Most Venerable Narada, there are three conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of harsh speech: a person to be abused, an angry thought, and the actual abuse. The inevitable consequences of harsh speech: being detested by others though absolutely harmless, and having a harsh voice. Sincere Buddhist should avoid using harsh words in speech. The fourth way is "Frivolous talk" (Samphappalapa p). According to Most Venerable in The Buddha and His Teachings, there are two conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of frivolous talk: the inclination towards frivolous talk, and its narration. The inevitable consequences of frivolous talk: defective bodily organs and incredible speech. Truly speaking, to let go these lying speeches is not an easy thing to do; they are not easy to be eliminated in one or two days, but when we want to follow the Buddha's Path, we have no other choice but to let go these lying speeches. Once we are able to let them go, it also means that we have already pushed away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. To Buddhists, especially, lay people, staying away from the demonic obstructions of lying will help us with the followings: Help make our life have more quality; help us obtain dignity and respect from others; help make us a good member of the family, a good father or mother, a filial child; help make us good citizens of the society.

Chapter Nineteen

Fifty Afflictive Maras in the Five Skandhas

I. An Overview of Demonic Obstructions In Buddhist Point of View:

“Mara” is a Sanskrit term for “demon.” “Mara” is also an ancient Indian term, implied the evil forces that disturb our minds. These are demonic forces that cause human beings to turn away from Buddhist practice and continue to flow in the cycle of births and deaths. “Demons” are called “mara” in Sanskrit. In Chinese, the word has connotation of “murderer” because demons usually plunder the virtues and murder the wisdom-life of cultivators. “Demons” also represent the destructive conditions or influences that cause practitioners to retrogress in their cultivation. Demons can render cultivators insane, making them lose their right thought, develop erroneous views, commit evil karma and end up sunk in the lower realms. These activities which develop virtue and wisdom and lead sentient beings to Nirvana are called Buddha work. Those activities which destroy good roots, causing sentient beings to suffer and revolve in the cycle of Birth and Death, are called demonic actions. The longer the practitioner cultivates, and the higher his level of attainment, the more he discovers how wicked, cunning and powerful the demons are. In meditation, mara is any delusion or force of distraction. “Demons” are called “mara” in Sanskrit. In Chinese, the word has connotation of “murderer” because demons usually plunder the virtues and murder the wisdom-life of cultivators. “Demons” also represent the destructive conditions or influences that cause practitioners to retrogress in their cultivation. Demons can render cultivators insane, making them lose their right thought, develop erroneous views, commit evil karma and end up sunk in the lower realms. These activities which develop virtue and wisdom and lead sentient beings to Nirvana are called Buddha work. Those activities which destroy good roots, causing sentient beings to suffer and revolve in the cycle of Birth and Death, are called demonic actions. The longer the practitioner cultivates, and the higher his level of attainment, the more he discovers how wicked, cunning and

powerful the demons are. In the Nipata Sutta, the Buddha told Mara: “Sensual pleasures are your first army; discontent your second; your third is hunger and thirst; the fourth is called craving; sloth and torpor are your fifth; the sixth is called fear; your seventh is doubt, conceit and ingratitude are your eight; the ninth is gain, renown, honor and whatever fame is falsely received; and whoever both extols himself and disparages others has fallen victim to the tenth. This is your army, Mara, the striking force of darkness. One who is not brave enough cannot conquer it, but having conquered it, one obtains happiness.”

Demonic obstructions can be internal devil or external devil. Internal Devil or the “devil in the body,” meaning instinctive impulses or wicked ideas that disturb our righteous minds. However, for determined or devout practitioners, such a temptation acts to strengthen their will to seek the Way. As a result, the “devil in the body” will be served to protect the Buddha-law. External Devil or the “devil outside the body,” meaning temptation or pressure from the outside. In other words, “devil outside the body” means the speech and conduct of those who offer temptation, criticism, disturbance, and threats to those who endeavor to practice the Buddha’s teachings and spread them. Besides, there are other demonic obstructions such as temper, the god of lust, or sins. All of the above symbolize the passions that overwhelmed human beings as well as everything that hinders the arising of the wholesome roots and progress on the path of salvation and enlightenment. Mara is our greed, hatred, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, evil views and all the other poisons bringing people unhappiness and grief. The temper, the murder, the destruction, or the personification of evil or death in Buddhist mythology. In Buddhism, Mara symbolizes the passions that overwhelm human beings as well as everything that hinders the arising of the wholesome roots and progress on the path of enlightenment. Mara is the lord of the sixth heaven of the desire realm and is often depicted with a hundred arms, riding on an elephant. According to legend, the Buddha Sakyamuni was attacked by Mara as he was striving for enlightenment. Mara wanted to prevent him from showing men the way that liberates them from suffering. Mara first called up a crowd of demons, but Sakyamuni did not fear them. Then he sent his most beautiful daughter to seduce Sakyamuni, but before the Buddha’s eyes she turned into an ugly hag, where upon Mara

admitted conclusive defeat. One of the three kinds of demons. Celestial demons refers to the type of demon that resides in the Sixth Heaven, also called the Heaven of Free Enjoyment of Others' Emanations. This type of demon possesses merits and blessings and enjoys the highest heavenly bliss in the Realm of desire, of which our world is but a small part. They then mistake such happiness and bliss as ultimate, and do not wish anyone to escape their influence. Celestial demons constantly obstruct the Buddha-truth and followers. When a practitioner has attained a fairly high level of cultivation, his mind-light develops and shines up to the realm of the Sixth Heaven. It is then discovered by the celestial demons, who seek ways to sabotage his cultivation. Such action can take many forms, threatening or cajoling, or even helping the practitioner attain false samadhi "wisdom" and spiritual power, with the aim of ultimately deceiving him. These demons take turns watching the practitioner constantly and without interruption, waiting for the opportunity. If the practitioner has a delusive thought, they pounce on him or steer him toward things contrary to the Way. The practitioner's entire lifetime of cultivation is then over, for all practical purposes.

Demonic obstruction can be demonic afflictions. These demons represent the afflictions of greed, anger, resentment, delusion, contempt, doubt and wrong views. They also include the demons of the Five Skandas, the Six Entrances, the Twelve Sense Fields, and the Eighteen Elements. These demons are also called "internal" as they created by topsy-turvy, delusive states of mind. Therefore, they must be overcome by the bright, enlightened mind. The human mind is easily moved, developing afflictions not only because of personal karma but also because of the common karma of living in an environment filled, for the most part, with evil beings. Some persons cannot resist the attractions of the five Dusts and thus fall into evil ways. Others, encountering adverse conditions, grow sad and mournful and lose their determination to progress. Such developments depending on their severity, render the cultivator despondent, indignant and ill, or worse still, cause him to abandon the Buddhist Order or even to commit suicide out of despair. More harmful still, they can lead to loss of respect and good will toward other cultivators, sometimes even hatred and avoidance of clergy and lay people alike. Loss of faith in cause

and effect, bad karma and finally, descent upon the three Evil Paths are the end result. To counteract these demons, the practitioner should reflect that all afflictions are illusory, upsetting, suffocating, binding, evil and conducive only to suffering for both himself and others. To eliminate afflictions is to return to the True Mind, free and liberated, fresh and tranquil, bright and clear, happy and at peace, transcendental and wondrous. The cultivator should also meditate in the same way on all attachments, from the Five Skandas to the Eighteen Elements. In the Lotus Sutra, Sakyamuni Buddha said: “You should not be greedy and attached to gross and vile forms, sound, smell, taste, touch and dharmas. If you do, they will burn you up.” Manjusri Bodhisattva once asked a female deity, “How do you see the Eighteen Elements?” The deity replied, “They are similar to the eonic fire burning up the whole world.” These are words of warning, reminding us to eliminate the demons of afflictions. If the demons of afflictions or internal demons are not subdued, they will attract external demons which wreak havoc. The ancient have said: “If inside the door there are mean-spirited people, mean-spirited people will arrive at the door; if inside the door there are virtuous, superior people, noble superior people will arrive at the door.” As an example, when thieves try to enter a house through the side door, if the owner calmly scolds them in a loud voice, they will naturally be frightened and leave. If on the other hand, he is terrified and panic-stricken, and begs them to desist, he will unwittingly be inviting them into his house.

In the Awakening of Faith, the Patriarch Asvaghosha admonished: “There may be some disciples whose root of merit is not yet mature, whose control of mind is weak and whose power of application is limited, and yet who are sincere in their purpose to seek enlightenment, these for a time may beset and bewildered by maras and evil influences who are seeking to break down their good purpose. Such disciples, seeing seductive sights, attractive girls, strong young men, must constantly remind themselves that all such tempting and alluring things are mind-made; and, if they do this, their tempting power will disappear and they will no longer be annoyed. Or, if they have vision of heavenly gods and Bodhisattvas and Buddhas surrounded by celestial glories, they should remind themselves that those, too, are mind-made and unreal. Or, if they should be uplifted and

excited by listening to mysterious Dharanis, to lectures upon the paramitas, to elucidations of the great principles of the Mahayana, they must remind themselves that these also are emptiness and mind-made, that in their essence they are Nirvana itself. Or, if they should have intimations within that they have attained transcendental powers, recalling past lives, or foreseeing future lives, or, reading others' thoughts, or freedom to visit other Buddha-lands, or great powers of eloquence, all of these may tempt them to become covetous for worldly power and riches and fame. Or, they may be tempted by extremes of emotion, at times angry, at other time joyous, or at times very kind-hearted and compassionate, at other times the very opposite, or at times alert and purposeful, at other times indolent and stupid, at times full of faith and zealous in their practice, at other times engrossed in other affairs and negligent. All of these will keep them vacillating, at times experiencing a kind of fictitious samadhi, such as the heretics boast of, but not the true samadhi. Or later, when they are quite advanced they become absorbed in trances for a day, or two, or even seven, not partaking of any food but upheld inward food of their spirit, being admired by their friends and feeling very comfortable and proud and complacent, and then later becoming very erratic, sometimes eating little, sometimes greedily, and the expression of their face constantly changing. Because of all such strange manifestations and developments in the course of their practices, disciples should be on their guard to keep the mind under constant control. They should neither grasp after nor become attached to the passing and unsubstantial things of the senses or concepts and moods of the mind. If they do this they will be able to keep far away from the hindrances of karma." According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of possession by demons of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who can leave these ten can attain the supreme supportive power of Buddhas. The first possession is laziness. The second possession is narrowness and meanness of aspiration. The third possession is satisfaction with a little practice. The fourth possession is exclusivity. The fifth possession is not making great vows. The sixth possession is liking to be in tranquil extinction and annihilating afflictions, forgetting the Bodhi mind. The seventh possession is permanently annihilating birth and death. The eighth possession is

giving up the practices of enlightening beings. The ninth possession is not edifying sentient beings. The tenth possession is doubting and repudiating the truth.

Practitioners should always remember that all circumstances are full of demonic obstructions. Practitioners should always remember these two types of demon, internal and external. Celestial demons are within the category of external demons; however, we described them separately to alert the practitioner to the dangerous, subtle havoc they can cause. In addition to the demons of afflictions, external demons and celestial demons described above, Buddhist sutras also mention “disease demons” and the “demons of death.” For disease will usually wither the practitioner’s efforts, while death in the midst of cultivation can make him regress. Thus, disease and death are called demons. In general, they represent obstacles to the way that affect the physical body, but they cannot harm and destroy the Bodhi-Mind in the true sense of the word “demon.” Considering the level of cultivation of today’s practitioners, they generally face harassment only from demons of afflictions or external demons. Such cultivators are not advanced enough to arouse opposition from celestial demons. However, should the latter set their minds to destroying someone, that person has little hope of escaping harm, unless his cultivation is exemplary. In the Surangama Sutra, Sakyamuni Buddha, out of compassion for cultivators faced with many dangers along the Way, advised those who practiced meditation to recite mantras at the same time. This would enable them to rely on the power of the Buddhas to escape harm from demons and achieve correct samadhi. The Patriarch Yin Kuang once said: “At first glance, it would appear that the Surangama Sutra has a different viewpoint from Pure Land. However, upon closer scrutiny, that sutra, in its essence, actually praised and commended the Pure Land School. Why is this so? It is because, if even those who have attained the third level of sagehood can suffer regression caused by demons, we can see the crucial importance of Buddha Recitation and rebirth in the Pure Land: in the gathering and helping light of the Lord Amitabha Buddha, there is no more danger of demons. Not thoroughly understanding of the Buddhist Doctrines is the main reason of demonic obstructions. Most of the time, practitioner does not understand the Dharma and is not skillful at reigning in his mind, letting internal

demons or afflictions spring up, which, in turn, attract external demons. If he can keep his mind empty and still and recite the Buddha's name, external demons will be powerless and afflictions will gradually disappear. Thus, for the Pure Land practitioner, even if demonic obstacles do appear, they are few in number. Advanced practitioners, on the other hand, face many demonic occurrences because they rely only on their own strength and self-power. A Buddhist follower should fulfill the following five conditions to be successful. If a practitioner does not meet these five conditions, he is very easily subject to get harm from demons: he should keep the precepts strictly; his nature and roots should be quick and enlightened; he should have a clear understanding of the Dharma, skillfully distinguishing the correct from the deviant, the true from the false; he should be firm and stable in his determination; he should be guided by a good advisor, who has a thorough understanding of the sutras and many years experience in meditation.

III. Summaries of The Fifty Skandha-Demon States:

Ten Maras of Afflictions Within the Form Skandha: The Form Skandha or the aggregate of matter (four elements of our own body and other material objects such as solidity, fluidity, heat and motion comprise matter). The aggregate of form includes the five physical sense organs and the corresponding physical objects of the sense organs (the eyes and visible objects, the ears and sound, the nose and smell, the tongue and taste, the skin and tangible objects). There are several different categories of rupa. Inner rupa as the organs of sense (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body). Outer rupa as the objects of sense (colour, sound, smell, taste, touch). Visible objects (white, blue, yellow, red, etc.). Invisible objects (sound, smell, taste, touch). Invisible immaterial or abstract objects. Form is used more in the sense of "substance," or "something occupying space which will resist replacement by another form." So it has extension, it is limited and conditioned. It comes into existence when conditions are matured, as Buddhists would say, and staying as long as they continue, pass away. Form is impermanent, dependent, illusory, relative, antithetical, and distinctive. Things with shape and features are forms. Forms include all colors which can dim our eyes. Ordinarily speaking, we are confused

with forms when we see them, hear sounds and be confused by them, smell scents and be confused by them, taste flavors and be confused by them, or feel sensations and be confused by them. In the Classic of the Way and Its Virtue, it is said: “The five colors blind the eyes; the five musical notes deafen the ears; and the five flavors dull the palate.” Therefore, in the Heart Sutra, the Buddha taught: “If we can empty out the Aggregate of Form, then we can realize a state of there being ‘no mind inside, no body outside, and no things beyond.’” If we can follow what the Buddha taught, we are no longer attached to Forms, we are totally liberated. According to the Suragama Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Ananda! Consider this example: when a person who has pure clear eyes look at clear, bright emptiness, he sees nothing but clear emptiness, and he is quite certain that nothing exists within it. If for no apparent reason, the person does not move his eyes, the staring will cause fatigue, and then of his own accord, he will see strange flowers in space and other unreal appearances that are wild and disordered. You should know that it is the same with the skandha of form. Ananda! The strange flowers come neither from emptiness nor from the eyes.” The reason for this, Ananda, is that if the flowers were to come from emptiness, they would return to emptiness. If there is a coming out and going in, the space would not be empty. If emptiness were not empty, then it could not contain the appearance of the arising and extinction of the flowers, just as Ananda’s body cannot contain another Ananda. If the flowers were to come from the eyes, they would return to the eyes. If the nature of the flowers were to come from the eyes, it would be endowed with the faculty of seeing. If it could see, then when it left the eyes it would become flowers in space, and when it returned it should see the eyes. If it did not see, then when it left the eyes it would obscure emptiness, and when it returned, it would obscure the eyes. Moreover, when you see the flowers, your eyes should not be obscured. So why it is that the eyes are said to be ‘pure and bright’ when they see clear emptiness? Therefore, you should know that the skandha of form is empty and false, because it neither depends on causes and conditions for existence nor is spontaneous in nature. The skandha of form relates to the physical body, while the remaining four concern the mind. The skandha of rupa (or that which has form). According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha’s Ancient

Path,” matter contains and comprises the Four Great Primaries which are traditionally known as, solidity, fluidity, heat or temperature, and motion or vibration. However, they are not simply earth, water, fire and wind, though conventionally they may be so called. In Buddhist thought, especially in the Abhidhamma, the Higher Doctrine, they are more than that. According to The Surangama Sutra, book nine, there are ten states within the form skandha. These are big demonic obstructions for Buddhists on their paths of cultivation. *The First Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that body can transcend obstructions:* The Buddha told Ananda that at the point, as the person intently investigates that wondrous brightness, the four elements will no longer function together, and soon the body will be able to transcend obstructions. This state is called “the pure brightness merging into the environment.” It is a temporary state in the course of cultivation and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demon’s influence. *The Second Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the light pervades internally and he can extract intestinal worms:* Ananda! As the person uses his mind to intently investigate that wondrous light, the light will pervade his body. Suddenly he will be able to extract intestinal worms from his own body, yet his body will remain intact and unharmed. This state is called “the pure light surging through one’s physical body.” It is a temporary state in the course of intense practice, and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demon’s influence. *The Third Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the essence and souls alternately separate and unite:* As the person uses his mind to intently investigate inside and outside, his physical and spiritual souls, intellect, will, essence, and spirit will be able to interact with one another without affecting his body. They will take turns as hosts and guests. Then he may suddenly hear the Dharma being spoken in space, or perhaps he will hear esoteric truths being pronounced simultaneously throughout the ten directions. This state is called “the essence and souls alternately separating and uniting, and the planting of good seeds.” It is a temporary state and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good

state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons' influence. *The Fourth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the Buddhas appear:* When a person's mind becomes clear, unveiled, bright, and penetrating, an internal light will shine forth and turn everything in the ten directions into the color of Jambu-river gold. All the various species of beings will be transformed into Tathagatas. Suddenly he will see Vairocana Buddha seated upon a platform of celestial light, surrounded by a thousand Buddhas, who simultaneously appear upon lotus blossoms in a hundred million lands. This state is called "the mind and soul being instilled with spiritual awareness." When he has investigated to the point of clarity, the light of his mind shine upon all worlds. This is a temporary state and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons' influence. *The Fifth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that space takes on the color of precious things:* As the person uses his mind to intently investigate that wondrous light, he will contemplate without pause, restraining and subduing his mind so that it does not go to extremes. Suddenly the space in the ten directions may take on the colors of the seven precious things or the colors of a hundred precious things, which simultaneously pervade everywhere without hindering one another. The blues, yellows, reds, and whites will each be clearly apparent. This state is called "excessively subduing the mind." It is a temporary state and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons' influence. *The Sixth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the person can see thing in the dark:* As the person uses his mind to investigate with clear discernment until the pure light no longer disperses, he will suddenly be able to see various things appear in a dark room at night, just as if it were daytime, while the objects that were already in the room do not disappear. This state is called "refining the mind and purifying the vision until one is able to see in the dark." It is a temporary state and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons' influence. *The Seventh Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that*

the person's body becomes like grass or wood: When his mind completely merges with emptiness, his four limbs will suddenly become like grass or wood, devoid of sensation even when burned by fire or cut with a knife. The burning of fire will not make his limbs hot, and even when his flesh is cut, it will be like wood being whittled. This state is called “the merging of external states and blending of the four elements into a uniform substance.” It is a temporary state and does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons’ influence. *The Eighth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the person sees everywhere turn into Buddha-lands:* When his mind accomplishes such purity that his skill in purifying the mind has reached its ultimate, he will suddenly see the earth, the mountains, and the rivers in the ten directions turn into Buddhalands replete with the seven precious things, their light shining everywhere. He will also see Buddhas, Tathagatas, as many as the sands of the Ganges, filling all of space. He will also see pavilions and palaces that are resplendent and beautiful. He will see the hells below and the celestial palaces above, all without obstruction. This state is called “the gradual transformation of concentrated thoughts of fondness and loathing.” It does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons’ influence. *The Ninth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the person sees and hears distant things:* As the person uses his mind to investigate what is profound and far away, he will suddenly be able to see distant places in the middle of the night. He will see city markets and community wells, streets, and alleys, and relatives and friends, and he may hear their conversations. This state is called “having been suppressed to the utmost, the mind flies out and sees much that had been blocked from view.” It does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons’ influence. *The Tenth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the person sees good advisors:* As the person uses his mind to investigate to the utmost point, he may see a Good and Wise Advisor whose body undergoes changes. Within a brief interval, various transformations will occur which cannot

be explained. This state is called “having an improper mind which is possessed by a li-ghost, a mei-ghost, or a celestial demon, and without a reason speaking Dharma that fathoms wondrous truths.” It does not indicate sagehood. If he does not think he has become a sage, then the demonic formations will subside. But if he considers himself a sage, then he will be vulnerable to the demons’ influence.

Ten Maras of Afflictions Within the Feeling Skandha: Feeling is knowledge obtained by the senses, feeling sensation. It is defined as mental reaction to the object, but in general it means receptivity, or sensation. Feeling is also a mind which experiences either pleasure, unpleasure or indifference (pleasant, unpleasant, neither pleasant nor unpleasant). The Aggregate of Feelings refers to the feelings that we experience. For instance, a certain state arises, we accept it without thinking about it, and we feel comfortable or uncomfortable. When we eat some delicious food and its flavor makes us feel quite pleasant, this is what we mean by feelings. If we wear a fine suit and it makes us feel quite attractive, this is also what we mean by feelings. If we live in a nice house that we feel like it, this is a feeling. If we drive a nice car that we love to have, this also a feeling. All experiences that our body accepts and enjoys are considered to be the Aggregate of Feelings. When we meet attractive objects, we develop pleasurable feelings and attachment which create karma for us to be reborn in samsara. In the contrary, when we meet undesirable objects, we develop painful or unpleasurable feelings which also create karma for us to be reborn in samsara. When we meet objects that are neither attractive nor unattractive, we develop indifferent feelings which develop ignorant self-grasping, also create karma for us to be reborn in samsara. All actions performed by our body, speech and mind are felt and experienced, Buddhism calls this “Feeling” and the Buddha confirmed in the Twelve Nidanas that “Feeling” creates karma, either positive or negative, which causes rebirths in samsara. Ananda! Consider the example of a person whose hands and feet are relaxed and at ease and whose entire body is in balance and harmony. He is unaware of his life-processes, because there is nothing agreeable or disagreeable in his nature. However, for some unknown reason, the person rubs his two hands together in emptiness, and sensations of roughness, smoothness, cold, and warmth seem to arise from nowhere between his palms. You

should know that it is the same with the skandha of feeling. Ananda! All this illusory contact does not come from emptiness, nor does it come from the hand. The reason for this, Ananda, is that if it came from emptiness, then since it could make contact with the palms, why wouldn't it make contact with the body? It should not be that emptiness chooses what it comes in contact with. If it came from the palms, it could be readily felt without waiting for the two palms to be joined. What is more, if it were to come from the palms, then the palms would know when they were joined. When they separated, the contact would return into the arms, the wrists, the bones, and the marrow, and you also should be aware of the course of its entry. It should also be perceived by the mind because it would behave like something coming in and going out of the body. In that case, what need would there be to put the two palms together to experience what is called 'contact?' Therefore, you should know that the skandha of feeling is empty and false, because it neither depends on causes and conditions for existence nor is spontaneous in nature. According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in "The Buddha's Ancient Path," all our feelings are included in the group of "Aggregate of feeling". Feelings are threefold: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. They arise dependent on contact. Seeing a form, hearing a sound, smelling an odor, or tasting a flavor, touching some tangible thing, cognizing a mental object, either an idea or a thought, man experiences feeling. When, for instance, eye, form and eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-vinnana*) come together, it is their coincidence that is called contact. Contact means the combination of the organ of sense, the object of sense, and sense-consciousness. When these are all present together there is no power or force that can prevent the arising of feeling. Practitioners of mindfulness should always contemplate various kinds of feelings such as pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings. To understand thoroughly how these feelings arise, develop after their arising, and pass away. To contemplate that "feelings" only arise when there is contact between the senses. To contemplate all of the above to have a better understanding of "feelings." No matter what kinds of feelings, pleasant, unpleasant or indifference, they all lead to sufferings. According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the ten states of Feeling Skandha, the big demonic obstructions for Buddhists on their

paths of cultivation as follows: *The First Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the suppression of the self leads to sadness:* Ananda! In this situation the good person experiences a brilliant light. As a result of the excessive internal pressure in his mind, he is suddenly overwhelmed with such boundless sadness that he looks upon even mosquitoes and gadflies as newborn children. He is filled with pity and unconsciously burst into tears. This is called “overexertion in suppressing the mind in the course of cultivation.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. If he realizes that and remains unconfused, then after a time it will disappear. But if he consider himself a sage, then a demon of sadness will enter is mind. Then, as soon as he sees someone, he will feel sad and cry uncontrollably. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Second Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the Praising Oneself is being equal to the Buddhas:* Further, Ananda, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. At that time he has a sublime vision and is overwhelmed with gratitude. In this situation, he suddenly evinces tremendous courage. His mind is bold and keen. He resolves to equal all Buddhas and says he can transcend three asamkheyas of eons in a single thought. This is called “being too anxious to excel in cultivation.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. If he realizes that and remains unconfused, then after a time it will disappear. But if he considers himself a sage, , then a demon of insanity will enter his mind. As soon as he sees someone, he will boast about himself. He will become extraordinarily haughty, to the point that he recognizes no Buddhas above him and no people below him. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Third Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the Samadhi out of balance brings much reverie:* Further, in this state of samadhi the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. With no new realization immediately ahead of him, and having lost his former status as well, his power of wisdom weakens, and he enters an impasse in which he sees nothing to anticipate. Suddenly a feeling of tremendous monotony and thirst arises in his mind. At all times he is fixated in memories that do not disperse. He mistakes this for a sign of diligence and vigor. This called “cultivating the mind but losing oneself due to

lack of wisdom.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon of memory will enter his mind. Day and night it will hold his mind suspended in one place. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Fourth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the Wisdom out of balance brings much arrogance:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. His wisdom becomes stronger than his samadhi, and he mistakenly becomes impetuous. Cherishing the supremacy of his nature, he imagines that he is Vairocana Buddha and rests content with his minor achievement. This is called “applying the mind, but straying away from constant examination and becoming preoccupied with ideas and opinions.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a lowly demon that is easily satisfied will enter his mind. As soon as he sees someone, he will announce “I have realized the unsurpassed absolute truth.” Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Fifth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that the Passing through danger leads to anxiety:* Further, in this state of samadhi the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. He has not yet obtain any results, and his prior state of mind has already disappeared. Surveying the two extremes, he feels that he is in great danger. Suddenly he becomes greatly distraught (crazy), as if he were seated on the Iron Bed, or as if he has taken poison. He has no wish to go on living, and he is always asking people to take his life so he can be released sooner. This is called “cultivating, but not understanding expedients.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon of chronic depression will enter his mind. He may take up knives and swords and cut his own flesh, happily giving up his life. Or else, driven by constant anxiety, he may flee into the wilderness and be unwilling to see people. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Sixth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that experiencing ease leads to joy:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. As he dwells in this purity, his mind is tranquil and at ease. Suddenly a feeling of boundless

joy wells up in him. There is such bliss in his mind that he cannot contain it. This is called “experiencing lightness and ease, but lacking the wisdom to control it.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon that likes happiness will enter his mind. As soon as he sees someone, he will laugh. He will sing and dance in the streets. He will say that he has already attained unobstructed liberation. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Seventh Kind of Maras of Afflictions is viewing oneself as supreme and arrogant:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. He says he is already satisfied. Suddenly a feeling of unreasonable, intense self-satisfaction may arise in him. It may include pride, outrageous pride, haughty pride, overweening pride, and pride based on inferiority, all of which occur at once. In his mind, he even looks down on the Tathagatas of the ten directions, how much the more so the lesser positions of Hearers and Those Enlightened by Conditions. This called “viewing oneself as supreme, but lacking the wisdom to save oneself.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon of intense arrogance will enter his mind. He will not bow to the stupas or in temples. He will destroy sutras and images. He will say to the danpatis, “These are gold, bronze, clay, or wood. The sutras are just leaves or cloth. The flesh body is what is real and eternal, but you don’t revere it; instead you venerate clay and wood. That is totally absurd.” Those who have deep faith in him will follow him to destroy the images or bury them. He will mislead living beings so that they fall into the Relentless Heels. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Eighth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that with wisdom comes lightness and ease, which leads to complacency:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. In his refined understanding, he awakens completely to subtle principles. Everything is in accord with his wishes. He may suddenly experience limitless lightness and ease in his mind. He may say that he has become a sage and attained great self-mastery. This is called “attaining lightness and clarity due to wisdom.” If he understands, then there is no error. This

experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon that likes lightness and clarity will enter his mind. Claiming that he is already satisfied, he will not strive to make further progress. For the most part, such cultivators will become like Uncleaned Bhikshu. He will mislead living beings so that they will fall into the Avichi Hell. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Ninth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that Becoming attached to emptiness and slandering precepts:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. In that clear awakening, he experiences an illusory clarity. Within that, suddenly he may veer towards the view of eternal extinction, deny cause and effect, and take everything as empty. The thought of emptiness so predominates that he comes to believe that there is eternal extinction after death. This is called “the mental state of samadhi dissolving so that one loses sight of what is right.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he considers himself a sage, then a demon of emptiness will enter his mind. He will slander the holding of precepts, calling it a “Small Vehicle Dharma.” He will say, “Since Bodhisattvas have awakened to emptiness, what is there to hold or violate?” This person, in the presence of his faithful danapatis, will often drink wine, eat meat, and engage in lust. The power of the demon will keep his followers from doubting or denouncing him. After the ghost has possessed him for a long time, he may consume excrement and urine, or meat and wine, claiming that all such things are empty. He will break the Buddha’s moral precepts and mislead people into committing offenses. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall. *The Tenth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is that Becoming attached to existence and indulging in lust:* Further, in this state of samadhi, the good person sees the disintegration of the form skandha and understands the feeling skandha. He savors the state of illusory clarity, and it deeply enters his mind and bones. Boundless love may suddenly well forth from his mind. When that love becomes extreme, he goes insane with greed and lust. This is called “when an agreeable state of samadhi enters one’s mind, lacking the wisdom to control oneself and mistakenly engaging in lustful behavior.” If he understands, then there is no error. This experience does not indicate sagehood. But if he

considers himself a sage, then a demon of desire will enter his mind. He will become an outspoken advocate of lust, calling it the Way to Bodhi. He will teach his lay followers to indiscriminately engage in acts of lust, calling those who commit acts of lust his Dharma heirs. The power of spirits and ghosts in the Ending Age will enable him to attract a following of ordinary, naïve people numbering one hundred, two hundred, five or six hundred, or as many as one thousand or ten thousand. When the demon becomes bored, it will leave the person's body. Once the person's charisma is gone, he will run afoul of the law. He will mislead living beings, so that they fall into the Relentless Heels. Lacking proper samadhi, he will certainly fall.

Ten Maras of Afflictions Within the Thinking Skandha: Activity of recognition or identification or attaching of a name to an object of experience. Perceptions include form, sound, smell, taste, bodily impression or touch, and mental objects. The Aggregate of Thoughts refers to our thinking processes. When our five sense organs perceive the five sense objects, a variety of idle thoughts arise. Many ideas suddenly come to mind and are suddenly gone: ideas of forms, ideas of feelings. According to the Surangama Sutra, Đức Phật dạy: “Ananda! Consider the example of a person whose mouth waters at the mention of sour plums, or the soles of whose feet tingle when he thinks about walking along a precipice. You should know that it is the same with the skandha of thinking. Ananda! You should know that the watering of the mouth caused by the mention of the plums does not come from the plums, nor does it come from the mouth.” The reason for this, Ananda, is that if it were produced from the plums, the plums should speak for themselves, why wait for someone to mention them? If it came from the mouth, the mouth itself should hear, and what need would there be to wait for the ear? If the ear alone heard, then why doesn't the water come out of the ear? Thinking about walking along a precipice is explained in the same way. Therefore, you should know that the skandha of thinking is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence, nor is spontaneous in nature. According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha's Ancient Path,” the function of perception is recognition of objects both physical and mental. Perception, like feeling, also is sixfold: perception of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily contacts, and mental objects.

Perception in Buddhism is not used in the sense that some Western philosophers like Bacon, or Descartes, etc. used the term, but as a mere sense perception. There is a certain affinity between awareness (a function of consciousness) and recognition (a function of perception). While consciousness becomes aware of an object, simultaneously the mental factor of perception takes the distinctive mark of the object and thus distinguishes it from other objects. This distinctive mark is instrumental in cognizing the object a second and a third time, and in fact, every time we become aware of the object. Thus, it is perception that brings about memory. According to The Surangama Sutra, the Buddha taught Ananda about the ten states of thinking skandha, the big demonic obstructions for Buddhists on their paths of cultivation as follows: *The First Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for cleverness and skill*: Ananda, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves its perfect brightness, so he sharpens his concentrated thought as he greedily seeks for cleverness and skill. At that time a demon from the heaven seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutra and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks cleverness and skill, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. In an instant, he may appear to be a Bhikshu, enabling that person to see him as such, or he may appear as Shakra, as a woman, or as a Bhikshuni; or his body may emit light as he sleeps in a dark room. The good person is beguiled and fooled into thinking that the other is a Bodhisattva. He believes the other's teachings and his mind is swayed. He breaks the Buddha's moral precepts and covertly indulges his greedy desires. The other person is fond of speaking about calamities, auspicious events, and unusual changes. He may say that a Tathagata has appeared in the world at a certain place. He may speak of catastrophic fire or wars, thus frightening people into squandering their family wealth without reason. This is a strange ghost that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then

both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Second Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for adventure:* Ananda! In the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves to roam about, so he lets his subtle thoughts fly out as he greedily seeks for adventure. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the sutra and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks to roam, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. His own body does not change its appearance, but those listening to the Dharma suddenly see themselves sitting on jeweled lotuses and their entire bodies transformed into clusters of purple-golden light. Each person in the audience experiences that state and feels he has obtained something unprecedented. The good person is beguiled and fooled into thinking the other is a Bodhisattva. Lust and laxity corrupt his mind. He breaks the Buddha's moral precepts and covertly indulges his greedy desires. The other person is fond of saying that Buddhas are appearing in the world. He claims that in a certain place a certain person is actually a transformation body of a certain Buddha. Or he says that a certain person is such and such a Bodhisattva who has come to teach humankind. People who witness this are filled with admiration. Their wrong views multiply, and their Wisdom of Modes is destroyed. This is a drought ghost that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Third Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for union:* Ananda! In the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and

experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves spiritual oneness, so he clarifies his concentrated thought as he greedily seeks for union. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutra and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is actually possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks union, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. Neither his own body nor the bodies of those listening to the Dharma go through any external transformations. But he makes the minds of the listeners become “enlightened” before they listen to the Dharma, so they experience changes in every thought. They may have the knowledge of past lives or the knowledge of others’ thoughts. They may see the hells or know all the good and evil events in the human realm. They may speak verses or spontaneously recite Sutras. Each person is elated and feels he has obtained something unprecedented. The good person is beguiled and fooled into thinking the other is a Bodhisattva. His thoughts become entangled in love. He breaks the Buddha’s moral precepts and covertly indulges his greedy desires. He is fond of saying that there are greater Buddhas and lesser Buddhas, earlier Buddhas and later Buddhas; that among them are true Buddhas and false Buddhas, male Buddhas and female Buddhas; and that the same is true of Bodhisattvas. When people witness this, their initial resolve is washed away, and they easily get carried away with their wrong understanding. This is a Mei-Ghost that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person’s body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Fourth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed to analyze things:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves to know the origins of things, so he exhaustively investigates the nature of physical things and their changes from beginning to end. He intensifies the keenness of his

thoughts as he greedily seeks to analyze things. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks to know the origins of things, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. His body has an awesome spiritual quality which subdues the seeker. He makes the minds of those gathered beside his seat spontaneously compliant, even before they have heard the Dharma. He says to all those people that the Buddha's N'rvana, Bodhi, and Dharma-body are there before them in the form of his own physical body. He says: "The successive begetting of fathers and sons from generation to generation is itself the Dharma-body, which is permanent and never-ending. What you see right now are those very Buddha-lands. There are no other pure dwellings or golden features. Those people believe and accept his words, forgetting their initial resolve. They offer up their lives, feeling they have obtained something unprecedented. They are all beguiled and confused into thinking he is a Bodhisattva. As they pursue his ideas, they break the Buddha's moral precepts and covertly indulges their greedy desires. He is fond of saying that the eyes, ears, nose, and tongue are the Pure Land, and that the male and female organs are the true place of Bodhi and Nirvana. Ignorant people believe these filthy words. This is a poisonous ghost or an evil paralysis ghost that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Fifth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for spiritual responses:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves revelations from afar, so he pours all his energy into this intense investigation as he greedily seeks for imperceptible spiritual responses. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for.

Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and Dharma. This person, completely unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks revelations, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. He briefly appears to his listeners in a body that looks a hundred or a thousand years old. They experience a defiling love for him and cannot bear to part with him. They personally act as his servants, tirelessly making the Four Kinds of Offerings to him. Each member of the assembly believes that this person is his former teacher, his original Good and Wise Advisor. They give rise to love for his Dharma and stick to him as if glued, feeling they have obtained something unprecedented. The good person is beguiled and fooled into thinking the other is a Bodhisattva. Attracted to the other's thinking, he breaks the Buddha's moral precepts and covertly indulges his greedy desires. He is fond of saying, "In a past life, in a certain incarnation, I rescued a certain person who was then my wife, my mistress or my brother. Now I have come to rescue you again. We will stay together and go to another world to make offerings to a certain Buddha." Or he may say, "There is a Heaven of Great Brilliance where a Buddha now dwells. It is the resting place of all Tathagatas." Ignorant people believe his ravings and lose their original resolve. This is a pestilence ghost that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Sixth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for peace and quiet:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves deep absorption, so he restrains himself with energetic diligence and likes to dwell in secluded places as he greedily seeks for peace and quiet. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is

possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks seclusion, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. He causes all of his listeners to think they know their karma from the past. Or he may say to someone there, “You haven’t died yet, but you have already become an animal.” Then he instructs another person to step on the first person’s tail,” and suddenly the first person cannot stand up. At that point, all in the assembly pour out their hearts in respect and admiration for him. If someone has a thought, the demon detects it immediately. He establishes intense ascetic practices that exceed the Buddha’s ’oral precepts. He slanders Bhikshus, scolds his assembly of disciples, and exposes people’s ’rivate affairs without fear of ridicule or rejection. He is fond of foretelling calamities and auspicious events, and when they come to pass, he is not wrong in the slightest. This is a ghost with great powers that in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person’s body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Seventh Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for past lives:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves more knowledge and understanding, so he diligently toils at examining and probing as he greedily seeks to know past lives. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks knowledge, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. There in the Dharma Assembly, inexplicably, that person may obtain an enormous precious pearl. The demon may sometimes change into an animal that holds the pearl or other jewels, bamboo tablets, tallies, talismans, letters, and other unusual things in its mouth. The demon first gives the objects to the person and afterwards possesses him. Or

he may fool his audience by buying the objects underground and then saying that a “moonlight pearl” is illuminating the place. Thereupon the audience feels they have obtained something unique. He may eat only medicinal herbs and not partake of prepared food. Or he may eat only one sesame seed and one grain of wheat a day and still look robust. That is because he is sustained by the power of the demon. He slanders Bhikshus and scolds his assembly of disciples without fear of ridicule or rejection. He is fond of talking about treasure troves in other locations, or of remote and hidden places where sages and worthies of the ten directions dwell. Those who follow him often see strange and unusual people. This is a ghost or spirit of the mountain forests, earth, cities, rivers, and mountains that in its old age has become a demon. The person it possesses may advocate promiscuity and violate the Buddha’s precepts. He may covertly indulge in the five desires with his followers. Or he may appear to be vigorous, eating only wild plants. His behavior is erratic, and he disturbs and confuses the good person. But when the demon tires, it will leave the other person’s body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Eighth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for spiritual powers:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves spiritual powers and all manner of transformations, so he investigates the source of transformations as he greedily seeks for spiritual powers. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, truly unaware that he is possessed by a demon, also claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks spiritual powers, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. The possessed person may hold fire in his hands and, grasping a portion of it, put a flame on the head of each listener in the Fourfold Assembly. The flames on top of their heads are several feet high, yet they are not hot and no one is burned. Or he may walk on water as if on dry land; or he

may sit motionless in the air; or he may enter into a bottle or stay in a bag; or he may pass through window panes and walls without obstruction. Only when attacked by weapons does he feel ill at ease. He declares himself to be a Buddha and, wearing the clothing of a lay person, receives bows from Bhikshus. He slanders dhyana meditation and the moral regulations. He scolds his disciples and exposes people's private affairs without fear of ridicule or rejection. He often talks about spiritual powers and self-mastery. He may cause people to see visions of Buddhalands, but they are unreal and arise merely from the ghost's power to delude people. He praises the indulgence of lust and does not condemn lewd conduct. He uses indecent means to transmit his Dharma. This is a powerful nature spirit: a mountain sprite, a sea sprite, a wind sprite, a river sprite, an earth sprite or a grass-and-tree sprite that has evolved over long ages. It may be a dragon-goblin; or a rishi who has been reborn as a goblin; or again a rishi who, having reached the end of his appointed time, should have died, but whose body does not decay and is possessed by a goblin. In its old age it has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Ninth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for profound emptiness:* Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves to enter cessation, so he investigates the nature of transformations as he greedily seeks for profound emptiness. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks emptiness, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. In the midst of the great assembly, his physical form suddenly disappears, and no one in the assembly can see him. Then out of nowhere, he abruptly reappears. He can appear and disappear at will, or he can make his

body transparent like crystal. From his hands and feet he releases the fragrance of sandalwood, or his excrement and urine may be sweet as thick rock candy. He slanders the precepts and is contemptuous of those who have left the home-life. He often says that there is no cause and no effect, that once we die, we are gone forever, that there is no afterlife, and that there are no ordinary people and no sages. Although he has obtained a state of empty stillness, he covertly indulges his greedy desires. Those who give in to his lust also adopt his views of emptiness and deny cause and effect. This is an essence that was created during an eclipse of the sun or moon. Having fallen on gold, jade, a rare fungus, a unicorn, a phoenix, a tortoise, or a crane, the essence endowed it with life, so that it did not die for a thousand or ten thousands of years and eventually became a spirit. It was then born into this land and in its old age has become a demon. It disturbs and confuses the good person. But when it tires of doing so, it will leave the other person's body. Then both the disciples and the teacher will get in trouble with the law. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells. *The Tenth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the Greed for immortality*: Further, in the unhindered clarity and wonder that ensues after the feeling skandha is gone, this good person is untroubled by any deviant mental state and experiences perfect, bright concentration. Within samadhi, his mind craves long life, so he toils at investigating its subtleties as he greedily seeks for immortality. He wishes to cast aside the birth and death of the body, and suddenly he hopes to end the birth and death of thoughts as well, so that he can abide forever in a subtle form. At that time a demon from the heavens seizes the opportunity it has been waiting for. Its spirit possesses another person and uses him as a mouthpiece to expound the Sutras and the Dharma. This person, unaware that he is possessed by a demon, claims he has reached unsurpassed Nirvana. When he comes to see that good person who seeks long life, he arranges a seat and speaks the Dharma. He is fond of saying that he can go places and come back without hindrance, perhaps traveling ten thousand miles and returning in the twinkling of an eye. He can also bring things back from wherever he goes. Or he may tell someone to walk from one end of the room to the other, a distance of just a few

paces. Then even if the person walked fast for ten years, he could not reach the wall. Therefore, people believe in the possessed person and mistake him for a Buddha. He often says, “All beings in the ten directions are my children. I gave birth to all Buddhas. I created the world. I am the original Buddha. I created this world naturally, not due to cultivation.” This may be a chamunda sent from the retinue of the demon in the Heaven of Sovereignty, or a youthful pishacha from the Heaven of the Four Kings that has not yet brought forth the resolve. It takes advantage of the person’s luminous clarity and devours his essence and energy. Or perhaps without having to rely on a teacher, the cultivator personally sees a being that tells him, “I am a Vajra Spirit who has come to give you long life.” Or the being transforms itself into a beautiful woman and engages him in frenzied lust, so that within a year his vitality is exhausted. He talks to himself; and to anyone listening he sounds like a goblin. The people around him do not realize what is happening. In most cases such a person will get in trouble with the law. But before he is punished, he will die from depletion. The demon disturbs and confuses the person to the point of death. You should be aware of this in advance and not get caught up in the cycle of transmigration. If you are confused and do not understand, you will fall into the Relentless Hells.

Ten Kinds of Maras of Afflictions of the Formation Skandha:

Aggregate of mental formation is a conditioned response to the object of experience including volition, attention, discrimination, resolve, etc. The Aggregate of Activities refers to a process of shifting and flowing. The Aggregate of Activities leads us to come and go, to go and come without end in a constant, ceaseless, flowing pattern. Our idle thoughts compel us to impulsively do good or do evil, and such thoughts then manifest in our actions and our words. According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Ananda! Consider, for example, a swift rapids whose waves follow upon one another in orderly succession, the ones behind never overtaking the ones in front. You should know that it is the same with the skandha of mental formation. Ananda! Thus the nature of the flow does not arise because of emptiness, nor does it come into existence because of the water. It is not the nature of water, and yet it is not separate from either emptiness or water. The reason for this, Ananda, is that if it arose because of emptiness, then the

inexhaustible emptiness throughout the ten directions would become an inexhaustible flow, and all the worlds would inevitably be drown. If the swift rapids existed because of water, then their nature would differ from that of water and the location and characteristics of its existence would be apparent. If their nature were simply that of water, then when they became still and clear they would no longer be made up of water. Suppose it were to separate from emptiness and water, there isn't anything outside of emptiness, and outside of water there isn't any flow. Therefore, you should know that the skandha of mental formation is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence nor is spontaneous in nature." According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in "The Buddha's Ancient Path," aggregate of volitional formations include all mental factors except feeling and perception. The Abhidhamma speaks of fifty-two mental concomitants or factors (cetasika). Feeling and perception are two of them, but they are not volitional activities. The remaining fifty are collectively known as mental or volitional formations. Volition (cetana) plays a very important role in the mental realm. In Buddhism, no action is considered as "kamma" if that action is void of volition. And like feeling and perception, it is of six kinds: volition directed to forms, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily contacts and mental objects. According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the ten big demonic obstructions of Zen practitioners caused by the Formation Skandha as follows: *The First Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the two theories on the absence of cause: First*, perhaps this person sees no cause for the origin of life. Why? Since he has completely destroyed the mechanism of production, he can, by means of the eight hundred merits of the eye organ, see all beings in the swirling flow of karma during eighty thousand eons, dying in one place and being reborn in another as they undergo transmigration. But he cannot see beyond eighty thousand eons. Therefore, he concluded that for the last eighty thousand eons living beings in the ten directions of this and other worlds have come into being without any cause. *Second*, perhaps this person sees no cause for the end of life. And why? Since he perceives the origin of life, he believes that people are always born as people and birds are always born as birds; that crows have always been black and swans have always been white; that humans and gods have always

stood upright and animals have always walked on four legs; that whiteness does not come from being washed and blackness does not come from being dyed; and that there have never been nor there will be any changes for eighty thousand eons. He says: “As I now examine to the end of this life, I find the same holds true. In fact, I have never seen Bodhi, so how can there be such a thing as the attainment of Bodhi? You should now realize that there is no cause for the existence of any phenomena.” Because of this speculation, he will lose proper and pervasive knowledge, fall into externalism, and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Second Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the four theories regarding pervasive permanence:* According to the Surangama Sutra, book Nine, in the part of the ten states of the formation skandha, the Buddha reminded Ananda as follows: “Ananda, in his practice of samadhi, the good person” mind is unmoving, clear, and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting, and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate on its pervasive constancy, he could fall into error with four theories of pervasive permanence.” *Attachment on Permanence on the Mind and its states:* First, as this person thoroughly investigates the mind and its states, he may conclude that both are causeless. Through his cultivation, he knows that in twenty thousand eons, as beings in the ten directions undergo endless rounds of birth and death, they are never annihilated. Therefore, he speculates that the mind and its states are permanent. *Attachment on Permanence on the four elements:* Second, as this person thoroughly investigates the source of the four elements, he may conclude that they are permanent in nature. Through his cultivation, he knows that in forty thousand eons, as living beings in the ten directions undergo births and deaths, their substances exist permanently and are never annihilated. Therefore, he speculates that this situation is permanent. *Attachment on Permanence on the sense faculty, the manas, and the consciousness:* Third, as this person thoroughly investigates the sixth sense faculty, the manas, and the consciousness that grasps and receives, he concludes that the origin of the mind, intellect, and consciousness is permanent. Through his cultivation, he knows that in eighty thousand eons, all living beings in the ten directions revolve in transmigration, this origin is never

destroyed and exists permanently. Investigating this undestroyed origin, he speculates that it is permanent. *Attachment on Permanence on the thoughts*: Fourth, since this person has ended the source of thoughts, there is no more reason for them to arise. In the state of flowing, halting, and turning, the thinking mind, which was the cause of production and destruction, has now ceased forever, and so he naturally thinks that this is a state of nonproduction and nondestruction. As a result of such reasoning, he speculates that this state is permanent. Because of these speculation of permanence, he will lose proper and pervasive knowledge, fall into externalism, and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Third Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the four upside-down theories*: First, as this person contemplates the wonderfully bright mind pervading the ten directions, he concludes that this state of profound stillness is the ultimate spiritual self. Then he speculates, "My spiritual self, which is settled, bright, and unmoving, pervades the ten directions. All living beings are within my mind, and there they are born and die by themselves. Therefore, my mind is permanent, while those who undergo birth and death there are truly impermanent." Second, instead of contemplating his own mind, this person contemplates in the ten directions worlds as many as the Ganges' sands. He regards as ultimately impermanent those worlds that are in eons of decay, and as ultimately permanent those that are not in eons of decay. Third, this person closely examines his own mind and finds it to be subtle and mysterious, like fine motes of dust swirling in the ten directions, unchanging in nature. And yet it can cause his body to be born and then to die. He regards that indestructible nature as his permanent intrinsic nature, and that which undergoes birth and death and flows forth from him as impermanent. Fourth, knowing that the skandha of thinking has ended and seeing the flowing of the skandha of formations, this person speculates that the continuous flow of the skandha of formations is permanent, and that the skandhas of form, feeling, and thinking which have already ended are impermanent. Because of these speculations of impermanence and permanence, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Fourth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the four theories regarding finiteness*: First, this person speculates that the origin of life flows and functions ceaselessly. He judges that the past

and the future are finite and that the continuity of the mind is infinite. *Second*, as this person contemplates an interval of eighty thousand eons, he can see living beings; but earlier than eighty thousand eons is a time of stillness in which he cannot hear or see anything. He regards as infinite that time in which nothing is heard or seen, and as finite that interval in which living beings are seen to exist. *Third*, this person speculates that his own pervasive knowledge is infinite and that all other people appear within his awareness. And yet, since he himself has never perceived the nature of their awareness, he says they have not obtained an infinite mind, but have only a finite one. *Fourth*, this person thoroughly investigates the formations skandha to the point that it becomes empty. Based on what he sees, in his mind he speculates that each and every living being, in its given body, is half living and half dead. From this he concludes that everything in the world is half finite and half infinite. Because of these speculations about the finite and the infinite, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Fifth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the four kinds of sophistry*: Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person's mind is firm, unmoving, and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting, and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate on what he knows and sees, he could fall into error with four distorted, false theories, which are total speculation based on the sophistry of immortality. *First*, this person contemplates the source of transformations. Seeing the movement and flow, he says there is change. Seeing the continuity, he says there is constancy. Where he can perceive something, he says there is production. Where he cannot perceive anything, he says there is destruction. He says that the unbroken continuity of causes is increasing and that the pause within the continuity are decreasing. He says that the arising of all things is existence and that the perishing of all things is nonexistence. The light of reason shows that his application of mind has led to inconsistent views. If someone comes to seek the Dharma, asking about its meaning, he replies, "I am both alive and dead, both existent and nonexistent, both increasing and decreasing." He always speaks in a confusing way, causing that person to forget what he was going to say.

Second, this person attentively contemplates his mind and finds that everything is nonexistent. He has a realization based on nonexistence. When anyone comes to ask him questions, he replies with only one word. He only says “no,” Aside from saying “none,” he does not speak. *Third*, this person attentively contemplates his mind and finds that everything is existent. He has a realization based on existence. When anyone comes to ask him questions, he replies with only one word. He only says “yes.” Aside from saying “yes,” he does not speak. *Fourth*, this person perceives both existence and nonexistence. Experiencing this branching, his mind becomes confused. When anyone comes to ask questions, he tells them, “Existence is also nonexistence. But within nonexistence there is no existence.” It is all sophistry and does not stand up under scrutiny. Because of these speculations, which are empty sophistries, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Sixth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the sixteen ways in which forms can exist after death:* Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person’s mind is firm, unmoving and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate the endless flow, he could fall into error with the confused ideas that forms exist after death. He may strongly identify with his body and say that form is himself; or he may see himself as perfectly encompassing all worlds and say that he contains form; or he may perceive all external conditions as contingent upon himself and say that form belongs to him; or he may decide that he relies on the continuity of the formations skandha and say that he is within form. In all these speculations, he says that forms exist after death. Expanding the idea, he comes up with sixteen cases of the existence of forms. *The Seventh Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the eight ideas about nonexistence of forms:* Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person’s mind is firm, unmoving and proper, and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of being and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate on the skandhas of form, feeling, and thinking, which have already ended, he could fall into error with the confused idea that forms do not exist after death. Seeing that his form

is gone, his physical shape seems to lack a cause. As he contemplates the absence of thought, there is nothing to which his mind can become attached. Knowing that his feelings are gone, he has no further involvements. Those skandhas have vanished. Although there is still some coming into being, there is no feeling or thought, and he concludes that he is like grass or wood. Since those qualities do not exist at present, how can there be any existence of forms after death? Because of his examinations and comparisons, he decides that after death there is no existence. Expanding the idea, he comes up with eight cases of the nonexistence of forms. From that, he may speculate that Nirvana and cause and effect are all empty, that they are mere names and ultimately do not exist. Because of those speculations that forms do not exist after death, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Eighth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the eight kinds of negation:* Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person's mind is firm, unmoving and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting and constant fluctuation. In this state where the skandha of formation remains, but the skandhas of feeling and thinking are gone, if he begins to speculate that there are both existence and nonexistence, thus contradicting himself, he could fall into error with confused theories that deny both existence and nonexistence after death. Regarding form, feeling and thinking, he sees that existence is not really existence. Within the flow of the formations skandha, he sees that that nonexistence is not really nonexistence. Considering back and forth in this way, he thoroughly investigates the realms of these skandhas and derives an eightfold negation of forms. No matter which skandha is mentioned, he says that after death, it neither exists nor does not exist. Further, because he speculates that all formations are changing in nature, an "insight" flashes through his mind, leading him to deny both existence and nonexistence. He cannot determine what is unreal and what is real. Because of these speculations that deny both existence and nonexistence after death, the future is murky to him and he cannot say anything about it. Therefore, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Ninth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the seven theories on the cessation of existence:* Further, in

his practice of samadhi, the good person's mind is firm, unmoving and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting, and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate that there is no existence after death, he could fall into error with seven theories of the cessation of existence. He may speculate that the body will cease to exist; or that when desire has ended, there is cessation of existence; or that after suffering has ended, there is cessation of existence; or that when bliss reaches an ultimate point, there is cessation of existence; or that when renunciation reaches an ultimate point, there is cessation of existence. Considering back and forth in this way, he exhaustively investigates the limits of the seven states and sees that they have already ceased to be and will not exist again. Because of these speculations that existence ceases after death, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. *The Tenth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the five kinds of immediate Nirvana:* According to the Surangama Sutra, book nine, in the section of the ten states of formation skandha, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the five kinds of immediate Nirvana: "Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person's mind is firm, unmoving, and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting, and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate on existence after death, he could fall into error with five theories of Nirvana. Because of these speculations about five kinds of immediate Nirvana, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature. He may consider the Heavens of the Desire Realm a true refuge, because he contemplates their extensive brightness and longs for it. He may take refuge in the First Dhyana, because there his nature is free from worry. He may take refuge in the Second Dhyana, because there his mind is free from suffering. He may take refuge in the Third Dhyana, because he delights in its extreme joy. He may take refuge in the Fourth Dhyana, reasoning that suffering and bliss are both ended there and that he will no longer undergo transmigration. These heavens are subject to outflows, but in his confusion he thinks that they are unconditioned; and he takes these five states of tranquility to be refuge of supreme purity.

Considering back and forth in this way, he decides that these five states are ultimate.

Ten Kinds of Maras of Afflictions of the Consciousness Skandha:

Aggregate of consciousness includes the six types of consciousness (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and mental consciousness). Awareness or sensitivity to an object, i.e. the consciousness associates with the physical factors when the eye and a visible object come into contact, an awareness of a visible object occurs in our mind. Consciousness or a turning of a mere awareness into personal experience is a combined function of feeling, perception and mental formation. The Aggregate of Consciousness refers to the process of discrimination. As soon as a situation appears, we begin to discriminate in our thoughts about that situation. For example, when we see something beautiful, we have thoughts of fondness towards it; and when we hear ugly sounds, we have thoughts of dislike for those sounds. All such discriminations are part of this Aggregate. According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Ananda! Consider, for example, a man who picks up a kalavinka pitcher and stops up its two holes. He lift up the pitcher filled with emptiness and, walking some thousand-mile way, presents it to another country. You should know that the skandha of consciousness is the same way. Thus, Ananda, the space does not come from one place, nor does it go to another. The reason for this, Ananda, is that if it were to come from another place, then when the stored-up emptiness in the pitcher went elsewhere, there would be less emptiness in the place where the pitcher was originally. If it were to enter this region, when the holes were unplugged and the pitcher was turned over, one would see emptiness come out. Therefore, you should know that the skandha of consciousness is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence nor is spontaneous in nature.” According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha’s Ancient Path”, Aggregate of consciousness is the most important of the aggregates; for it is the receptacle, so to speak, for all the fifty-two mental concomitants or factors, since without consciousness no mental factors are available. Consciousness and the factors are interrelated, inter-dependent, and co-existent. Aggregate of consciousness has six types and its function is varied. It has its basis and objects. All our feelings are experienced through the contact of

sense faculties with the external world. Although there is this functional relationship between the faculties and their objects, for instance, eye with forms, ear with sounds, and so on, awareness comes through consciousness. In other words, sense objects can not be experienced with the particular sensitivity without the appropriate kind of consciousness. Now when eye and form are both present, visual consciousness arises dependent on them. Similarly with ear and sound, and so on, down to mind and mental objects. Again, when the three things, eye, form, and eye-consciousness come together, it is their coincidence that is called “contact”. From contact comes feeling and so on. Thus, consciousness originates through a stimulus arising in the five sense doors and the mind door, the sixth. As consciousness arises through the interaction of the sense faculties and the sense objects, it also is conditioned and not independent. It is not a spirit or soul opposed to matter. Thoughts and ideas which are food for the sixth faculty called mind are also dependent and conditioned. They depend on the external world which the other five sense faculties experience. The five faculties contact objects, only in the present that is when objects come in direct contact with the particular faculty. The mind faculty, however, can experience the sense object, whether it is form, sound, smell, taste, or thought already cognized by the sense organs. For instance, a visible object, with which the eye came in contact in the past, can be visualized by the mind faculty just at this moment although the object is not before the eye. Similarly with the other sense objects. This is subjective, and it is difficult to experience some of these sensations. This sort of activity of the mind is subtle and sometimes beyond ordinary comprehension. In the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the ten states of consciousness which are big demonic obstructions for Buddhists on their paths of cultivation as follows: *The First Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to causes and what which is caused*: Ananda! You should know that the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty, and he must return consciousness to the source. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. He can cause the individual sense faculties of his body to unite and open. He also has a pervasive awareness of all categories of beings in the ten directions. Since his awareness is

pervasive, he can enter the perfect source. But if he regards what he is returning to as the cause of true permanence and interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of holding to that cause. Kapila the Sankhyan, with his theory of returning to the Truth of the Unmanifest, will become his companion. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the first state, in which he concludes that there is a place to which to return, based on the idea that there is something to attain. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds of externalism. *The Second Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to ability that is not actually ability:* Further, Ananda, the god person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. He may regard that to which he is returning as his own body and may see all beings in the twelve categories throughout space as flowing forth from his body. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of maintaining that he has an ability which he does not really have. Maheshvara, will manifest his boundless body, will become his companion. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the second state, in which he draws conclusions about the workings of an ability based on idea that he has such an ability. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds for being born in the Heaven of Great Pride where the self is considered all-pervading and perfect. *The Third Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to a wrong idea of permanence:* Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. If he regards what he is returning to as a refuge, he will suspect that his body and mind come forth from there, and that all things throughout space in the ten directions arise from there as well. He will explain that from which all things issue forth is the truly permanent body, which is not subject to production and destruction. While still within production and destruction, he prematurely reckons that he abides in permanence. Since he is deluded about nonproduction, he is also confused about production and destruction.

He is sunk in confusion. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of taking what is not permanent to be permanent. He will speculate that the Sovereign God (Ishvaradeva) is his companion. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the third state, in which he makes a false speculation based on the idea that there is a refuge. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds of a distorted view of perfection. *The Fourth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to an awareness that is not actually awareness:* Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. Based on his idea that there is universal awareness, he formulates a theory that all the plants in the ten directions are sentient, not different from human beings. He claims that plants can become people, and that when people die they again become plants in the ten directions. If he considers this idea of unrestricted, universal awareness to be supreme, he will fall into the error of maintaining that what is not aware has awareness. Vasishtha and Sainika, who maintained the idea of comprehensive awareness, will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the fourth state, in which he draws an erroneous conclusion based on the idea that there is a universal awareness. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds of a distorted view of awareness. *The Fifth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to birth that is not actually birth:* Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. If he has attained versatility in the perfect fusion and interchangeable functioning of the sense faculties, he may speculate that all things arise from these perfect transformations. He then seeks the light of fire, delights in the purity of water, loves the wind's circuitous flow, and contemplates the accomplishments on the earth. He reveres and serves them all. He takes these mundane elements to be a fundamental cause and considers them to be everlasting. He will then fall into the error of taking what is not production to be production.

Kashyapa and the Brahmans who seek to transcend birth and death by diligently serving fire and worshipping water will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the fifth state, in which he confusedly pursues the elements, setting up a false cause that leads to false aspirations based on speculations about his attachment to worship. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds of a distorted view of transformation. *The Sixth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to a refuge that is not actually a refuge:* Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. He may speculate that there is an emptiness within the perfect brightness, and based on that he denies the myriad transformations, taking their eternal cessation as his refuge. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of taking what is not a refuge to be a refuge. Those abiding in the Shunyata of the Heaven of Neither Thought nor Non-Thought will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the sixth state, in which he realizes a state of voidness based on the idea of emptiness within the perfect brightness. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds of annihilationism. *The Seventh Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to an attainable craving:* Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. In the state of what seems to be perfect permanence, he may bolster his body, hoping to live for a long time in that subtle and perfect condition without dying. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of being greedy for something attainable. Asita and those who seek long life will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the seventh state, in which he sets up the false cause of bolstering and aspires to permanent worldly existence, based on his attainment to the life-source. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds for false thoughts of lengthening life. *The Eighth Kind*

of Maras of Afflictions is the attachment to truth that is not actually truth: Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. As he contemplates the interconnection of all lives, he wants to hang on to worldly enjoyments and is afraid they will come to an end. Caught up in this thought, he will, by the power of transformation, seat himself in a lotus flower palace, conjure up an abundance of the seven precious things, increase his retinue of beautiful women, and indulge his mind. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall into the error of taking what is not the truth to be the truth. Vignakara will become his companion. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the eighth state, in which he decides to indulge in worldly enjoyments, based on his wrong thinking. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds for becoming a demon of the heavens.

The Ninth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the fixed nature Hearers: Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate serenity. In his understanding of life, he distinguishes the subtle and the coarse and determines the true and the false. But he only seeks a response in the mutual repayment of cause and effect, and he turns his back on the Way of Purity. In the practice of seeing suffering, eliminating accumulation, realizing cessation, and cultivating the Way, he dwells in cessation and stops there, making no further progress. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall and become a fixed nature Hearer. Unlearned Sanghans and those of overweening pride will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhis of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the ninth state, in which he aspires toward the fruition of cessation, based on perfecting the mind that seeks responses. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds for becoming enmeshed in emptiness.

The Tenth Kind of Maras of Afflictions is the fixed nature Pratyekas: Further, the good person has thoroughly seen the formations skandha as empty. He has ended production and destruction, but he has not yet perfected the subtle wonder of ultimate

serenity. In that perfectly fused, pure, bright enlightenment, as he investigates the profound wonder, he may take it to be Nirvana and fail to make further progress. If he interprets this as a supreme state, he will fall and become a fixed-nature Pratyeka. Those Enlightened by Conditions and Solitary Enlightened Ones who do not turn their minds to the Great Vehicle will become his companions. Confused about the Bodhi of the Buddhas, he will lose his knowledge and understanding. This is the tenth state, in which he realizes a profound brightness based on fusing the mind with perfect enlightenment. He strays far from perfect penetration and turns his back on the City of Nirvana, thus sowing the seeds for being unable to surpass his attachment to the brightness of perfect enlightenment.

Chapter Twenty

Summaries of Functioning Consciousnesses That Can Cause Afflictions

I. An Overview of The Functioning Consciousnesses:

As mentioned above, “Mind” is another name for Alaya-vijnana. Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible. We are aware of our thoughts and feelings and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy. The mind is the root of all dharmas. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: “All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas.” The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, but the mind can also create sufferings, afflictions and hells in daily life. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. The mind is so closely linked with the body that mental states affect the body’s health and well-being. Some doctors even confirm that there is no such thing as a purely physical disease. Unless these bad mental states are caused by previous evil acts, and they are unalterable, it is possible so to change them as to cause mental health and physical well-being to follow thereafter. Man’s mind influences his body profoundly. If allowed to function viciously and entertain unwholesome thoughts, mind can cause disaster, can even kill a being; but it can also cure a sick body. When mind is concentrated on right thoughts with right effort and understanding, the effect it can produce is immense. A mind with pure and wholesome thoughts really does lead to a healthy and relaxed life. As a matter of fact, Outside the mind, there is no other thing. Mind, Buddha, and all the living, these three are not different (the Mind, the Buddha and sentient beings are not three different things). Zen practitioners should always remember that nothing exists outside the mind (consciousness), since all phenomena are projections of consciousness. All is mind, mind pervades in all places, in all the bodies. The ignorance perceive multiplicity, but there is nothing predicable in Mind-Only. The functions of mind are very extensive and numberless. That’s why the Buddha always reminded his disciples, “Mind is like an unrest monkey jumping from one tree to

another.” Fundamental Consciousness is the functioning mind and the later is its qualities or conditions.

The Qualities of the Functioning Mind, also called the conditions (mental actions) of the functioning mind are also called the mental factors, also called psychic factors or jhana factors, that help raise the practitioner from lower to higher levels of mental purity. There are five jhana factors: initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness of mind. Mental conditions or emotions; the attributes of the mind, especially the moral qualities, emotions, love, hate, etc. Mental factor intention includes all of our desires develop because of the thoughts of our mental factor intention. When we see an attractive object, we develop a wish to obtain that object. In contrary, when we see an unattractive object, we develop a wish not to obtain that object; sometimes we hate the object.

Summaries of Fifty-One Mental States That Are Interactive With the Mind & Cause Afflictions:

Mental conditions or emotions; the attributes of the mind, especially the moral qualities, emotions, love, hate, etc. According to the Kosa Sastra, there are one hundred divisions of all mental qualities and their agents of the Consciousness-Only School, or five groups of one hundred modes or things. Mental factors are also called psychic factors including mental conditions or emotions; the attributes of the mind, especially the moral qualities, emotions, love, hate, etc. Fifty-one mental states are divided into six parts. ***Part One Is the Five Universally Interactive Mental States (Sarvatraga):*** The first mental state is the attention (manaskara) or paying attention on something. The second mental state is the contact (sparsha), which means after paying attention on something, one has a tendency to want to come in contact with it. The third mental state is the feeling (vedana), which means once contact is established, feeling arises. The fourth mental state is the conceptualization (samjna), which means once feeling arises, conceptualization occurs. The fifth mental state is the deliberation (cetana), which means once there is “conceptualization,” then “deliberation” sets in. ***Part Two Is the Five Particular States (Viniyata):*** The sixth mental state is the desire (chanda). Desire means to want for something. The seventh mental state is the resolution

(adhimoksha). Resolution means supreme understanding without any doubt at all. The eighth mental state is the recollection (smriti). Recollection means remembering clearly. The ninth mental state is the concentration (samadhi). Concentration means exclusively pay attention to something. The tenth mental state is the judgment (prajna). Judgment means ability to judge which average person possesses. **Part Three Is the Eleven Wholesome States (Kushala):** From the eleventh mental state to the twenty-first mental state: faith (shraddha), vigor (virya), shame (hri), remorse or embarrassment (apatraya), absence of greed (alobha), anger (advesha), ignorance (amoha), light ease (prashraddhi), non-laxness (apramada), renunciation (upeksha), and non-harming (ahimsa) are mental states that do not cause afflictions for practitioners. **Part Four Is the Six Fundamental Afflictions (Klesha):** The twenty-second mental state is the greed (raga). Greed for wealth, sex, fame, food, sleep or greed for forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch. The twenty-third mental state is the anger (pratigha). Not obtaining what one is greedy for leads to anger. The twenty-fourth mental state is the ignorance (moha). Once anger arises, one has nothing but “ignorance.” The twenty-fifth mental state is the arrogance (mana). Arrogance means pride and conceit which causes one to look down on others. The twenty-sixth mental state is the doubt (vicikitsa). Cannot believe or make up one’s mind on something. The twenty-seventh mental state is the improper views (drishti). **Part Five Is the Twenty Derivative Afflictions (Upaklesha):** Derivative Afflictions include ten minor grade afflictions, two intermediate grade afflictions, and eight major grade afflictions. *Ten minor grade afflictions include wrath, hatred, covering, rage, deceit, conceit, harming, flattery, jealousy, and stinginess.* The twenty-eighth mental state is the wrath (krodha). Wrath which comes suddenly and is a combination of anger and hatred. The twenty-ninth mental state is the hatred (upanaha). Hatred happens when one represses the emotional feelings deep inside. The thirtieth mental state is the rage (pradasa). Rage, of which the emotional reaction is much more severe than hatred. The thirty-first mental state is the hiding (mraksha). Hiding means covering or concealing something inside. The thirty-second mental state is the deceit (maya). Deceit means false kindness or phone intention. The thirty-third mental state is the flattery (shathya). The thirty-fourth

mental state is the conceit (mada). Conceit means to think high of self and low of others. The thirty-fifth mental state is the harming (vihimsa). Harming means to want to harm other people. The thirty-sixth mental state is the jealousy (irshya). Jealousy means to become envious of the who surpass us in one way or other. The thirty-seventh mental state is the stinginess (matsarya). One is tight about one's wealth, not wishing to share it with others. *Two intermediate grade afflictions include lack of shame and lack of remorse.* The thirty-eighth mental state is the lack of shame (ahrikya). Lack of shame means to do wrong, but always feel self-righteous. The thirty-ninth mental state is the lack of remorse (anapatrapya). Lack of remorse means never examine to see if one is up to the standards of others. *Eight major grade afflictions include lack of faith, laziness, laxiness, torpor, restlessness, distraction, improper knowledge and scatteredness.* The fortieth mental state is the lack of faith (ashraddhya). Lack of faith means not trust or believe in anyone, not to believe in the truth. The forty-first mental state is the laziness (kausidya). Laziness means not to try to eliminate unwholesome deeds and to perform good deeds. The forty-second mental state is the laxiness (pramada). Laxiness means not to let the body and mind to follow the rules but does whatever one pleases. The forty-third mental state is the torpor (styana). Torpor means to feel obscure in mind or to fall asleep in the process. The forty-fourth mental state is the restlessness (auddhatya). One is agitated and cannot keep still. The forty-fifth mental state is the distraction (mushitasmriti). Distraction means to lose proper mindfulness. The forty-sixth mental state is the improper knowledge (asamprajanya). One become obsessed with defilement. The forty-seventh mental state is the scatteredness (vikshepa). **Part Six Is the Four Unfixed Mental States (Aniyata):** The forty-eighth mental state is the falling asleep to obscure the mind (middha). The forty-ninth mental state is the regret (kaudritya) or repent for wrong doings in the past. The fiftieth mental state is the investigation (vitarka means to cause the mind unstable). The fifty-first mental state is the correct Examination (vicara means to pacify the mind).

Chapter Twenty-One

Mental Factors That Cause the Undetermined Mind & Can Lead to Afflictions

I. Mental Factors That Cause the Undetermined Mind & Can Lead to Afflictions:

As mentioned above, “Mind” is another name for Alaya-vijnana. Unlike the material body, immaterial mind is invisible. We are aware of our thoughts and feelings and so forth by direct sensation, and we infer their existence in others by analogy. The mind is the root of all dharmas. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: “All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas.” The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sorrowful, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. The mind is so closely linked with the body that mental states affect the body’s health and well-being. Some doctors even confirm that there is no such thing as a purely physical disease. Unless these bad mental states are caused by previous evil acts, and they are unalterable, it is possible so to change them as to cause mental health and physical well-being to follow thereafter. Man’s mind influences his body profoundly. If allowed to function viciously and entertain unwholesome thoughts, mind can cause disaster, can even kill a being; but it can also cure a sick body. When mind is concentrated on right thoughts with right effort and understanding, the effect it can produce is immense. A mind with pure and wholesome thoughts really does lead to a healthy and relaxed life. As a matter of fact, Outside the mind, there is no other thing. Mind, Buddha, and all the living, these three are not different (the Mind, the Buddha and sentient beings are not three different things). Zen practitioners should always remember that nothing exists outside the mind (consciousness), since all phenomena are projections of consciousness. All is mind, mind pervades in all places, in all the bodies. The ignorance perceive multiplicity, but there is nothing predicable in Mind-Only. The functions of mind are very extensive and numberless. That’s why the

Buddha always reminded his disciples, “Mind is like an unrest monkey jumping from one tree to another.” Fundamental Consciousness is the functioning mind and the later is its qualities or conditions.

The Qualities of the Functioning Mind, also called the conditions (mental actions) of the functioning mind are also called the mental factors, also called psychic factors or jhana factors, that help raise the practitioner from lower to higher levels of mental purity. There are five jhana factors: initial application, sustained application, rapture, happiness, and one-pointedness of mind. Mental conditions or emotions; the attributes of the mind, especially the moral qualities, emotions, love, hate, etc. Mental factor intention includes all of our desires develop because of the thoughts of our mental factor intention. When we see an attractive object, we develop a wish to obtain that object. In contrary, when we see an unattractive object, we develop a wish not to obtain that object; sometimes we hate the object. According to Buddhist teachings, there are eight indeterminate mental functions: Repentance, drowsiness, reflection, investigation, covetousness, hatred, pride, and doubt. They are those which cannot be classified as belonging to any of the five above mentioned functions. According to the Fa-Hsiang School, an element does not have a good or evil nature, but still have the ability to cause afflictions for practitioners.

II. Eight Mental Factors That Can Cause the Undetermined Mind & Can Lead to Afflictions:

From the First Unfixed Mental State to the Fourth Mental State:

The mental state of middha: the falling asleep to obscure the mind. The mental state of kaudritya: the regret or repent for wrong doings in the past. The mental state of vitarka: the investigation (vitarka means to cause the mind unstable). The mental state of vicara: the correct Examination (vicara means to pacify the mind). The doctrine of Idealism School concerns chiefly with the facts or specific characters (lakshana) of all elements on which the theory of idealism was built in order to elucidate that no element is separate from ideation. The main goal of the Studies of Consciousness-Only is to transform the mind in cultivation in order to attain enlightenment and liberation. In the Vijnaptimatratna-Trimsika, the fifth stanza emphasized on the Ten Good

Things in the Studies of Consciousness-Only. According to the Mind-Only School, there are four mental factors that cause the unfixed or undetermined mind: repentance, drowsiness or torpor, applied thought or discursive thought, and sustained thought or reflection. *First, Remorse:* Regret can be either a wholesome or unwholesome or neutral mind. Regret is a mind which feels sorrow or remorse about past actions. Regret for negative past actions (non-virtuous) is a positive regret; however, regret for positive past actions (virtuous) is a negative regret. To repent or regret for error and seek forgiveness, or to ask for pardon. It especially refers to the regular confessional services in temples. *Second, Sloth and Torpor:* Dullness and drowsiness means to fall asleep to obscure the mind. Drowsiness, or sloth as a hindrance to progress to fulfil good deeds. Practitioners should always remember that sloth, torpor, and drowsiness belong to the fifth army of Mara. It is the translation of “Thina” in Pali. The difficulties caused by sloth and torpor are worth dwelling on, for they are surprisingly great. In fact, “Torpor” is the usual translation of the Pali word “thina,” which actually means a weak mind, a shrunken and withered, viscous and slimy mind, unable to grasp the meditation object firmly. As “thina” makes the mind weak, it automatically brings on weakness of body. The sluggish mind cannot keep your sitting posture erect and firm. Walking meditation becomes a real drag, so to speak. The presence of “thina” means that “atapa,” the fiery aspect of energy, is absent. The mind becomes stiff and hard; it loses its active sharpness. *Third, Investigation:* The nearest equivalent term in English is “investigation.” We say that our mind is enveloped by darkness, and as soon as insight or wisdom arises, we say that the light has come. This light reveals physical and mental phenomena so that the mind can see them clearly. It is as if you were in a dark room and were given a flashlight. You can begin to see what is present in the room. The image illustrates “investigation,” the second enlightenment factor in the Bojjhangas. In meditation, investigation is not carried out by means of the thinking process. It is intuitive, a sort of discerning insight that distinguishes the characteristics of phenomena. The word Vicaya in Pali is the word usually translated as “investigation;” it is also a synonym for “wisdom” or “insight.” Thus in meditation practice there is no such thing as a proper investigation which uncovers nothing. When Vicaya is present,

investigation and insight coincide. They are the same thing. So what is it we investigate? What do we see into? We see into Dharma. This is a word with many meanings that can be experienced personally. Generally when we say “dharma” we mean phenomena, mind and matter. We also mean the laws that govern the behavior of phenomena. When “Dharma” is capitalized, it refers more specifically to the teaching of the Buddha, who realized the true nature of “dharma” and helped others to follow in his path. The commentaries explain that in the context of investigation, the word “dharma” has an additional, specific meaning. It refers to the individual states or qualities uniquely present in each object, as well as the common traits each object may share with other objects. Thus, individual and common traits are what we should be discovering in our practice. “Vitakka” or initial application directs the mind onto the object. “Vitakka” is neither wholesome nor unwholesome. When “vitakka” associates with wholesome deeds, vitakka becomes wholesome. When “vitakka” associates with unwholesome deeds, it becomes unwholesome. In the practice for attaining jhana, vitakka has the special task of inhibiting the hindrance of sloth and torpor. Vitakka is the mental factor by which one’s attention is applied to the chosen meditation object. Vitakka and its companion factor vicara (correct examination) reach full maturity upon the development of the first level of jhana. In the Buddhist sutras, the words “vitakka” is often used in the loose sense of “thought,” but in the Abhidharma it is used in a precise technical sense to mean the mental factor that mounts or directs the mind onto the object. Just as a king’s favourite might conduct a villager to the palace, even so “vitakka” directs the mind onto the object. *Fourth, Contemplation (Cetana (skt):* Mental factors or mental actions. The mental factor Analysis is a mind which investigates its objects carefully and precisely. Reading a book precisely, reasoning things precisely, contemplating or meditating precisely, etc are the functions of the mental factor analysis. According to Keith in *The Dictionary of Chinese-English Buddhist Terms*, Vitarka means initial attention, or cognition in initial application, search, or inquiry; in contrasted with Spying out, or careful examination. Vitakka and its companion factor vicara (correct examination) reach full maturity upon the development of the first level of jhana.

From the Fifth Unfixed Mental State to the Eighth Mental State:
The Fifth Mental Factor That Causes Afflictions Is Craving: Craving (greed, affection, desire) means desire for and love of the things of this worldly life. Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Only if we have no desire for ourselves; if we are working and earning money in order to help other people; if we make cultivation our business and our business is cultivation only, then how clear and happy our life will be! However, most people don't understand this. They are only interested in making a lot of money or becoming successful in worldly business. Remember, this is only a small 'I'. Devout Buddhists should make a lot of money to help all people, then even we create our worldly business, it is a good business. It is a selfish desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings' greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings' lives, especially, those of human beings' are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few

possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. Cultivation helps us balance ‘Lust’ by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from lust. Furthermore, through cultivation, we can see the string of craving and attachment confines us to samsara’s prison. In other words, craving and attachment are not only roots that prevent us from being sufficiently moved to renounce samsara, but they are also two of the main things that bind us to samsara. In order to overcome craving and attachment, we should contemplate on the impurity of the body. When we are attached to someone, for example, consider how that person is just a sack full of six kinds of filthy substances. Then our attachment and craving will diminish. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when we get rid of greed and desires or when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. The Buddha taught: “Craving and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness.” Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. As a matter of fact, once, we, Buddhist practitioners get rid of greed and desire also means that we have already pushed away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. In conclusion for this chapter, on the path of cultivation, practitioners should always remember the Buddha's teaching in the Sutra in Forty Two Chapters taught: “Though a person with a state of mind filled with desires dwells in heaven, still that is not enough for him; though a person who has ended desire dwells on the ground, still

he is happy.” We are living in a material world where we must encounter all kinds of objects such as sights, sounds, tastes, sensations, thoughts and ideas, etc. Desire arises from contact with these pleasing objects. Buddhists should always remember that “Desire” not only obscures our mind, but it is also a main cause of grasping which causes sufferings and afflictions, forces us to continue to wander in the samsara.

At this very moment in daily life, content with few desires and satisfy with what we have is one of the most efficient way to subdue demonic obstruction of greed and desire. Content with few desires. “Thiểu Dục” means having few desires; “tri túc” means being content. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to practice the Way. “Knowing how to feel satisfied and being content with material conditions” is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of body and mind and accomplish our supreme goal of cultivation. Being content with few desires means having few desires. Here “desires” include not only the desire for money and material things but also the wish for status and fame. It also indicates seeking the love and service of others. In Buddhism, a person who has attained the mental stage of deep faith has very few desires and is indifferent to them. We must note carefully that though such a person is indifferent to worldly desires, he is very eager for the truth, that is, he has a great desire for the truth. To be indifferent to the truth is to be slothful in life. To be content with few desires also means to be satisfied with little material gain, that is, not to feel discontented with one’s lot and to be free from worldly cares. Nevertheless, this does not mean to be unconcerned with self-improvement but to do one’s best in one’s work without discontent. Such a person will never be ignored by those around him. But even if people around him ignored him, he would feel quite happy because he lives like a king from a spiritual point of view. We must have few desires in two areas: the desires for food and sex. Food and sex support ignorance in perpetrating all sort of evil. Thus, Confucius taught: “Food and sex are part of human nature.” That is to say we are born with the craving for food and sex. Why is that we have not been able to demolish our ignorance, eliminate our afflictions, and reveal our

wisdom? Because we always crave for food and sex. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that food gives rise to sexual desire, and sexual desire gives rise to ignorance. Once the desire for food arises, the desire for sex arises as well. Men are attracted to beautiful women, and women are charmed by handsome men. People become infatuated and obsessed and cannot see through their desires. The nourishment from the food we eat is transformed into reproductive essence; and once that essence is full, sexual desire arises. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that the less tasty the food is, the better. Food should not be regarded as too important. Sincere Buddhists should practice moderation and eat only enough to sustain ourselves. We should neither eat very rich food, nor eat spoilt food, for either one could ruin our health. To be satisfied with what we have at this very moment means satisfaction or contentment is a characteristic of the really happy individual. The ordinary people seem to think that it is difficult to cultivate and develop contentment. However, with courage and determination to control one's evil inclination, as well as to understand the consequences of these evil thoughts, one can keep the mind from being soiled and experience happiness through contentment. For those who have wisdom, know how to apply themselves and are able to endure life, and are able to think cleverly, will find peace in his fate under whatever circumstances. With the conditions of wealth, one satisfies and is at peace with being wealthy; with the conditions of poverty, one satisfies and is at peace with being impoverished. In fact, in our lifetime, we engage in all kinds of activities, think and calculate every imaginable method without abandoning any plot, so long as it is beneficial, but whether or not our actions affect others we never care. We have been doing all these for what? For a better life, clothes, house, and for storing more money. If we think carefully, we will see that the sun rises, reaches its stand still, and then it will set and disappears in the evening; a full moon will soon become half, quarter, then lose its brightness; mountains become deep canyons; oceans become hills of berries, etc. The way of life has always been rise and fall, success and failure, victory and defeat, lost and found, together and apart, life and death, etc., goes on constantly and there is absolutely nothing that remain unchanged and eternal. People with wisdom should always satisfy with their current circumstances. The

Buddha extols simple living as being more conducive to the development of one's mind. Thus, the Buddha always preaches the self-contentment for the benefit of the Bhikkhus as follow: The robes or clothes they receive, whether coarse or fine; alms or food they receive, whether unpalatable or delicious; the abodes or houses they receive, whether simple or luxurious. Those who satisfy with these three conditions can reduce the desires, and at the same time develop the habits and values of simple living.

Devout Buddhists should always remember that to Buddhism, sensual pleasure are something fleeting, something that comes and goes. Can something be really called "Happiness" when it is here one moment and gone the next? Is it really so enjoyable to go around hunting for something so ephemeral, which is changing all the time? Look at the amount of trouble we have to go through to get all those sensual pleasures which we think will bring us happiness. Some people have such strong desire for pleasure that they will break the law, commit brutal crimes and cause others to suffer just so they can experience these pleasures. They may not understand how much suffering they themselves will have to endure in the future as a consequence of the unwholesome acts they have committed. Even ordinary people may become aware that a disproportionate amount of suffering is necessary to bring together a few moments of happiness so much that it really is not worth it. Devout Buddhists should always remember that suffering will always follow craving. All the problems in this world are rooted in the desire for pleasure. It is on account of the need for pleasure that quarrels occur within the family that neighbors do not get along well, that states have conflict and nations go to war. It is also on account of sense-based pleasures that sufferings, afflictions, and all kinds of problems plague our world, that people have gone beyond their humanness into great cruelty and inhumanity—See Three Kinds of Afflictions in Particular Marks (Ba Loại Tự Tướng Phiền Não).

The Sixth Mental Factor That Causes Afflictions Is Ill-Will: Ill-will or anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner,

destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Ill-will or Hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: “Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha’s teachings, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it’s not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus the Buddha

taught: "When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own." A man was rowing his boat upstream on a very misty morning. Suddenly, he saw another boat coming downstream, not trying to avoid him. It was coming straight at him. He shouted, "Be careful!" but the boat came right into him, and his boat was almost sunk. The man became very angry, and began to shout at the other person, to give him a piece of his mind. But when he looked closely, he saw that there was no one in the other boat. Charlotte Joko Beck wrote in 'Nothing Special': "There's a killer shark in everybody. And the killer shark is unexperienced fear. Your way of covering it up is to look so nice and do so much and be so wonderful that nobody can possibly see who you really are, which is someone who is scared to death. As we uncover these layers of rage, it's important not to act out; we shouldn't inflict our rage on others. In genuine practice, our rage is simply a stage that passes. But for a time, we are more uncomfortable than when we started. That's inevitable; we're becoming more honest, and our false surface style is beginning to dissolve. The process doesn't go on forever, but it certainly can be most uncomfortable while it lasts. Occasionally we may explode, but that's better than evading or covering our reaction." Zen practitioners should always remember that hatred is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger is also one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. As in the case of lust or sense-desire, it is unwise or unsystematic attention that brings about ill-will, which when not checked propagates itself, saps the mind and clouds the vision. It distorts the entire mind and its properties and thus hinders awakening to truth, and blocks the path to freedom. Lust and ill-will based on ignorance, not only hamper mental growth, but act as the root cause of strife and dissension between man and man and nation and nation. Besides, Zen practitioner should always pay close attention to your breathing because there is surely a so-called reciprocal character of mind and breathing (Prana), which means that a certain type of mind or mental activity is invariably accompanied by a breathing of corresponding character, whether

transcendental or mundane. For instance, a particular mood, feeling, or thought is always accompanied, manifested, or reflected by a breathing of corresponding character and rhythm. Thus anger produces not merely an inflamed thought-feeling, but also a harsh and accentuated "roughness" of breathing. On the other hand, when there is a calm concentration on an intellectual problem, the thought and the breathing exhibit a like calmness.

The Buddha taught that in order to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves—See Three Kinds of Afflictions in Particular Marks (Ba Loại Tự Tướng Phiền Não).

The Seventh Mental Factor That Causes Afflictions Is Arrogance: Arrogance or Elevated Pride means arrogance or haughtiness. Arrogance and pride, a kind of klesa, one of the five higher bonds of desire. Pride is asserting superiority over inferiors and equality with equals. Looking down on others. Haughty people are self-aggrandized and boasting. They tend to bully their superiors and trample the inferior. They refuse to learn any more or listen to advice or explanations; and as a result commit regrettable errors. Pride is also the inflated opinion of ourselves and can manifest in relation to some good or bad object, one of the most considerable demonic obstructions on the practitioners' path of cultivation. When we look down from a high mountain, everyone below seems to have shrunken in size. When we hold ourselves to be superior to others, and have an inflated opinion of ourselves, we take on a superior aspect. It is extremely difficult to

develop any good qualities at all when one has pride, for no matter how much the teacher may teach that person, it will do no good. Haughtiness means false arrogance, thinking oneself correct in spite of one's wrong conduct, thinking oneself is good in spite of one's very bad in reality.

Buddhist practitioners should always remember that conceit and ingratitude belong to the eighth army of Mara. Conceit arises when practitioners begin to experience joy, rapture, delight, and other interesting things in practice. At this point they may wonder whether their teacher has actually attained this wondrous stage yet, whether other practitioners are practicing as hard as they are, and so forth. Conceit most often happens at the stage of insight when practitioners perceive the momentary arising and passing away of phenomena. It is a wonderful experience of being perfectly present, seeing how objects arise and pass away at the very moment when mindfulness alights on them. At this particular stage, a series of defilements can arise. They are specifically known as the "vipassana kilesas," defilements of insight. Since these defilements can become a harmful obstacle, it is important for practitioners to understand them clearly. The scriptures tell us that mana or conceit has the characteristic of bubbly energy, of a great zeal and enthusiasm arising in the mind. One overflows with energy and is filled with self-centered, self-glorifying thoughts like, "I'm so great, no one can compare with me." A prominent aspect of conceit is "stiffness and rigidity." One's mind feels stiff and bloated, like a python that has just swallowed some other creature. This aspect of mana is also reflected as tension in the body and posture. Its victims get big-headed and stiff-necked, and thus may find it difficult to bow respectfully to others. Conceit is really a fearsome mental state. It destroys gratitude, making it difficult to acknowledge that one owes any kind of debt to another person. Forgetting the good deeds others have done for us in the past, one belittles them and denigrates their virtues. Not only that, but one also actively conceals the virtues of others so that no one will hold them in esteem. All of us have had benefactors in our lives, especially in childhood and younger days. Our parents, for example, gave us love, education and necessities of life at a time when we were helpless. Our teachers gave us knowledge. Friends helped us when we got into trouble. Remembering our debts to

those who have helped us, we feel humble and grateful, and we hope for a chance to help them in turn. The Buddha taught: there are two types of rare and precious people in the world. The first type is a benefactor, one who is benevolent and kind, who helps another person for noble reasons, sparing no effort to help beings liberate themselves from the sufferings of samsara. The second type is the one who is grateful, who appreciates the good that has been done for him or her, and who tries to repay it when the time is ripe.”

Arrogance is generated by one’s feeling of inferiority, while pride, haughtiness, and arrogance are born from a false sense of superiority. These kinds of pride and arrogance are caused by looking at things from a distorted, self-centered point of view. Those who have truly understood the Buddha’s teachings and been able to obtain a right view of things will never succumb to such warped thinking.

Pride is the inflated opinion of ourselves and can manifest in relation to some good or bad object. When we look down from a high mountain, everyone below seems to have shrunk in size. When we hold ourselves to be superior to others, and have an inflated opinion of ourselves, we take on a superior aspect. It is extremely difficult to develop any good qualities at all when one has pride, for no matter how much the teacher may teach that person, it will do no good. Haughtiness means false arrogance, thinking oneself correct in spite of one’s wrong conduct, thinking oneself is good in spite of one’s very bad in reality. Haughtiness also means arrogance and conceit due to one’s illusion of having completely understood what one has hardly comprehended at all. Haughtiness is one of the main hindrances in our cultivation. In cultivating the Way, we must have genuine wisdom. Those who have genuine wisdom never praise themselves and disparage others. These people never consider themselves the purest and loftiest, and other people common and lowly. Once, we, Buddhist practitioners, get rid of pride and arrogance also means that we have already pushed away one of the great obstacles on our own path of cultivation. In Buddhism, those who praise themselves have no future in their cultivation of the Way. Even though they are still alive, they can be considered as dead, for they have gone against their own conscience and integrity—See Three Kinds of Afflictions in Particular Marks (Ba Loại Tự Tướng Phiền Não).

The Eighth Mental Factor That Causes Afflictions Is Doubt: Doubt signifies spiritual doubt, from a Buddhist perspective the inability to place confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the training; doubt if there really is a so called “you reap what you sow”, and so on. Doubt is one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Doubt, as wavering uncertainty, a hindrance and fetter to be removed, one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Skepticism, one of the five hindrances one must eliminate on entering the stream of saints. Vichikiccha is a Pali term, a combination of “vi”, means without; and “cikiccha” means medicine. One who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. In fact, one who suffers from perplexity is really suffering from a dire disease, and unless he sheds his doubts, he will continue to worry over and suffer from this illness. As long as man is subject to this mental itch, this sitting on the fence, he will continue to take a skeptical view of things which is most detrimental to mental ability to decide anything definitely; it also includes doubt with regard to the possibility of attaining the jhanas.

As mentioned above, doubt signifies spiritual doubt, from a Buddhist perspective the inability to place confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the training. Bernard Glassman and Rick Fields wrote in 'Instructions to the Cook': "Doubt is a state of openness and unknowing. It's a willingness to not be in charge, to not know what is going to happen next. The state of doubt allows us to explore things in an open and fresh way. Like water, doubt is fluid. It had no fixed position. If you pour water into a round container, it becomes round, and if you pour water into a square container, it becomes square. In the same way, doubt or unknowing flows in accordance with the situation. It's the state of surrender, of being open to what is. Only when we raise sufficient doubt and questioning can we go further. Our problem with doubt is that we take it to be a negative thing. We think that because we don't understand or because we are not sure, there is something wrong. When we get caught by the negative aspects of doubt, we wallow in self-pity. 'How come I can't see it?' we say. But this doubt can be positive. Positive doubt can allow us to see what this life is about. It can help us get rid of our complacency." Doubting is natural.

Everyone starts with doubts. We can learn a great deal from them. What is important is that we do not identify with our doubts. That is, do not get caught up in them, letting our mind spin in endless circles. Instead, watch the whole process of doubting, of wondering. See who it is that doubts. See how doubts come and go. Then we will no longer be victimized by our doubts. We will step outside of them, and our mind will be quiet. We can see how all things come and go. Let go of our doubts and simply watch. This is how to end doubting—See Three Kinds of Afflictions in General Marks (Ba Loại Cộng Tướng Phiền Não).

Part Three
To Face & To Subdue Afflictions
In Buddhist Point of View
(Phần Ba: Đối Mặt & Đối Trị Phiền Nã
Theo Quan Điểm Phật Giáo)

Chapter Twenty-Two

Human Life With All Kinds of Upside-Down That Are Causes of Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions

I. An Overview of Inversions in Buddhist Teachings:

In Buddhism, inversions (Vipariyaya (p) or Viparyasa (skt)) mean upside down, perversion, inverted; contrary to reality; to believe things as they seem to be, e.g. the impermanent to be permanent; the apparent ego to be real. In Buddhist cultivation, practitioners usually have a delusive thinking which is another human way of thinking that cause them to suffer with afflictions and to resolve in the birth and death. Suppose we are looking at the wall in our room; our eyes tell us that it is an upright, smooth surface standing stably and silently before us. We walk one step forward to touch it, and find that it is something firm, cold, and solid. Then we remember what chemistry and physics have to say about a wall. They assert that it is composed of various compounds and elements containing innumerable atoms, electrons, protons, etc., all constantly moving at incredible speeds in their innumerable orbits. So our senses and our minds tell us radically different stories about the same thing. To which should we listen? We human beings are perpetually bombarded by discordant information conveyed by our different "sense-agents"; but fortunately we have a good "compromiser" or "arbitrator", the mind, which synthesizes, integrates and smooths out the conflicts between its agents, which are constantly reporting to "headquarters" from their various outposts. Although our conscious mind is a remarkable agent in itself, practical, intelligent, and imaginative, its main concern in our everyday lives is not to check on whether the senses have conveyed the most reliable information, nor to give a verdict on their discordant findings, but rather to see that these agents work harmoniously together. But here a serious question arises: Is the pragmatic approach taken by the human mind necessarily sound, and does not this integrating and "compromising" process result, perhaps, in a mutilation of the truth? If "right is right" and "wrong is wrong", as our reason tells us, and "right" cannot possibly be "wrong" at the same time, whose findings should we

accept, the static wall of the eye or the "dynamic wall" of the mind? From the viewpoint of the eyes, the static wall is right; from that of the mind, the "dynamic wall"; but from that of the nose, both are wrong. It is impossible to define right and wrong without an absolute standard. Fundamentally they are meaningful only when a certain standard or criterion has been established. Without such a standard, right and wrong both become meaningless. An absolute and final standard has thus been sought by philosophers and thinkers throughout all ages. Some argue that it is reason; others, that only God, or His Will, can be regarded as absolute, and so on. The final settlement of this problem seems well-nigh impossible. The search and the arguments go on ad infinitum. While no final conclusion can be drawn, the Hua Yen philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism suggests one solution. It holds that if any standard is by nature exclusive and "fixed", it can never be considered as "absolute" or final, for if absolute, it must be "all-inclusive", a standard of totality, and so not an ordinary standard arbitrarily established to measure one thing against another. Such a standard cannot be otherwise than arbitrary and "deadly fixed"; its very nature sets it apart from the dynamic totality of Dharmadhatu. The absolute standard should include, permeate, and embrace all. It is not a standard as such, but is, rather, a realm of wonder, a state of the perfect interpenetration of all Dharmas, the indescribable and inexplicable marvel of Buddhahood. We seem to have an instinctive urge to seek the Truth, but somehow lack the capacity to find it. The dilemma of trying to set up an absolute standard is merely one of the many puzzles that have harassed mankind since the dawn of civilization. Man's search for Truth has been a never-ending obsession. Buddhist thinkers attribute this predicament to the delusive way of human thinking which, they say, if not qualitatively transformed, will drag man down for ever into the morass of futile pursuit. Another gulf that the human mind cannot bridge separates the realms of "indirect understanding" and "direct realization". We can understand the atomic structure of a thing, but we cannot see or experience it directly. Our minds can only give us the indirect measure of a thing; they cannot put us in direct contact with it. We can appreciate the grand idea of "all in one, and one in all"; but what we actually see around us is still the "all in all, and one in one". With hard work and deep thinking we may come to understand the profound truth of Emptiness (Sunyata), the void nature of being as taught by the Prajnaparamita; but all that we see and experience in our daily lives is within the samsaric realm of existence and subsistence. All these predicaments are caused by what Buddhists call "the delusive way of human thinking."

II. Three Kinds of Upside-Down That Are Causes of Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions in Human Life:

The three subversions or subverters which make beings to think upside-down and to suffer afflictions: to apprehend objects that are impermanent, painful, not self, and foul, as permanent, pleasant, self, and beautiful; or evil thoughts, false views, and a deluded mind. This is the inversion of the three marks of existence, or three characteristics of existence that the Buddha declared are common to all phenomena, or the three marks that refers to impermanence (anitya), suffering or unsatisfactoriness (duhkha) and egolessness or anatman. There are three other kinds of dharma seals: impermanence, suffering or unsatisfaction, and nirvana. For Zen practitioners, these three dharma seals are not three different things but rather one thing, that is your life from three different perspectives. So you can appreciate your life from these perspectives and see how easily they overlap. For example, when you understand impermanence, you understand the nature of suffering and no-self. When you understand no-self, that is the peace of Nirvana.

III. Four Kinds of Upside-Down That Are Causes of Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions in Human Life:

The First Four Ways of Upside-down Thinking are those that cause beings to suffer with afflictions and to resolve in the birth and death. *First*, permanent (Buddhist doctrine emphasizes that all is impermanent. Only Nirvana is permanent, mistaking the impermanent for the permanent. *Second*, joy is suffering. Only Nirvana is joy, mistaking what is not bliss for bliss. *Third*, self or personal. All is non-self or without a soul. Mistaking what is not self for self. *Fourth*, purity. All is impure. Only Nirvana is pure, mistaking what is impure for pure. ***Four Other Inverted Things:*** greed, hatred, stupidity, and pride. *The first three are the three Poisons:* greed, anger, and ignorance. Three defilements are also called three sources of all passions and delusions. The fundamental evils inherent in life which give rise to human suffering. The three poisons are regarded as the sources of all illusions and earthly desires. They pollute people's lives. Men worry about many things. Broadly speaking, there are 84,000 worries. But after analysis, we can say there are only 10 serious ones including the three evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusion. Three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance do not only cause our afflictions, but also prevent us from tasting the pure and cool flavor of emancipation (liberation). *The fourth upside-down is pride:* Haughty people are self-aggrandized and boasting. They tend to bully their superiors and trample the inferior. They refuse to learn any more or listen to advice or explanations; and as a result commit regrettable errors.

According to the Common Buddhist Belief, which denied by the early Buddhist doctrine. *The first inverted thing is impermanent*: We are deceived by the momentary exterior appearance of things. They do not appear to be changing; they appear to our delusion-dulled sense as static. We do not perceive processes in dynamic change but only as we think, entities which go on existing. Similarity, due to a line of change in a given direction, is often mistaken for sameness. If this misapprehension is firmly rooted in our mind, all sorts of attachments and cravings for things and people, including attachment to oneself will be formed and these bring them much sorrow, for to regard things and people in this way is to regard them as through a distorting glass. It is not seeing them correctly, it is seeing them invertedly as though permanent. *The second inverted thing is suffering*: The unsatisfactory invertedly appears to be pleasant. Thus people fritter away much of their precious lives on this or that 'pleasure' and as they never actually get the satisfaction they crave for, so they are driven on from one thing to another. 'Pleasures' may produce temporary feelings of ease, of worldly happiness, but they are always linked to succeeding disappointment, regret, longing for some other emotion indicating an absence of real satisfaction. Those who actually rejoice in Greed, Aversion or Delusion are of course, invertedly trying to enjoy what is not enjoyable. Dukkha is linked to any mental state into which the above Three roots enter. Nothing really satisfactory can be expected where they operate as they certainly do in turning round what is by nature unsatisfactory and making it appear the opposite. *The third inverted thing is impersonal*: Sentient beings including human beings come into being under the law of conditioning, by the union of five aggregates or skandhas (material form, feeling, perception, mental formation or dispositions, and consciousness). When these aggregates are combined together, they sustain life; if they disintegrate, the body will die. This the Buddha called "Impersonal." *The fourth inverted thing is impure*: All is impure. Only Nirvana is pure, mistaking what is impure for pure.

In the Surangama Sutra, book Nine, in the part of the ten states of the formation skandha, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the four upside-down theories as follows: "Ananda! Further, in his practice of samadhi, the good person's mind is firm, unmoving, and proper and can no longer be disturbed by demons. He can thoroughly investigate the origin of all categories of beings and contemplate the source of the subtle, fleeting, and constant fluctuation. But if he begins to speculate about self and others, he could fall into error with theories of partial impermanence and partial permanence based on four distorted views." *First*, as this person contemplates the wonderfully bright mind pervading the ten directions, he concludes that this state of profound stillness is the ultimate spiritual self. Then he speculates, "My spiritual self,

which is settled, bright, and unmoving, pervades the ten directions. All living beings are within my mind, and there they are born and die by themselves. Therefore, my mind is permanent, while those who undergo birth and death there are truly impermanent." *Second*, instead of contemplating his own mind, this person contemplates in the ten directions worlds as many as the Ganges' sands. He regards as ultimately impermanent those worlds that are in eons of decay, and as ultimately permanent those that are not in eons of decay. *Third*, this person closely examines his own mind and finds it to be subtle and mysterious, like fine motes of dust swirling in the ten directions, unchanging in nature. And yet it can cause his body to be born and then to die. He regards that indestructible nature as his permanent intrinsic nature, and that which undergoes birth and death and flows forth from him as impermanent. *Fourth*, knowing that the skandha of thinking has ended and seeing the flowing of the skandha of formations, this person speculates that the continuous flow of the skandha of formations is permanent, and that the skandhas of form, feeling, and thinking which have already ended are impermanent. Because of these speculations of impermanence and permanence, he will fall into externalism and become confused about the Bodhi nature.

IV. Seven Kinds of Upside-Down That Are Causes of Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions in Human Life:

In Buddhist teachings, seven inversions or upside-down views that cause beings to suffer with afflictions and to resolve in the birth and death which include: wrong views on permanence, wrong views on worldly happiness and unhappiness, wrong views on ego, wrong views on purity and impurity, wrong views on impermanence, wrong views on non-egoism, and wrong views on emptiness. According to the Yogacara Sastra, seven inversions or upside-down views include: evil thoughts or wrong views on (upside down) perception or false views or wrong views or illusory or misleading views (to see things upside down), deluded or upside down mind or mind following the external environments, wrong views on permanence and impermanence, wrong views on worldly happiness and unhappiness, wrong views on ego and non-ego, and wrong views on purity and impurity.

V. Eight Kinds of Upside-Down That Are Causes of Innumerable Sufferings & Afflictions in Human Life:

According to Buddhist teachings, eight kinds of upside-down views that cause beings to suffer with afflictions and to resolve in the birth and death which include Four Upside-down Views for Ordinary People

and Four Upside-down Views for Both Hinayana and Mahayana. ***Four Upside-down Views for Ordinary People:*** heretics believe in permanence, heretics believe in pleasure, heretics believe in personality, and heretics believe in purity. *Wrong Views on Permanence:* Heretics believe in permanence or Wrong views on permanence and impermanence. *Heretics Believe in Pleasure:* Wrong views on worldly happiness and unhappiness. This is one of the eight upside-down views which belongs to the four upside-down views for ordinary people. *Wrong Views on the Self or on Ego:* Heretics believe in personality or illusion of a real ego. Wrong views on ego and non-ego or the inverted or upside-down ideas which belongs to the four upside-down views for ordinary people, the illusion that the ego is real. The illusion that the ego has real existence. *Upside-down Views on Purity:* Heretics believe in purity. ***Four Upside-down Views for Both Hinayana and Mahayana:*** Heretics believe that nirvana is impermanent; nirvana is a permanent place of bliss, however, heretics believe that everywhere including nirvana as no pleasure, but suffering; heretics believe that nirvana has no pleasure; and heretics believe that nirvana is also impure. *Wrong Views on Impermanence:* Heretics believe that Nirvana is impermanence. Nirvana is permanent and eternal; however, heretics believe that everything including nirvana as impermanent. *Upside-down View (perversion belief) That Nirvana Is Not a Permanent Place of Bliss:* Heretics believe that nirvana has no pleasure. Nirvana is a permanent place of bliss; however, heretics believe that everywhere including nirvana as no pleasure, but suffering. This is one of the eight upside-down views which belongs to the four upside-down views on impermanence. Buddhism believes that Nirvana is permanent and eternal; however, heretics believe that everything including nirvana as impermanent. *Wrong Views on Non-egoism:* Upside-down view (perversion belief) that nirvana is not a real Buddha-nature. Nirvana is a real Buddha-nature; however, heretics believe that there is no such Buddha-nature. This is one of the eight upside-down views which belongs to the four upside-down views on impermanence. Buddhism believes that Nirvana is permanent and eternal; however, heretics believe that everything including nirvana as impermanent. *Upside-down View (perversion belief) That Even Nirvana Is Not Pure:* Heretics believe that nirvana is also impure. Nirvana is pure; however, heretics believe that everything is impure. This is one of the eight upside-down views which belongs to the four upside-down views on impermanence. Buddhism believes that Nirvana is permanent and eternal; however, heretics believe that everything including nirvana as impermanent.

Chapter Twenty-Three

In Buddhist Teachings, Sufferings-Afflictions and Adverse Circumstances Are Triplets

We should understand that when the Buddha described our lives as “Dukkha”, he was referring to any and all unsatisfactory conditions. These range from minor disappointments, problems and difficulties to intense pain and misery. Therefore, Dukkha should be used to describe the fact that things are not completely right in our lives and could be better. “Suffering” means “unsatisfactoriness.” This is the first of the four noble truths of Buddhism, which holds that cyclic existence is characterized by unsatisfactoriness or suffering. This is related to the idea that since the things of the world are transitory, beings are inevitably separated from what they desire and forced to endure what is unpleasant. The main stated goal of Buddhism from its inception is overcoming “dukkha.” There are three main types of dukkha: 1) the suffering of misery (dukkha-dukkhata), which includes physical and mental sufferings; 2) the suffering of change (viparinama-dukkhata), which includes all contaminated feelings of happiness. These are called sufferings because they are subject to change at any time, which leads to unhappiness; and 3) compositional suffering (samskara-dukkhata), the suffering endemic to cyclic existence, in which sentient beings are prone to the dissatisfaction due to being under the influence of contaminated actions and afflictions. The Buddha teaches that suffering is everywhere, suffering is already enclosed in the cause, suffering from the effect, suffering throughout time, suffering pervades space, and suffering governs both philistine and saint. Talking about adverse circumstances, on the path of cultivation, sometimes practitioners encounter adverse circumstances, i.e., evil teachers and friends. Some are prevented from cultivating or frustrated in their practice by parents, brothers and sisters, wives, husbands or children. Others suddenly develop a chronic disease, from which they never completely recover. Still others are continually pursued by oponents and enemies looking for ways to harm them. Others are slandered or meet misfortunes which land them in prison, subject to torture, or they are sent into exile. Others, again, victims of jealous competition or calumny, lose all peace of mind. This last occurrence is the most frequent. Meanwhile, as mentioned above, afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its

purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. According to Buddhist teachings, sufferings, afflictions and adverse circumstances are triplet and they always go together. Practitioners should always remember that such cases occur because of the power of evil karma. The Buddhas view suffering and adverse circumstances as their teacher, thus achieving Ultimate Enlightenment. Likewise, we should consider illness as medicine, to escape Birth and Death. We should realize that human beings are bound by all kinds of karmic afflictions. Without the sufferings of poverty and illness, they will, by nature, pursue the world's of sight and sound, fame and profit, finding it difficult to let go. Who would then willingly turn around to watch and ponder the state of perdition to come? The sage Mencius once said, “Those who will be entrusted with great tasks should first endure hardship both in body and mind, suffering hunger and destitution or failure in their undertakings. Only then will they be able to forge their character, develop patience and endurance and attain outstanding abilities, beyond the ken of the multitude. Therefore, we should realize that human character is usually forged in adversity. If adversity cannot be avoided, we should remain at peace and practice forbearance. Moreover, in speaking of great tasks, the sage Mencius was referring merely to mundane undertakings. Even so, enduring hardship is necessary for success; how much more so when lowly beings such as ourselves undertake the great task of achieving Buddhahood and rescuing sentient beings! If we are not tested to a certain extent by financial hardship and disease, our worldly delusions will know no bounds and our Pure Land practice will be difficult to perfect. With our Mind-mirror clouded, we will revolve for many eons in the evil realms; not knowing when we will ever achieve liberation! The ancients have said: 'If it were not for a period of penetrating cold, the plum blossom could never develop its exquisite perfume!' This is the meaning of what I said earlier. We should persevere in reciting the Buddha's name, to eradicate past karma swiftly and avoid developing a mind of afflictions, resenting the Heavens, blaming our fellow beings, considering the law of Cause and Effect as a fairy tale and rejecting the Buddhas and their teachings as ineffective. We should know that from time immemorial, we have all created immeasurable evil karma. As the Avatamsaka Sutra states: 'If evil karma had physical form, the empty space of the ten directions could not contain it.' Thus, how can haphazard, intermittent cultivation possibly annihilate all afflictions and obstructions?”

Chapter Twenty-Four

Pragmatic Approach of Buddhism In Cultivation of Subduing Sufferings and Afflictions

It's trully wrong to believe that Buddhism a religion of pessimism and not practical. This is not true even with a slight understanding of basic Buddhism. When the Buddha said that human life was full of sufferings and afflictions, he did not mean that life was pessimistic. In this manner, the Buddha admitted the presence of sufferings and afflictions in human life, and by a method of analysis he pointed out to his disciples that attachment to things without a correct view as to their nature is the cause of sufferings and afflictions, and from that we can face and subdue them, not to escape them. In other words, in order to have a life and cultivation full of peace, mindfulness and happiness, practitioners should bravely face impermanence and experience sufferings and afflictions naturally. Impermanence and change are inherent in the nature of all things. This is their true nature and this is the correct view. He concluded: "As long as we are at variance with this truth, we are bound to run into conflicts. We cannot alter or control the nature of things. The result is 'hope deferred made the heart sick'. The only solution lies in correcting our point of view." In fact, the thirst for things begets sorrow. When we like someone or something, we wish that they belonged to us and were with us forever. We never think about their true nature, in other words, or we refuse to think about their true nature. We expect them to survive forever, but time devours everything. Eventually we must yield to old age and freshness of the morning dew disappears before the rising sun. In the Nirvana Sutra, when Ananda and other disciples were so sad and cried when the Buddha lay on his death-bed, the Buddha taught: "Ananda! Lament not. Have I not already told you that from all good things we love and cherish we would be separated, sooner or later... that they would change their nature and perish. How then can Tathagata survive? This is not possible!" This is the philosophy which underlies the doctrine of the "Three Marks" (impermanence, suffering and no-self) of existence of the Buddhist view of life and the world. All Buddhist values are

based on this. The Buddha expected of his disciples, both laity and clergy, good conduct and good behavior and decent standard of living in every way. With him, a simple living did not amount to degenerate human existence or to suffer oneself. The Buddha advised his disciples to follow the “Middle Path”. It is to say not to attach to things nor to abandon them. The Buddha does not deny the “beauty”, however, if one does not understand the true nature of the objects of beauty, one may end up with sufferings and afflictions or grief and disappointment. In the “Theragatha”, the Buddha brought up the story of the Venerable Pakka. One day, going to the village for alms, Venerable Pakka sat down beneath a tree. Then a hawk, seizing some flesh flew up into the sky. Other hawks saw that attacked it, making it drop the piece of meat. Another hawk grabbed the fallen flesh, and was flundered by other hawks. And Pakka thought: “Just like that meat are worldly desires, common to all, full of pain and woe.” And reflecting hereon, and how they were impermanent and so on, he continued to contemplate and eventually won Arahanship. The Buddha advised his disciples not to avoid or deny or attach to objects of beauty. Try not to make objects of beauty our objects of like or dislike. Whatever there is in the world, pleasant or unpleasant, we all have a tendency to attach to them, and we develop a like or dislike to them. Thus we continue to experience sufferings and afflictions. Buddhists recognize beauty where the sense can perceive it, but in beauty we should also see its own change and destruction. And Buddhist should always remember the Buddha’s teaching regarding to all component things: “Things that come into being, undergo change and are eventually destroyed.” Therefore, Buddhists admire beauty but have no greed for acquisition and possession.

Buddhism is the only way that leads people from the evil to the virtuous, from deluded to fully enlightened sagehood. According to the Chulamalunkya Sutra, the Buddha expressed very clearly about the pragmatic approach of Buddhism in everything. The Buddha himself made use of the parable of a wounded man. In the story, a man wounded by an arrow wishes to know who shot the arrow, the direction from which it came, whether the arrowhead is made of bone or steel, and what kind of wood the shaft is made of before he will let the arrow be removed. The Buddha wanted to imply the man’s attitude with the

attitude of those who want to know about the origin of the universe, whether it is eternal or not, finite in space or not, and so on, before they will undertake to practice a religion. According to the Buddha, these people are people of idle talks and pleasure discussions. Such people will die uselessly before they ever have the answers to all their irrelevant questions, just as the man in the parable will die before he has all the answers he seeks about the origin and nature of the arrow. Thus the Buddha taught: "Mankind's pragmatic approach or most important priority is the reduction and elimination of suffering, and try not to waste the precious time on irrelevant inquiries. Buddhism considers human's liberation the priority. Once the Buddha was asked by a monk named Malunkyaputta, whether the world was eternal or not eternal, whether the world was finite or infinite, whether the soul was one thing and the body another, whether a Buddha existed after death or did not exist after death, and so on, and so on. The Buddha flatly refused to discuss such metaphysics, and instead gave him a parable. "It is as if a man had been wounded by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and yet he were to say, 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know by what man I was wounded,' or 'I will not have this arrow pulled out until I know of what the arrow with which I was wounded was made.'" As a practical man he should of course get himself treated by the physician at once, without demanding these unnecessary details which would not help him in the least. This was the attitude of the Buddha toward the metaphysical speculation which do not in any way help improve ourselves in our cultivation. The Buddha would say, "Do not go by reasoning, nor by argument." Besides, Buddhism does not accept such practices as fortune telling, wearing magic charms for protection, fixing lucky sites for building, prophessing and fixing lucky days, etc. All these practices are considered useless superstitions in Buddhism. However, because of greed, fear and ignorance, some Buddhists still try to stick to these superstitious practices. As soon as people understand the Buddha's teachings, they realize that a pure heart can protect them much better than empty words of fortune telling, or wearing nonsense charms, or ambiguous chanted words and they are no longer rely on such meaningless things. In Buddhism, liberation is a motto which heightens (elevates) the unfettered spirit beyond the irrational wall of conventional restriction in which the faith of each

individual must be chosen by that individual and by no one else. However, the Buddha always emphasized “Try to understand thoroughly before believing, even with my teachings, for acting freely and without knowing the real meaning of whatever you act sometimes you unintentionally destroy valuable traditions of yourselves. This is the same as a diamond being thrown into the dirt.” The Buddha continued to advise: “When you do anything you should think of its consequence.” Nowadays, more than 2,500 years after the Buddha’s time, all scientists believe that every event that takes place in the world is subject to the law of cause and effect. In other words, cause is the activity and effect is the result of the activity. The Buddha described the world as an unending flux of becoming. All is changeable, continuous transformation, ceaseless mutation, and a moving stream. Everything exists from moment to moment. Everything is recurring rotation of coming into being and then passing out of existence. Everything is moving from formation to destruction, from birth to death. The matter of material forms are also a continuous movement or change towards decay. This teaching of the impermanent nature of everything is one of the most important points of view of Buddhism. Nothing on earth partakes of the character of absolute reality. That is to say there will be no destruction of what is formed is impossible. Whatever is subject to origination is subject to destruction. Change is the very constituent of reality. In daily life, things move and change between extremes and contrasts, i.e., rise and fall, success and failure, gain and loss, honor and contempt, praise and blame, and so on. No one can be sure that a “rise” does not follow with a “fall”, a success does not follow with a failure, a gain with a loss, an honor with a contempt, and a praise with a blame. To thoroughly understand this rule of change or impermanence, Buddhists are no longer dominated by happiness, sorrow, delight, despair, disappointment, satisfaction, self-confidence and fear.

Chapter Twenty-Five

The Buddha's Teachings On Ten Robbers of Afflictions of Desires-Anger-Ignorance-Arrogance-Doubt-Wrong Views-Killing-Stealing-Sexual Misconduct-Lying

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Desire & Love: In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: One is the path that leads to worldly gain, and another is the path leads to nirvana. Once understand this, the monks and the lay disciples of the Buddha, should not rejoice in the praise and worldly favours, but cultivate detachment (75). It is difficult to renounce the world. It is difficult to be a householder. It is painful to associate with those who are not friends. It is painful to be wandering in the samsara forever. Reaching the enlightenment and let wander no more! Let's suffer no more! (Dharmapada 302). Whoever binds to craving, his sorrows flourish like well-watered birana grass (Dharmapada 335). Whoever in this world overcomes this unruly craving, his sorrows fall away just like water-drops from a lotus leaf (Dharmapada 336). This is my advice to you: "Root out craving; root it out, just like birana grass is rooted out. Let not Mara crush you again and again as a flood crushes a reed! (Dharmapada 337). Latent craving is not conquered, suffering recovers and grows again and again, just like a tree hewn down grows up again as long as its roots is unrooted (Dharmapada 338). If in any man, the thirty-six streams of craving are still flowing, such deluded person is still looking for pleasure and passion, and torrential thoughts of lust sweep him away (Dharmapada 339). Streams of pleasure and passion flow in all directions, just like the creeper sprouts and stands. Seeing the creeper that has sprung up in your mind, cut it off with wisdom (Dharmapada 340). Common people are subject to attachment and thirst; they are always happy with pleasure; they run after passion. They look for happiness, but such men caught in the cycle of birth and decay again and again (Dharmapada 341). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified like hunted hares. The more they hold fast by fetters, bonds, and afflictions, the longer they suffer (Dharmapada 342).

Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified just like hunted hares. Therefore, a monk who wishes his own passionlessness, should first banish craving (Dharmapada 343). He who is free from desire for the household, finds pleasure (of asceticism or monastic life) in the forest, yet run back to that very home. Look at that man! He runs right back into that very bondage again! (Dharmapada 344). To a wise man, the bondage that is made of hemp, wood or iron, is not a strong bond, the longing for wives, children, jewels, and ornaments is a greater and far stronger attachment (Dharmapada 345). The wise people say that that bond is very strong. Such fetters seem supple, but hard to break. Break them! Cut off desire and renounce the world! (Dharmapada 346). A man infatuated with lust falls back into the stream as a spider into the web spun by itself. He who cuts off this bond, retire from the world, with no clinging, will leave all sorrow behind (Dharmapada 347). He who has reached the goal, without fear, without craving and without desire, has cut off the thorns of life. This is his final mortal body (Dharmapada 351). He who is without craving, without attachment; who understands subtleties of words and meanings; they are truly a great wise who bear the final mortal body (Dharmapada 352). Strive hard to cut off the stream of desires. Oh! Brahman! Knowing that all conditioned things will perish. Oh! Brahman! You are a knower of the Unmade Nirvana! (Dharmapada 383).

Also in the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught on Happiness: “Happy is the birth of Buddhas! Happy is the teaching of the True Law! Happy is the harmony in the sangha! Happy is the discipline of the united ones! (Dharmapada 194). Oh! Happily do we live without hatred among the hateful! Among hateful men we dwell unhating! (Dharmapada 197). Oh! Happily do we live in good health among the ailing! Among the ailing we dwell in good health! (Dharmapada 198). Oh! Happily do we live without greed for sensual pleasures among the greedy! Among the greedy we dwell free from greed! (Dharmapada 199). Oh! Happily do we live without any hindrance. We shall always live in peace and joy as the gods of the Radiant Realm (Dharmapada 200). Victory breeds hatred, defeat breeds suffering; giving up both victory and defeat will lead us to a peaceful and happy life (Dharmapada 201). From desire springs grief; from desire springs fear. For him who is free from desire, will be neither grief nor fear (214).

From lust springs grief; from lust springs fear. For him who is free from lust, there will be neither grief nor fear (215). There is no fire like passion, no grip like hatred, no net like ignorance, no river like craving (251). Not by a shaven head does an undisciplined man who utters lies on the Dharma, become a monk. How can one who is full of desire and greed be a monk? (264). If by giving up a small happiness or pleasure, one may behold a larger joy. A far-seeing and wise man will do this (a wise man will leave the small pleasure and look for a larger one) (Dharmapada 290). It is pleasant to have friends when need arises. Enjoyment is pleasant when shared with one another. Merit is pleasant when life is at its end. Shunning of (giving up) all evil is pleasant (Dharmapada 331). To revere the mother is pleasant; to revere the father is pleasant; to revere the monks is pleasant; to revere the sages is pleasant (Dharmapada 332). To be virtuous until old age is pleasant; to have steadfast faith is pleasant; to attain wisdom is pleasant; not to do evil is pleasant (Dharmapada 333).

Also in the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “It is difficult to renounce the world. It is difficult to be a householder. It is painful to associate with those who are not friends. It is painful to be wandering in the samsara forever. Reaching the enlightenment and let wander no more! Let’s suffer no more! (Dharmapada 302). Whoever binds to craving, his sorrows flourish like well-watered birana grass (Dharmapada 335). Whoever in this world overcomes this unruly craving, his sorrows fall away just like water-drops from a lotus leaf (Dharmapada 336). This is my advice to you: “Root out craving; root it out, just like birana grass is rooted out. Let not Mara crush you again and again as a flood crushes a reed! (Dharmapada 337). Latent craving is not conquered, suffering recovers and grows again and again, just like a tree hewn down grows up again as long as its roots is unrooted (Dharmapada 338). If in any man, the thirty-six streams of craving are still flowing, such deluded person is still looking for pleasure and passion, and torrential thoughts of lust sweep him away (Dharmapada 339). Streams of pleasure and passion flow in all directions, just like the creeper sprouts and stands. Seeing the creeper that has sprung up in your mind, cut it off with wisdom (Dharmapada 340). Common people are subject to attachment and thirst; they are always happy with pleasure; they run after passion. They look for happiness, but such men

caught in the cycle of birth and decay again and again (Dharmapada 341). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified like hunted hares. The more they hold fast by fetters, bonds, and afflictions, the longer they suffer (Dharmapada 342). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified just like hunted hares. Therefore, a monk who wishes his own passionlessness, should first banish craving (Dharmapada 343). He who is free from desire for the household, finds pleasure (of asceticism or monastic life) in the forest, yet run back to that very home. Look at that man! He runs right back into that very bondage again! (Dharmapada 344). To a wise man, the bondage that is made of hemp, wood or iron, is not a strong bond, the longing for wives, children, jewels, and ornaments is a greater and far stronger attachment (Dharmapada 345). The wise people say that that bond is very strong. Such fetters seem supple, but hard to break. Break them! Cut off desire and renounce the world! (Dharmapada 346). A man infatuated with lust falls back into the stream as a spider into the web spun by itself. He who cuts off this bond, retire from the world, with no clinging, will leave all sorrow behind (Dharmapada 347). He who has reached the goal, without fear, without craving and without desire, has cut off the thorns of life. This is his final mortal body (Dharmapada 351). He who is without craving, without attachment; who understands subtleties of words and meanings; they are truly a great wise who bear the final mortal body (Dharmapada 352). Strive hard to cut off the stream of desires. Oh! Brahman! Knowing that all conditioned things will perish. Oh! Brahman! You are a knower of the Unmade Nirvana! (Dharmapada 383).” He whose passion, hatred, pride and hypocrisy fall off like a mustard seed from the point of a needle, I call him a Brahmana (407).

In the Middle Length Discourses, the Buddha taught: “O Bhikkhus, with sense desires as cause, with sense desires as motives, kings are fighting with kings, khattiya are fighting with khattiya, brahmanas are fighting with brahmanas, householders are fighting with householders, mother is fighting with son, son is fighting with mother, father is fighting with brother, brother is fighting with sister, sister is fighting with brother, friend is fighting with friend. When they engage themselves in fighting, in quarrels, in disputes, they attack each other with hands, they attack each other with stones, they attack each other with sticks, they attack each other with swords. Thus they are going to

death, or to suffer like death. O Bhikkhus, with sense desires as cause, with sense desires as motives, they take hold of spears, they take hold of shields, they wear bows and arrows. They arrange themselves in two lines, and arrows are thrown at each other, knives are thrown at each other, swords are slashed at each other. They pierce each other with arrows, they slash each other with knives, they cut each other heads with swords. Thus they are going to death, or to suffer like death.”

The Buddha's Teachings on Robbers of Afflictions of Anger: The Buddha taught: “Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Like the earth, Arhats who are balanced and well-disciplined, resent not. He is like a pool without mud; no new births are in store for him (95). Misers cannot go to the heaven, fools cannot indeed praise charity. A wise man rejoices in almsgiving and thus becomes happy thereafter (177). There is no fire like lust; no evil like hatred. There is no ill like the body; no bliss higher than Nirvana (202). One should give up anger; one should abandon pride. One should overcome all fetters. No suffering befall him who calls nothing his own (Dharmapada 221). He who controls his anger which arises as a rolling chariot. He is a true charioteer. Other people are only holding the rein (Dharmapada 222). Conquer anger by love; conquer evil by good; conquer stingy by giving; conquer the liar by truth (Dharmapada 223). One should speak the truth. One should not be angry. One should give when asked to. These are three good deeds that help carry men the realm of heaven (224). One should guard against the bodily anger, or physical action, and should control the body. One should give up evil conduct of the body. One should be of good bodily conduct (Dharmapada 231). One should guard against the anger of the tongue; one should control the tongue. One should give up evil conduct in speech. One should be of good conduct in speech (Dharmapada 232). One should guard against

the anger of the mind; one should control the mind. One should give up evil conduct of the mind. One should practice virtue with the mind (Dharmapada 233). Only he who eradicates hatred, is indeed called good-natured (263).”

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Ignorance:

In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Long is the night to the wakeful; long is the road to him who is tired; long is samsara to the foolish who do not know true Law (60). If a traveler does not meet a companion who is better or at least equal, let him firmly pursue his solitary career, rather than being in fellowship with the foolish (61). These are my sons; this is my wealth; with such thought a fool is tormented. Verily, he is not even the owner of himself. Whence sons? Whence wealth? (62). A foolish man who knows that he is a fool, for that very reason a wise man; the fool who think himself wise, he is indeed a real fool (63). If a fool associates with a wise man even all his life, he will understand the Dharma as little as a spoon tastes the flavour of soup (64). An intelligent person associates with a wise man, even for a moment, he will quickly understand the Dharma, as the tongue tastes the flavour of soup (65). A fool with little wit, goes through life with the very self as his own greatest enemy. In the same manner, evil doers do evil deeds, the fruit of which is bitter (66). The deed is not well done of which a man must repent, and the reward of which he receives, weeping, with tearful face; one reaps the fruit thereof (67). The deed is well done when, after having done it, one repents not, and when, with joy and pleasure, one reaps the fruit thereof (68). As long as the evil deed done does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is as sweet as honey; but when it ripens, then he comes to grief (69). Let a fool, month after month, eats only as much food as can be picked up on the tip of a kusa blade; but he is not worth a sixteenth part of them who have comprehended the truth (70). An evil deed committed may not immediately bear fruit, just as newl drawn milk does not turn sour at once. In the same manner, smouldering, it follows the fool like fire covered with ashes (71). The knowledge and fame that the fool gains, so far from benefiting; they destroy his bright lot and cleave his head (72). The fool always desire for an undue reputation or undeserved honour, precedence among the monks, authority in the monasteries, honour among other families (73). Let

both monks and laymen think, “by myself was this done; in every work, great or small, let them refer to me.” Such is the ambition of the fool; his desires and pride increase (74).

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Arrogance:

According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of conceited action of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who can get rid of these ten kinds of conceited action will attain ten kinds of actions of knowledge. First, not respecting teachers, parents, mendicants, people on the right Path, people aiming for the right Path, or honorable fields of blessings, is conceited action. Second, if there are teachers who have attained to supreme truth, who ride the Great Vehicle of universal enlightenment, who know the way to emancipation, who have attained mental command and expound the great principles of the scriptures, to be haughty toward them or their teachings and to be disrespectful is conceited action. Third, when in an audience hearing the sublime Teaching expounded, to be unwilling to laud its excellence and cause others to believe and accept it, is conceited action. The fourth conceited action: habitually conceiving the illusion of superiority, elevating oneself and looking down on others, not seeing one's own faults, and not knowing one's own shortcoming. The fifth conceited action: habitually imagining that one is better than those who are better than oneself; not praising virtuous people who are praiseworthy; not being happy when others praise virtuous people. Sixth, when seeing someone preach, in spite of knowing it is the norm, the rule, the truth, the word of Buddha, to despise the teaching because of disliking the person, to slander it and incite others to slander it, is conceited action. The seventh conceited action: seeking a high seat for oneself; edeclaring oneself to a teacher; declaring oneself to be worthy of receiving offerings; not supposed to work; failing to rise to greet old people who have cultivated spiritual practice for a long time; being unwilling to serve and make offerings to enlightening beings. Eighth, frowning unhappily on seeing people with virtue, speaking to them harshly and looking for faults in them, is conceited action. The ninth conceited action, when seeing intelligent people who know the truth, not being willing to approach and attend them, not respecting and honoring them, being unwilling to ask them what is good and what is not good, what should be done and what should not be done, what acts

result in various benefits and comforts in the long night, being foolish and deluded, stubborn and contentious, swallow by self-importance, never able to see the way of emancipation. The tenth conceited action: minds shrouded by conceit; when Buddhas appear in the world are unable to approach, respect, and honor them; no new good arises, and goodness from the past evaporates and vanishes; they say what they should not; they contend where they should not; in the future they will surely fall into a deep pit of danger and; will not even encounter Buddha; much less hearing the Teaching for hundreds of thousands of eons; though because of having once conceived the aspiration for enlightenment they will in the end wake up on their own. According to the Surangama Sutra, book Eight, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the habit of arrogance as follows: “Habits of arrogance and resulting friction which give rise to mutual intimidation. When it accelerates without cease, it produces torrents and rapids which create restless waves of water, just as water is produced when a person continuously works his tongue in an effort to taste flavors. Because these two habits incite one another, there come into being the river of blood, the river of ashes, the burning sand, the poisonous sea, the molten copper which is poured over one or which must be swallowed, and other such experiences. Therefore, the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions look upon self-satisfaction and name it ‘drinking the water of stupidity.’ Bodhisattvas should avoid arrogance as they would a huge deluge.”

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Doubt: In Buddhist scriptures, the Buddha always taught that doubting is natural. Everyone starts with doubts. We can learn a great deal from them. What is important is that we do not identify with our doubts. That is, do not get caught up in them, letting our mind spin in endless circles. Instead, watch the whole process of doubting, of wondering. See who it is that doubts. See how doubts come and go. Then we will no longer be victimized by our doubts. We will step outside of them, and our mind will be quiet. We can see how all things come and go. Let go of our doubts and simply watch to see the real nature of them. This is how to end doubting. In short, to see the real nature of doubts will lead practitioners to letting go. And as a matter of fact, unless Buddhist practitioners see the real nature of doubts, if not, we can never let them go. Practitioners should always listen to the Buddha's teachings on

doubts to prevent us from sufferings and afflictions on our path of cultivation.

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Wrong Views: According to the Simile of the Snake in the Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, the Buddha taught about someone who does not have wrong views as follows: “Here Bhikkhus! Someone who hears the Tathagata or a disciple of the Tathagata teaching the Dharma for the elimination of all standpoints, decisions, obsessions, adherences, and underlying tendencies, for the stilling of all formations, for the relinquishing of all attachments, for the destruction of craving, for dispassion, for cessation, for Nirvana. He thinks that he will be annihilated, he will be perished; he will have no more sorrow, grieve, and lament; he does not weep beating his breast and become distraught.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Those who embrace the wrong views, are ashamed of what is not shameful, and are not ashamed of what is shameful, will not be able to avoid the hell (Dharmapada 316). Those who fear when they should not fear, and don’t fear in the fearsome, embrace these false views, will not be able to avoid the hell (Dharmapada 317). Those who perceive faults in the faultless, and see no wrong in what is wrong; such men, embracing false doctrines, will not be able to avoid the hell (Dharmapada 318). Those who perceive wrong as wrong and what is right as right, such men, embracing right views and go to the blissful state (319).”

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Killing: In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “He who in this world destroys life, tells lie, takes others’ wealth, commits adultery, is addicted to intoxicating liquors (246). A person who has such actions, digs up his own good roots right in this life (247). He who does not use the rod to damage creatures, big or small, who neither harms nor kills, I call him a Brahmana (405).” According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about “cutting off killing”, one of the four important precepts for monks and nuns in Buddhism: “Ananda! If living beings in the six paths of any mundane world had no thoughts of killing, they would not have to follow a continual succession of births and deaths. Ananda! Your basic purpose in cultivating samadhi is to transcend the wearisome defilements. But if you do not remove your thoughts of killing, you will not be able to get out of the dust. Ananda!

Even though one may have some wisdom and the manifestation of Zen Samadhi, one is certain to enter the path of spirits if one does not cease killing. At best, a person will become a mighty ghost; on the average, one will become a flying yaksha, a ghost leader, or the like; at the lowest level, one will become an earth-bound rakshasa. These ghosts and spirits have their groups of disciples. Each says of himself that he has accomplished the unsurpassed way. After my extinction, in the Dharma-Ending Age, these hordes of ghosts and spirits will abound, spreading like wildfire as they argue that eating meat will bring one to the Bodhi Way. Ananda! I permit the Bhikshus to eat five kinds of pure meat. This meat is actually a transformation brought into being by my spiritual powers. It basically has no life-force. You Brahmans live in a climate so hot and humid, and on such sandy and rocky land, that vegetables will not grow. Therefore, I have had to assist you with spiritual powers and compassion. Because of the magnitude of this kindness and compassion, what you eat that tastes like meat is merely said to be meat; in fact, however, it is not. After my extinction, how can those who eat the flesh of living beings be called the disciples of Sakya? You should know that these people who eat meat may gain some awareness and may seem to be in samadhi, but they are all great rakshasas. When their retribution ends, they are bound to sink into the bitter sea of birth and death. They are not disciples of the Buddha. Such people as they kill and eat one another in a never-ending cycle. How can such people transcend the triple realm? Ananda! When you teach people in the world to cultivate samadhi, they must also cut off killing. This is the second clear and unalterable instruction on purity given by the Thus Come Ones and the Buddhas of the past, World Honored Ones. Therefore, Ananda, if cultivators of Zen Samadhi do not cut off killing, they are like one who stops up his ears and calls out in a loud voice, expecting no one to hear him. It is to wish to hide what is completely evident. Bhikshus and Bodhisattvas who practice purity will not even step on grass in the pathway; even less will they pull it up with their hand. How can one with great compassion pick up the flesh and blood of living beings and proceed to eat his fill? Bhikshus who do not wear silk, leather boots, furs, or down from this country or consume milk, cream, or butter can truly transcend this world. When they have paid back their past debts, they will not have to re-enter the triple

realm. Why? It is because when one wears something taken from a living creature, one creates conditions with it, just as when people eat the hundred grains, their feet cannot leave the earth. Both physically and mentally one must avoid the bodies and the by-products of living beings, by neither wearing them nor eating them. I say that such people have true liberation. What I have said here is the Buddha's teaching. Any explanation counter to it is the teaching of Papiyan.

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Stealing: In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "He who takes nothing that is not given, good or bad, long or short, small or great, I call him a Brahmana (409)." According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about "cutting off stealing", one of the four important precepts for monks and nuns in Buddhism: "Ananda! If living beings in the six paths of any mundane world had no thoughts of stealing, they would not have to follow a continuous succession of births and deaths. Ananda! Your basic purpose in cultivating samadhi is to transcend the wearisome defilements. But if you do not renounce your thoughts of stealing, you will not be able to get out of the dust. Ananda! Even though one may have some wisdom and the manifestation of Zen Samadhi, one is certain to enter a devious path if one does not cease stealing. At best, one will be an apparition; on the average, one will become a phantom; at the lowest level, one will be a devious person who is possessed by a Mei-Ghost. These devious hordes have their groups of disciples. Each says of himself that he has accomplished the unsurpassed way. After my extinction, in the Dharma-Ending Age, these phantoms and apparitions will abound, spreading like wildfire as they surreptitiously cheat others. Calling themselves good knowing advisors, they will each say that they have attained the superhuman dharmas. Enticing and deceiving the ignorant, or frightening them out of their wits, they disrupt and lay waste to households wherever they go. I teach the Bhikshus to beg for their food in an assigned place, in order to help them renounce greed and accomplish the Bodhi Way. The Bhikshus do not prepare their own food, so that, at the end of this life of transitory existence in the triple realm, they can show themselves to be once-returners who go and do not come back. How can thieves who put on my robes and sell the Thus Come One's dharmas, saying that all manner of karma one creates is

just the Buddhadharma? They slander those who have left the home-life and regard Bhikshus who have taken complete precepts as belonging to the path of the small vehicle. Because of such doubts and misjudgments, limitless living beings fall into the Unintermittent Hell. I say that Bhikshus who after my extinction have decisive resolve to cultivate samadhi, and who before the images of Thus Come Ones can burn a candle on their bodies, or burn off a finger, or burn even one incense stick on their bodies, will in that moment, repay their debts from beginningless time past. They can depart from the world and forever be free of outflows. Though they may not have instantly understood the unsurpassed enlightenment, they will already have firmly set their mind on it. If one does not practice any of these token renunciations of the body on the causal level, then even if one realizes the unconditioned, one will still have to come back as a person to repay one's past debts exactly as I had to undergo the retribution of having to eat the grain meant for horses. Ananda! When you teach people in the world to cultivate samadhi, they must also cease stealing. This is the third clear and unalterable instruction on purity given by the Thus Come One and the Buddhas of the past, World Honored Ones. Therefore, Ananda, if cultivators of Zen Samadhi do not cease stealing, they are like someone who pours water into a leaking cup and hopes to fill it. He may continue for as many eons as there are fine motes of dust, but it still will not be full in the end. If Bhikshus do not store away anything but their robes and bowls; if they give what is left over from their food-offerings to hungry living beings; if they put their palms together and make obeisance to the entire great assembly; if when people scold them they can treat it as praise; if they can sacrifice their very bodies and minds, giving their flesh, bones, and blood to living creatures. If they do not repeat the non-ultimate teachings of the Thus Come One as though they were their own explanations, misrepresenting them to those who have just begun to study, then the Buddha gives them his seal as having attained true samadhi. What I have said here is the Buddha's teaching. Any explanation counter to it is the teaching of Papiyan.

The Buddha's Teachings On Robbers of Afflictions of Lewd:

According to the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha taught: "Monk, I know not of any other single form by which a man's heart is attracted as it is

by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's form fills a man's mind. Monks, I know not of any other single sound by which a man's heart is attracted as it is by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's sound fills a man's mind (the same thing happens with smell, flavor, touch..." Sex is described by the Buddha as the strongest impulse in man. If one becomes a slave to this impulse, even the most powerful man turn into a weakling; even the sage may fall from the higher to a lower level. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Even a shower of gold pieces cannot satisfy lust. A wise man knows that lusts have a short taste, but long suffering (186). Misconduct is the taint of a woman; stinginess is the taint of a donor. Taints are indeed all evil things, both in this world and in the next (242). Four misfortunes occur to a careless man who commits adultery: acquisition of demerit, restlessness, moral blame and downward path (Dharmapada 309). There is acquisition of demerit as well as evil destiny. No joy of the frightened man. The king imposes a heavy punishment. Therefore, man should never commit adultery (Dharmapada 310)." In the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, the Buddha said: "There was once someone who, plagued by ceaseless sexual desire, wished to castrate himself. To cut off your sexual organs would not be as good as to cut off your mind. Your mind is like a supervisor; if the supervisor stops, his employees will also quit. If the deviant mind is not stopped, what good does it do to cut off the organs?" The Kasyapa Buddha taught: 'Desire is born from your will; your will is born from thought. When both aspects of the mind are still, there is neither form nor activity.' We, Buddhist practitioners should listen to the Buddha's teaching to get rid of sexual misconducts, for once we are able to get rid of sexual misconducts also means that we have already pushed away great obstacles on our own path of cultivation.

According to the Surangama Sutra, the Buddha reminded Ananda about "cutting off lust", one of the four important precepts for monks and nuns in Buddhism: "Ananda! Your basic purpose in cultivating is to transcend the wearisome defilements. But if you don't renounce your lustful thoughts, you will not be able to get out of the dust. Even though one may have some wisdom and the manifestation of Zen Samadhi, one is certain to enter demonic paths if one does not cut off lust. At best, one will be a demon king; on the average, one will be in the

retinue of demons; at the lowest level, one will be a female demon. These demons have their groups of disciples. Each says of himself he has accomplished the unsurpassed way. After my extinction, in the Dharma-Ending Age, these hordes of demons will abound, spreading like wildfire as they openly practice greed and lust. Calming to be good knowing advisors, they will cause living beings to fall into the pit of love and views and lose the way to Bodhi Ananda! When you teach people in the world to cultivate samadhi, they must first of all sever the mind of lust. This is the first clear and unalterable instruction on purity given by the Thus Come Ones and the Buddhas of the past, World Honored Ones. Therefore, Ananda, if cultivators of Zen Samadhi do not cut off lust, they will be like someone who cooks sand in the hope of getting rice, after hundreds of thousands of eons, it will still be just hot sand. Why? It wasn't rice to begin with; it was only sand. Ananda! If you seek the Buddha's wonderful fruition and still have physical lust, then even if you attain a wonderful awakening, it will be based in lust. With lust at the source, you will revolve in the three paths and not be able to get out. Which road will you take to cultivate and be certified to the Thus Come One's Nirvana? You must cut off the lust which is intrinsic in both body and mind. Then get rid of even the aspect of cutting it off. At that point you have some hope of attaining the Buddha's Bodhi. What I have said here is the Buddha's teaching. Any explanation counter to it is the teaching of Papiyan. According to the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha taught: "Monk, I know not of any other single form by which a man's heart is attracted as it is by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's form fills a man's mind. Monks, I know not of any other single sound by which a man's heart is attracted as it is by that of a woman. Monks, a woman's sound fills a man's mind (the same thing happens with smell, flavor, touch...)" Sex is described by the Buddha as the strongest impulse in man. If one becomes a slave to this impulse, even the most powerful man turn into a weakling; even the sage may fall from the higher to a lower level. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Four misfortunes occur to a careless man who commits adultery: acquisition of demerit, restlessness, moral blame and downward path (Dharmapada 309). There is acquisition of demerit as well as evil destiny. No joy of the frightened man. The king imposes a heavy punishment. Therefore, man should never commit

adultery (Dharmapada 310).” In the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, the Buddha said: “There was once someone who, plagued by ceaseless sexual desire, wished to castrate himself. To cut off your sexual organs would not be as good as to cut off your mind. Your mind is like a supervisor; if the supervisor stops, his employees will also quit. If the deviant mind is not stopped, what good does it do to cut off the organs?” The Kasyapa Buddha taught: ‘Desire is born from your will; your will is born from thought. When both aspects of the mind are still, there is neither form nor activity.’”

The Buddha's Teachings On Lying: At the time of the Buddha, one day, an angry man with a bad temper went to see the Buddha. The man used harsh words to abuse the Buddha. The Buddha listened to him patiently and quietly, and did not say anything as the man spoke. The angry man finally stopped speaking. Only then did the Buddha ask him, “If someone wants to give you something, but you don’t want to accept it, to whom does the gift belong?” “Of course it belongs to the person who tried to give it away in the first place,” the man answered. “Likewise it is with your abuse,” said the Buddha. “I do not wish to accept it, and so it belongs to you. You should have to keep this gift of harsh words and abuse for yourself. And I am afraid that in the end you will have to suffer it, for a bad man who abuses a good man can only bring suffering on himself. It is as if a man wanted to dirty the sky by spitting at it. His spittle can never make the sky dirty, it would only fall onto his own face and make it dirty instead.” The man listened to the Buddha and felt ashamed. He asked the Buddha to forgive him and became one of his followers. The Buddha then said, “Only kind words and reasoning can influence and transform others.” According to the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Do not speak harshly to anyone. Those who are spoken to will respond in the same manner. Angry speech nourishes trouble. You will receive blows in exchange for blows (133). If like a cracked gong, you silence yourself, you already have attained Nirvana. No vindictiveness (quarrels) will be found in you (134). Those who have transgressed the One Vehicle Law (the law of truthfulness), who tell lies, who don’t believe in the law of cause and effect, there is no evil that they will not do (176). The speaker of untruth goes down; also he who denies what he has done, both sinned against truth. After death they go together to hells (306).”

According to Buddhism, habits of deceptions (deceitfulness) result in yokes and being beaten with rods. According to the Surangama Sutra, book Eight, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the habit of deceitfulness as follows: “Habits of deception and misleading involments which give rise to mutual guile. When such maneucering continues without cease, it produces the ropes and wood of gallows for hanging, like the grass and trees that grow when water saturates a field. Because these two habits perpetuate one another, there come into being handcuffs and fetters, cangues and locks, whips and clubs, sticks and cudgels, and other such experiences. Therefore, the Thus Come Ones of the ten directions look upon deception and name it a ‘treacherous crook.’ Bodhisattvas fear deception as they would a savage wolf.”

Chapter Twenty-Six

Identifying Afflictions With Objective Observations

The Buddha stressed in His Teachings the experimental process in Buddhist cultivation is a chain of objective observations practices because only through objective observations we can realize the real face of sufferings and afflictions and from there we can overcome them. It's is objective observation that gives us an opportunity to cultivate to totally destroy sufferings and afflictions. Thus, at any time, objective observation plays a key role in the experimental process in Buddhist cultivation. *First, Identifying and Overcoming Anger:* According to the Buddhist theory, in order to overcome anger, one must contemplate that a person or an animal which causes us to be angry today may have been our friend, relative or even our father or mother in a certain previous life. *Second, Identifying and Overcoming Attachment:* We should meditate or contemplate that a friend today may become an enemy tomorrow and therefore, there is nothing for us to attach to. *Third, Identifying and Overcoming Obstructive Demons:* To overcome demons, e.g. as the Buddha did at his enlightenment. *Fourth, Identifying and Overcoming Doubts:* To study scriptures, to read stories of enlightened ones, as well as to contemplate will help us perceive the truth and overcome doubts. *Fifth, Identifying and Renouncing Wealth and Sex:* According to the Sutra in Forty-Two Sections, Chapter 22, the Buddha said: "People who cannot renounce wealth and sex are like small children who, not satisfied with one delicious helping, lick the honey off the blade of the knife and in doing so, cut their tongues." *Sixth, Identifying and Getting Rid of Deluded Thoughts:* One of the best methods to get rid of deluded thoughts is either meditation to obtain concentration or just keep one method such as reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. *Seventh, Identifying and Refusing to Slander Any Enlightening Teachings:* Should not slander any enlightening teachings. This is one of the ten kinds of rules of behavior of great enlightening beings. Enlightening beings who abide by these can attain the supreme discipline of great knowledge. *Eighth, Identifying and Refusing to Look for Faults in Others:* In daily life, always look above, look below, look

to the east or to the west, to the north or to the south and so on to try to find faults in others. Buddha taught that we should look into ourselves, we should reflect the light of awareness inwardly to become enlightened. The Buddha taught: “When we do not see others’ mistakes or see only our own rightness, we are naturally respected by seniors and admired by juniors.” According to the Dharmapada, sentence 50, the Buddha taught: “Let not one look on the faults of others, nor things left done and undone by others; but one’s own deeds done and undone.” *Ninth, Identifying and Examining Ourselves:* We, devoted Buddhists, must examine ourselves so that we are able to know who we are. Know our body and mind by simply watching. In sitting, in sleeping, in eating, know our limits. Use wisdom. The practice is not to try to achieve anything. Just be mindful of what is. Our whole meditation is to look directly at the mind. We will be able to see suffering, its cause, and its end. *Tenth, Identifying and Controlling Emotions:* In Buddhism, controlling emotions does not mean a repression or suppression of emotions, but to recognize that they are destructive and harmful. If we let emotions simply come and go without checking them, we will have a tendency to be prone to emotional outbursts. In the contrary, if we have a clear recognition of their destructive potential, we can get rid of them easily. *Eleventh, Identifying and Getting Rid of Desires:* A Buddhist practitioner should be keenly anxious to get rid of desires, and wants to persist in this. *Twelfth, Identifying and Eliminating of Suffering:* Suffering can be eliminated because suffering itself isn’t the intrinsic nature of our minds. Since suffering arises from ignorance or misconception, once we realize emptiness, or the nature of things as they are, ignorance or misconception no longer influences us. It’s like turning a light on in a dark room, once the light is on, the darkness vanishes. Similarly, wisdom can help us cleanse ignorance and disturbing attitudes from our minds forever. In addition, wisdom cleanses the karmic imprints currently on our minds, so they won’t bring results. After perceiving the true picture of life, the Buddha said to himself: “I must get rid of the oppression of disease, old age and death.” *Thirteenth, Identifying and Eliminating Perversions:* Eliminating deluded and confused. This means eliminating deceived in regard to reality. Delusion also implies a belief in something that is contrary to reality. Illusion, on the other

hand, suggests that what is seen has objective reality but is misinterpreted or seen falsely. In Buddhism, delusion is ignorance, an unawareness of the true nature of things or of the real meaning of existence. We are deluded or led astray by our senses (which include the intellect and its discriminating thoughts) insofar as they cause us to accept the phenomenal world as the whole of reality when in fact it is but a limited and ephemeral aspect of reality, and to act as though the world is external to us when in truth it is but a reflection of ourselves. This does not say all phenomena are illusory, they mean that compared with Mind itself the world apprehended by the senses is such a partial and limited aspect of truth that it is dreamlike. When we fail to see the true nature of things our views always become clouded. Because of our likes and dislikes, we fail to see the sense organs and sense objects objectively and in their proper perspective and go after mirages, illusions and deceptions. The sense organs delude and mislead us and then we fail to see things in their true light as a result of which our way of seeing things becomes perverted. The delusion of mind mistakes the unreal for the real, the passing shadows for permanence, and the result is confusion, conflict, disharmony and perpetual sorrow. When we are caught up in these illusions, we perceive, think and view things incorrectly. We perceive permanence in the impermanence; pleasure in pain; self in what is not self; beauty in repulsive. We think and view in the same erroneous manner. We are perverted for four reasons: our own senses, unwise reflection, unsystematic attention, failure to see true nature of this world. The Buddha recommended us to utilize right understanding or insight to remove these illusions and help us recognize the real nature of all things. Once we really understand that all thing is subject to change in this world without any exception, we will surely want to rely on nothing. *Fourteenth, Identifying and Eliminating of All Hindrances That Cause Afflictions:* By realizing for oneself with direct knowledge, one here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints. *Fifteenth, Identifying and Getting Rid of Covetousness:* Getting rid of covetousness, anger, delusion, and fear, by taming their own minds, one of the ten kinds of action of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can achieve the action of Buddhas that has no coming or going.

Sixteenth, Identifying Attachments and Letting Them Go: A basic teaching of the Buddha on how to calm and rein in the “monkey” mind. When we feel asleep, just lie down in a quiet place, put the lights out and let go our minds and bodies. In Buddhism, we have always been hearing about letting go and not clinging to anything. What does the Buddha mean on letting go? He means in daily activities, no way we can let go everything. We have to hold on things; however, try not to cling to them. For example, we try to make money for our living expenses, but not try to cling on making a lot of money to accumulate regardless of the means of making the money. Practitioners do everything with a mind that lets go. Do not expect any praise or reward. If we let go a little, we will have a little peace. If we let go a lot, we will have a lot of peace. If we let go completely, we will know complete peace and freedom.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

To Face & to Subdue Afflictions In Daily Living and Cultivation

I. An Overview of Afflictions:

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Sanskrit term "Agantuklesa" means guest-dust. Let's explain in details for "Guest-dust". According to Buddhism, affliction means guest or the foreign atom, or intruding element, which enters the mind and causes distress and delusion. Also according to Buddhism, affliction means worldly dust for the mind is naturally pure or innocent till the evil element enters. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. "Klesa" literally means "pain," "external dust," "affliction," or "something tormenting" and is translated as "affliction." As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust for agantuklesa. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such

troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration. In Buddhist teachings, all afflictions, wrath, and folly are weapons of enlightening beings because they liberate sentient beings through afflictions. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can annihilate the afflictions, bondage, and compulsion accumulated by all sentient beings in the long night of ignorance. According to the Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, Bodhisattvas utilize “Giving” to destroy all stinginess; “Self-control” to get rid of all crime; Impartiality to remove all discrimination; Wisdom to dissolve all ignorance and afflictions; Right livelihood to lead away from all wrong livelihood; Skill in means to manifest in all places; All afflictions, wrath, and folly to liberate sentient beings through afflictions; Birth-and-death to continue enlightening practices and teach sentient beings; Teaching the truth to be able to break up all clinging; All knowledge to not give up the avenues of practice of enlightening beings. Defilements of transgression occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. Defilements of obsession is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one’s mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have

experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. Dormant or latent afflictions are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden, waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day's activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

According to Buddhism, *mulaklesa* means fundamental illusions or passions, or afflictions, including: *Panca-klesa* or *Panca-klesa-dula* means five dull, unintelligent, or stupid vices or temptations or five envoys of stupidity caused by the illusion of the body or self: greed, anger, stupidity, arrogance, and doubt. It should be reminded that the suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turn results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. *Panca-tiksna-dula* means the five higher wholesome deeds: no greed, no hatred (hate), no stupidity, nor pride nor arrogance, and no doubt. While *Sequent*, or associated *klesa-trials*, or evils, either all of them as always dogging the foot-steps. Consequent afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions, in contrast with afflictions arising from the six senses. The twenty-four consequent *klesas* arising out of the six senses. The consequent or secondary afflictions resulting or arising from the fundamental afflictions. They include: *Klesas* arising from false reasoning. *Klesa* that which is natural to all. Ordinary passions or temptations. Firece or sudden afflictions cause by lack of belief on the Law of Cause and Effect. According to Vasubandhu's *Trimsika*, there are twenty-four secondary afflictions: impatience or anger (*krodha* (skt), hatred or resentment (*upanada* (skt), hypocrisy or concealment (*mraksha* (skt), stinging talk or worry (*pradasa* (skt), envy or jealousy (*irshya* (skt), stinginess (*matsarya* (skt), deceit or manipulation (*maya* (skt), duplicity or undully flattering (*sathya* (skt), arrogance or conceitedness (*mada* and *mana* (skt), hurting others or destructive

(vihimsa (skt), shamelessness, self-shameless, or have no shame of self (ahri (skt), recklessness, or have no shame around other people (atrapa (skt), torpidity or drowsiness (styanam (skt), fluctuations, or instability of mind and body (uddhava (skt), unbelief or faithlessness (asraddha (skt), indolence or laziness (kausidya (skt), thoughtlessness, uninhibitedness, or lack of self-mastery (pramada (skt), senselessness (mushitasmritita (skt), uncollected state or unsteadiness (vikshepa (skt), inaccuracy of knowledge, or do not understand in a proper manner (asamprajanya (skt), evil doing (kaukritya (skt), drowsiness (middha (skt), investigation (vitarka (skt), and reflection (vicara (skt).

II. To Face Afflictions in Daily Living and Cultivation:

When There Are Afflictions, Water Freezes into Ice; When Afflictions Are Gone, Ice Melt into Water: According to Buddhist teachings, afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Practitioners of mindfulness subdue afflictions in four basic ways: Subduing afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation. Subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever affliction of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Subduing afflictions with phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don’t work for someone with heavy karma,

leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Subduing afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha. As a matter of fact, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. The one is included in the other. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Once we thoroughly understand the real meaning of "Afflictions are bodhi", we've already subdued our own afflictions. The Buddha witnessed that all sentient beings undergo great sufferings, so He resolved to leave the home-life, to cultivate and find the way to help sentient beings escape these sufferings. Afflictions manifest themselves through our ignorance. Sometimes they show in our appearance; sometimes they are hidden in our minds, etc. In our daily life, we cannot do without sufferings and afflictions. However, if we know how to cultivate, we always consider "afflictions is Bodhi". If we know how to use it, affliction is Bodhi; on the contrary, if we do not know how to use it, then Bodhi becomes affliction. According to Late Most Venerable Hsuan-Hua in Talks on Dharma, volume 7, Bodhi is analogous to water, and affliction to ice. Ice and water are of the same substance; there is no difference. In freezing weather, water will freeze into ice, and in hot weather, ice will melt into water. When there are afflictions, water freezes into ice; and when the afflictions are gone, ice melts into water. It is to say, having afflictions is having the affliction-ice of ignorance; having no afflictions is having the Bodhi-water of wisdom.

To Face Afflictions In Daily Living and Cultivation: According to Buddhism, all existence is characterized by suffering and does not bring satisfaction. According to Buddhism, human existence is distinguished by the fact that nothing is permanent: no happiness will last forever, and whatever else there is, there will always be suffering and death. The first step in the Buddhist path to awakening is to recognize this as the foremost problem of human existence, to see that

all is dukkha. However, this is not a pessimistic observation, because while acknowledging the ubiquity of dukkha, Buddhism offers a solution in the form of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Dukkha. The Buddha himself characterized his teaching by saying: “I teach only Dukkha and the cessation of dukkha.” When the Buddha described our lives as “Dukkha”, he was referring to any and all unsatisfactory conditions. These range from minor disappointments, problems and difficulties to intense pain and misery. Therefore, Dukkha should be used to describe the fact that things are not completely right in our lives and could be better. The Buddha taught: Negative thoughts produce worries and miseries, while positive thoughts produce happiness and peace. Also according to Buddhism, suffering is everywhere, suffering is already enclosed in the cause, suffering from the effect, suffering throughout time, suffering pervades space, and suffering governs both normal people and saint. From internal sufferings to external sufferings. Internal sufferings include both physical and mental sufferings. Physical sufferings are sufferings from within such as sickness or sorrow. Mental sufferings are spiritual sufferings such as sadness, distress, jealousy, bitterness, unsatisfaction, unhappiness, etc. External sufferings include sufferings from outside circumstances such as calamities, wars, etc. The Buddha said that whatever is impermanent is suffering because although impermanence is not a cause for suffering, it creates occasions for suffering. For not understanding of impermanence, we crave and cling to objects in the hope that they may be permanent, that they may yield permanent happiness. Failing to understand that youth, health, and life itself are impermanent, we crave them and cling to them. We desperately hold onto our youth and try to prolong our life, yet because they are impermanent by nature, they keep changing rapidly and we will surely one day become old and sick. When this occurs, impermanence is the main agent which creates occasions for suffering. The end of sufferings and affliction is the most important goal of Buddhism; however, this cannot be done through studying, but one must practice with your personal experiences. When we speak of the end of sufferings and afflictions in Buddhism, we mean the end of sufferings and afflictions in this very life, not waiting until a remote life. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that Nirvana in Buddhism is simply a place where there are no sufferings and

afflictions. So if we can cultivate ourselves to eliminate sufferings and afflictions, we reach what we call “Nirvana in this very life.” Meanwhile, affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life’s stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T’ien-T’ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don’t want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. In daily life, do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions.

III. To Subdue Afflictions In Daily Living and Cultivation:

Buddhist practitioners should always remember that we can reduce obstructions in cultivation by striving to subdue afflictions. Afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis.

There are four basic ways for a Buddhist to subdue afflictions: *First*, subduing afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation. *Second*, subduing afflictions with noumenon: When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. *Third*, subduing afflictions with phenomena: When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. *Fourth*, subduing afflictions via cultivating the Ten Good Actions and Deva-Gati. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, there are ten meritorious deeds, or the ten paths of good action. First, to abstain from killing, but releasing beings is good; second, to abstain from stealing, but giving is good; third, to abstain from sexual misconduct, but being virtuous is good; fourth, to abstain from lying, but telling the truth is good; fifth, to abstain from speaking double-tongued (two-faced speech), but telling the truth is good; sixth, to abstain from hurtful words (abusive slander), but speaking loving words is good; seventh, to abstain from useless gossiping, but speaking useful words; eighth, to abstain from being greedy and covetous; ninth, to abstain from being angry, but being gentle is good; tenth, to abstain from being attached (devoted) to wrong views, but understand correctly is good. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, chapter ten, the Buddha of the Fragrant Land, Vimalakirti said to Bodhisattvas of the Fragrant Land as follows: "As you have said, the Bodhisattvas of this world have strong compassion, and their lifelong works of salvation for all living beings surpass those done in other pure lands during hundreds and thousands of aeons. Why? Because they achieved ten excellent deeds which are not required in other pure lands." What are these ten excellent deeds? They are: using charity (dana) to succour the poor; using precept-keeping (sila) to help those who have broken the commandments; using patient endurance (ksanti) to subdue their anger;

using zeal and devotion (virya) to cure their remissness; using serenity (dhyana) to stop their confused thoughts; using wisdom (prajna) to wipe out ignorance; putting an end to the eight distressful conditions for those suffering from them; teaching Mahayana to those who cling to Hinayana; cultivation of good roots for those in want of merits; and using the four Bodhisattva winning devices for the purpose of leading all living beings to their goals (in Bodhisattva development). According to Hinayana Buddhism, according to Most Venerable Narada, there are ten kinds of good karma or meritorious actions which may ripen in the sense-sphere. Generosity or charity which yields wealth; morality gives birth in noble families and in states of happiness; meditation gives birth in realms of form and formless realms; reverence is the cause of noble parentage; service produces larger retinue; transference of merit acts as a cause to give in abundance in future births; rejoicing in other's merit is productive of joy wherever one is born; rejoicing in other's merit is also getting praise to oneself; hearing the dhamma is conducive to wisdom; expounding the dhamma is also conducive to wisdom; taking the three refuges results in the destruction of passions, straightening one's own views and mindfulness is conducive to diverse forms of happiness. *Fifth*, subduing afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha. According to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Once we thoroughly understand the real meaning of "Afflictions are bodhi", we've already subdued our own afflictions. The Buddha witnessed that all sentient beings undergo great sufferings, so He resolved to leave the home-life, to cultivate and find the way to help sentient beings escape these sufferings. Afflictions manifest themselves through our ignorance. Sometimes they show in our appearance; sometimes they are hidden in our minds, etc. In our daily life, we cannot do without sufferings and afflictions. However, if we know how to cultivate, we always consider "afflictions is Bodhi". If we know how to use it, affliction is Bodhi; on the contrary, if we do not know how to use it,

then Bodhi becomes affliction. According to Late Most Venerable Hsuan-Hua in Talks on Dharma, volume 7, Bodhi is analogous to water, and affliction to ice. Ice and water are of the same substance; there is no difference. In freezing weather, water will freeze into ice, and in hot weather, ice will melt into water. When there are afflictions, water freezes into ice; and when the afflictions are gone, ice melts into water. It is to say, having afflictions is having the affliction-ice of ignorance; having no afflictions is having the Bodhi-water of wisdom. The end of sufferings and affliction is the most important goal of Buddhism; however, this cannot be done through studying, but one must practice with your personal experiences. When we speak of the end of sufferings and afflictions in Buddhism, we mean the end of sufferings and afflictions in this very life, not waiting until a remote life. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that Nirvana in Buddhism is simply a place where there are no sufferings and afflictions. So if we can cultivate ourselves to eliminate sufferings and afflictions, we reach what we call “Nirvana in this very life.” To end sufferings and afflictions, selfish desire must be removed. Just as a fire dies when no fuel is added, so unhappiness will end when the fuel of selfish desire is removed. When selfish desire is completely removed, our mind will be in a state of perfect peace. We shall be happy always. Buddhists call the state in which all suffering is ended “Nirvana”. It is an everlasting state of great joy and peace. It is the greatest happiness in life. The Eightfold Path to the Cessation of Duhkha and afflictions, enumerated in the fourth Noble Truth, is the Buddha’s prescription for the suffering experienced by all beings. It is commonly broken down into three components: morality, concentration and wisdom. Another approach identifies a path beginning with charity, the virtue of giving. Charity or generosity underlines morality or precept, which in turn enables a person to venture into higher aspirations. Morality, concentration and wisdom are the core of Buddhist spiritual training and are inseparably linked. They are not merely appendages to each other like petals of a flower, but are intertwined like “salt in great ocean,” to invoke a famous Buddhist simile. Finally, according to Buddhism, subduing affliction in order to reach the state without affliction which means without physical distress or mental distress. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: Let’s kill the mother of

craving, the father of arrogance, two warrior kings of wrong views of eternalism and nihilism. Let's destroy the kingdom of senses and officials of attachments. Let's turn to the Brahman of ungrief (Dharmapada 294). Let's kill the mother of craving, the father of arrogance, two Brahman kings of the wrong views of eternalism and nihilism. Let's destroy the official of Doubt and turn to the ungrieving Brahman (Dharmapada 295).

IV. Striving to Let the Sorrowless Flowers Always Bloom In Our Minds:

The opportunity our precious human lives does not last forever. Sooner or later, death comes to everyone. The very true nature of our lives is impermanent, and death inevitable. When we first took birth, given the countless number of bodies into which we have been born. Death is an irrevocable result of living. Therefore, we should not ignore it; on the contrary, it is good to think about it seriously. According to the Buddhist point of view, death is not an end but a means leading to another rebirth. The conscious mind only migrates from life to life. The starting point of such a process is impossible to retrace. However, our existence in samsara is not naturally infinite. Also according to the Buddhist point of view, it is possible to put an end to it. A seed has no beginning but it is not naturally infinite, if we burn the seed we can destroy its potential to grow. That is the end of it. The only way to do is to let the sorrowless flowers always bloom in our minds. Why? Because once the sorrowless flowers bloom in our minds, we no longer continue to grow any seed for this rebirth cycle. Due to our deluded mind, even in this present life, we are constantly operating with negative actions. We do not have much freedom from afflictive emotions. We are enslaved by them. We are prisoners of our own devices. For example, when anger rises in us, we become completely under the control of this afflictive emotion. It makes us think and act in ways we do not want to. If we step back and look in a mirror when we become angry, we will see what anger has done to us. We will see anger's power to destroy us and others around us. We might wonder if it is indeed possible to expiate a non-virtuous deed such as one of these five heinous crimes. According to "Prasanghika Madhyamika," any kind of negative deed can be expiated. This is a property of

negativities. If we do not leave them unattended until they are ripen, we can purify them. Non-virtuous deeds are negative by nature but have the quality of being purified. There are people who believe that they can get away with whatever negative action they commit. They are those who do not believe in the law of cause and effect. We have no comment on these people. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that according to the law of cause and effect, the consequences of any kind of act one commits, virtuous or non-virtuous, must be faced by that same person. In other words, each person is responsible for his own actions. And again, the only way to do this is to let the sorrowless flowers always bloom in our minds. Why? Because once the sorrowless flowers bloom in our minds, we are able to purify all negative and non-virtuous deeds in the past; at the same time, we can avoid similar negative and non-virtuous deeds at the present and in the future. However, the sorrowless flowers only bloom when we are content with few desires; or when we have few desires. Here “desires” include not only the desire for money and material things but also the wish for status and fame. It also indicates seeking the love and service of others. In Buddhism, a person who has attained the mental stage of deep faith has very few desires and is indifferent to them. We must note carefully that though such a person is indifferent to worldly desires, he is very eager for the truth, that is, he has a great desire for the truth. To be indifferent to the truth is to be slothful in life. To be content with few desires also means to be satisfied with little material gain, that is, not to feel discontented with one’s lot and to be free from worldly cares. This does not mean to be unconcerned with self-improvement but to do one’s best in one’s work without discontent. Such a person will never be ignored by those around him. But even if people around him ignored him, he would feel quite happy because he lives like a king from a spiritual point of view. We must have few desires in two areas: the desires for food and sex. Food and sex support ignorance in perpetrating all sort of evil. Thus, Confucius taught: “Food and sex are part of human nature.” That is to say we are born with the craving for food and sex. Why is that we have not been able to demolish our ignorance, eliminate our afflictions, and reveal our wisdom? Because we always crave for food and sex. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that food gives rise to sexual desire, and

sexual desire gives rise to ignorance. Once the desire for food arises, the desire for sex arises as well. Men are attracted to beautiful women, and women are charmed by handsome men. People become infatuated and obsessed and cannot see through their desires. The nourishment from the food we eat is transformed into reproductive essence; and once that essence is full, sexual desire arises. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that the less tasty the food is, the better. Food should not be regarded as too important. Sincere Buddhists should practice moderation and eat only enough to sustain ourselves. We should neither eat very rich food, nor eat spoilt food, for either one could ruin our health. Finally, the sorrowless flowers only bloom when we understands things as they really are, that is seeing the impermanent, unsatisfactory, and non-substantial or non-self nature of the five aggregates of clinging in ourselves. It is not easy to understand ourselves because of our wrong concepts, baseless illusions, perversions and delusions. It is so difficult to see the real person. The Buddha taught that to be a real knower, we must first see and understand the impmanence of the five aggregates. He compares material form or body to a lump of foam, feeling to a bubble, perception to a mirage, mental formations or volitional activities to water-lily plant which is without heartwood, and consciousness to an illusion. The Buddha says: "Whatever material form there be whether past, future or present, internal, external, gross or subtle, low or lofty, far or near that material form is empty, unsubstantial and without essence. In the same manner, the remaining aggregates: feeling, perception, mental formation, and consciousness are also empty, unsubstantial and without essence. Thus, the five aggregates are impermanent, whatever is impermanent, that is suffering, unsatisfactory and without self. Whenever you understand this, you understand yourselves." To Buddhists, the blooming of the sorrowless flowers bloom also means the illumination of wisdom. In Buddhism, wisdom is of the highest importance; for purification comes through wisdom, through understanding; and wisdom in Buddhism is the key to enlightenment and final liberation. But the Buddha never praised mere intellect. According to him, knowledge should go hand in hand with purity of heart, with moral excellence. Wisdom gained by understanding and development of the qualities of mind and heart is

wisdom par excellence. It is the knowledge of loving kindness, of compassion, of joy, of letting go, of altruism, of understanding of the law of cause and effect, of wishing for freedom, of seeking enlightenment and emancipation for others. It is saving knowledge, and not mere speculation, logic or specious reasoning. However, devout Buddhists never fall in love with wisdom; nor induce the search after wisdom; nor adore wisdom. Although wisdom really has its significance and bearing on mankind, devout Buddhists should use it as an encouragement of a practical application of the teaching that leads the follower to dispassion, enlightenment and final deliverance. Hoping that the sorrowless flowers are blooming everywhere, so that one day all beings will achieve Buddhahood together!

Chapter Twenty-Eight

Buddhists Should Always Be Alert to Fueling Materials for All Fires of Afflictions in Beings

At the Deer Park, the Buddha also preached a Lecture on Fires. From the fire of love, fire of passion, fire of lust to the fires of greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, and lying, and so on. All these fires are fires of afflictions that have been burning up all the forest of Practitioners' merits and virtues. And they are still flaring up incessantly in us at this very moment. What are fueling materials for all fires of afflictions which are flaring up in all sentient beings?

Six Organs of Sense Are Fueling Materials for All Fires of Afflictions from Within Practitioners: In Buddhism, six sense organs are best fueling materials for all kinds of fires of afflictions, i.e., fires of greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts, and lying, and so on. Six bases of mental activities: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Practitioners should always remember that food for six bases of mental activities: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. Food for the eyes is the sleep; for the ears is the sound; for the nose is the smell; for the tongue is the taste; for the body is the smooth touch; and for the mind is the dharma. Practitioners should always remember that the six senses or six organs of sense are likened to six wild creatures in confinement and always struggling to escape. Only when they are domesticated will they be happy. So is it with the six senses and the taming power of Buddha-truth. So is it with the six senses and the taming power of Buddha-truth. One of the most important purposes of practitioners is to keep the six sense organs pure. The six organs and their purification in order to develop their unlimited power and interchange (in the case of Buddha). This full development enables the eye to see everything in a great chiliocosm from its highest heaven down to its lowest hells and all the beings past, present, and future with all the karma of each. According to Bikkhu Piyananda in *The Gems of Buddhism Wisdom*, you must always be aware of the sense organs such as eye, ear, nose,

tongue and body and the contact they are having with the outside world. You must be aware of the feelings that are arising as a result of this contact: eye is now in contact with forms (rupa), ear is now in contact with sound, nose is now in contact with smell, tongue is now in contact with taste, body is now in contact with touching, and mind is now in contact with all things (dharma).

Practitioners should always remember that the six faculties are the main reasons that cause human beings to fall into hells, to be reborn in the realm of the hungry ghosts, or animals, asuras, devas, or human beings, etc. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. They are the main agents that cause us to create unwholesome karma, and eventually we will fall into evil ways because of them. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, the Buddha advised his disciples thus: “You should cultivate until you are unaware of heaven above, people in between, and earth below.” If we cultivate until the time heaven, earth, people, east, west, south, north, etc., can no longer impact our six faculties, then at that point we are liberated from all hindrances.

According to the Samannaphala Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, the Buddha taught about “a guardian of the sense-door.” How does a monk become a guardian of the sense-door? Here a monk, on seeing a visible object with the eye, does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics. Because greed and sorrow, evil unskilled states, would overwhelm him if he dwelt leaving this eye-faculty unguarded, so he practises guarding it, he protects the eye-faculty, develops restraint of the eye-faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear...; on smelling an odour with the nose...; on tasting a flavour with the tongue...; on feeling an object with the body...; on thinking a thought with the mind, he does not grasp at its major signs or secondary

characteristics, he develops restraint of the mind-faculty. He experiences within himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Ariyan guarding of the faculties.

Six Sense Organs with Six Entrances Cause All Fires of Afflictions to Flare Up: In Buddhism, six sense organs together with six entrances cause to flare up all kinds of fires of afflictions, from the fires of greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, to the fires of killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts, and lying, and so on. “Entrance” is one of the links in the chain of causation. The six entrances or locations, both the organ and the sensation (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind; sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and perception). The six entrances or locations, both the organ and the sensation (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind; sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and perception). One of the links in the chain of causation. According to the Surangama Sutra, book Three, the Buddha reminded Ananda about the six entrances as follows: “Ananda! Why do I say the six entrances have their origin in the wonderful nature of true suchness, the treasury of the Thus Come One?” *The first entrance is the The Organ of Sight with Eye-Entrance:* Ananda! Although the eye’s staring causes fatigue, the eye and the fatigue originate in Bodhi. Staring gives rise to the characteristic of fatigue. Because a sense of seeing is stimulated in the midst of the two false, defiling objects of light and dark, defiling appearances are taken in; this is called the nature of seeing. Apart from the two defiling objects of light and dark, this seeing is ultimately without substance. Thus, Ananda, you should know that seeing does not come from light or dark, nor does it come forth from the sense organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it came from light, then it would be extinguished when it is dark, and you would not see darkness. If it came from darkness, then it would be extinguished when it is light, and you would not see light. Suppose it came from the sense organ, which is obviously devoid of light and dark, a nature of seeing such as this would have no self-nature. Suppose it came forth from emptiness. When it looks in front of you, it sees the shapes of the defiling dust; turning around, it would see your sense-organ. Moreover, if it were emptiness itself which sees, what connection would that have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the eye entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for

existence nor is spontaneous in nature. *The second entrance is the Organ of Hearing with Ear-Entrance:* Ananda! Consider, for example, a person who suddenly stops up his ears with two fingers. Because the sense-organ of hearing has become fatigued, a sound is heard in his head. However, both the ears and the fatigue originate in Bodhi. Because a sense of hearing is stimulated in the midst of the two false, defiling objects of movement and stillness, defiling appearances are taken; this is called the nature of hearing. Apart from the two defiling objects of movement and stillness, this hearing is ultimately without substance. Thus, Ananda, you know that hearing does not come from movement and stillness; nor does it come from the sense-organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it came from stillness, it would be extinguished when there is movement, and you would not hear movement. If it came from movement, then it would be extinguished when there is stillness, and you would not be aware of this stillness. Suppose it came from the sense-organ, which is obviously devoid of movement and stillness: a nature of hearing such as this would have no self-nature. Suppose it came from emptiness; emptiness would then become hearing and would no longer be emptiness. Moreover, would it have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the ear-entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence, nor is spontaneous in nature. *The third entrance is the Organ of Smell with Nose-Entrance:* Ananda! Consider, for example, a person who inhales deeply through his nose. After he has inhaled for a long time it becomes fatigued, and then there is a sensation of cold in the nose. Because of that sensation, there are the distinctions of penetration and obstruction, of emptiness and actuality, and so forth, including all fragrant and stinking vapors. However, both the nose and the fatigue originate in Bodhi. Because a sense of smelling is stimulated in the midst of the two false, defiling objects of penetration and obstruction, defiling appearances are taken in; this is called the nature of smelling. Apart from the two defiling objects of penetration and obstruction, this smelling is ultimately without substance. You should know that smelling does not come from penetration and obstruction, nor does it come forth from the sense-organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it came from penetration, the smelling would be extinguished when there is

obstruction, and then how could it experience obstruction? If it existed because of obstruction, then where there is penetration there would be no smelling; in that case, how would the awareness of fragrance, stench, and other such sensations come into being? Suppose it came from the sense organ, which is obviously devoid of penetration and obstruction. A nature of smelling such as this would have no self-nature. Suppose it came from emptiness; smelling itself would turn around and smell your own nose. Moreover, if it were emptiness itself which smelled, what connection would it have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the nose-entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence nor is spontaneous in nature. *The fourth entrance is the Organ of Taste with Tongue-Entrance:* Ananda! Consider, for example, a person who licks his lips with his tongue. His excessive licking causes fatigue. If the person is sick, there will be a bitter flavor; a person who is not sick will have a subtle sweet sensation. Sweetness and bitterness demonstrate the tongue's sense of taste. When the organ is inactive, a sense of tastelessness prevails. However, both the tongue and the fatigue originate in Bodhi. Because of the two defiling objects of sweetness and bitterness, as well as tastelessness, stimulate a recognition of taste which in turn draws in these defiling sensations, it becomes what is known as a sense of taste. Apart from the two defiling objects of sweetness and bitterness and apart from tastelessness, the sense of taste is originally without a substance. Thus, Ananda, you should know that the perception of sweetness, bitterness, and tastelessness does not come from sweetness or bitterness, nor does it exist because of tastelessness, nor does it arise from the sense organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it came from sweetness and bitterness, it would cease to exist when tastelessness was experienced, so how could it recognize tastelessness? If it arose from tastelessness, it would vanish when the flavor of sweetness was tasted, so how could it perceive the two flavors, sweet and bitter? Suppose it came from the tongue which is obviously devoid of defiling objects sweetness and bitterness and of tastelessness. An essence of tasting such as this would have no self-nature. Suppose it came from emptiness; the sense of taste would be experienced by emptiness instead of by the mouth. Suppose, moreover, that it was emptiness itself which tasted, what

connection would that have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the tongue entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence, nor is it spontaneous in nature. *The fifth entrance is the Organ of Touch with Body-Entrance:* Ananda! Consider, for example, a person who touches his warm hand with his cold hand. If the cold is in excess of warmth, the warm hand will become cold; if the warmth is in excess of the cold, his cold hand will become warm. So the sensation of warmth and cold is felt through the contact and separation of the two hands. Fatiguing contact results in the interpenetration of warmth and cold. However, both the body and the fatigue originate in Bodhi. Because a physical sensation is stimulated in the midst of the two defiling objects of separation and union, defiling appearances are taken in; this is called the awareness of sensation. Apart from the two sets of defiling objects of separation and union, and pleasantness and unpleasantness, the awareness of sensation is originally without a substance. Thus, Ananda, you should know that this sensation does not come from separation and union, nor does it exist because of pleasantness and unpleasantness, nor does it arise from the sense organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it arose when there was union, it would disappear when there was separation, so how could it sense the separation? The two characteristics of pleasantness and unpleasantness are the same way. Suppose it came from the sense organ, which is obviously devoid of the four characteristics of union, separation, pleasantness, and unpleasantness; an awareness of physical sensation such as this would have no self-nature. Suppose it came from emptiness; the awareness of sensations would be experienced by emptiness itself, what connection would that have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the body-entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence, nor is spontaneous in nature. *The sixth entrance is the Organ of Mind with Mind-Entrance:* Ananda! Consider, for example, a person who becomes so fatigued that he goes to sleep. Having slept soundly, he awakens and tries to recollect what he experienced while asleep. He recalls some things and forgets others. Thus, his upsidownness goes through production, dwelling, change, and extinction, which are taken in and returned to a center habitually, each following the next without ever being over

taken. This is known as the mind organ or intellect. The mind and fatigue are both Bodhi. The two defiling objects of production and extinction stimulate a sense of knowing which in turn grasps these inner sense data, reversing the flow of seeing and hearing. Before the flow reaches the ground it is known as the faculty of intellect. Apart from the two sets of dwelling objects of waking and sleeping and of production and extinction, the faculty of intellect is originally without substance. Thus, Ananda, you should know that the faculty of intellect does not come from waking, sleeping, production, or extinction, nor does it arise from the sense organ, nor is it produced from emptiness. Why? If it came from waking, it would disappear at the time of sleeping, so how could it experience sleep? If it came from production, it would cease to exist at the time of extinction, so how could it undergo extinction? If it came from extinction it would disappear at the time of production, so how could it know about production? Suppose it came from the sense-organ; waking and sleeping cause only a physical opening and closing respectively. Apart from these two movements, the faculty of intellect is as unsubstantial as flowers in space, because it is fundamentally without a self-nature. Suppose it came from emptiness; the sense of intellect would be experienced by emptiness instead of by the mind. Then what connection would that have with your entrance? Therefore, you should know that the mind entrance is empty and false, since it neither depends upon causes and conditions for existence, nor is spontaneous in nature.

According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are six internal sense-spheres: Eye-sense-sphere, Ear-sense-sphere, Nose-sense-sphere, Tongue-sense-sphere, Body-sense-sphere, and Mind-sense-sphere. Practitioners should always try keep these six internal sense-spheres pure places. That is to say, they try to keep the six organs and their purification in order to develop their unlimited power and interchange (in the case of Buddha). This full development enables the eye to see everything in a great chiliocosm from its highest heaven down to its lowest hells and all the beings past, present, and future with all the karma of each. This is the state of the organs thus purified is defined by T'ien-T'ai as the semblance stage in the Perfect teaching.

Objects or Views Are Also Best Fueling Materials for Fires of Afflictions: A prospect, region, territory, surroundings, views, circumstances, environment, area, field, sphere, environments and conditions, i.e., the sphere of mind, the sphere of form for the eye, of sound for the ear, etc. In Buddhism, objects or views are also best fueling materials for all kinds of fires of afflictions, i.e., fires of greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts, and lying, and so on. The word "object" has many meanings, such as scene, environment, domain, sphere, object, understanding, etc. Zen Buddhists seemed to have a special usage of this word; for instance, a realm has not yet arisen (ching pu sheng) means a certain specific experience of Zen which has not yet arisen in the disciple. Thus "realm" means the specific experience or understanding within one's mind, which, of course, can be referentially treated as an "object" visualized or comprehended by the mind. Practitioners should always remember that all things and conditions come together and disintegrate like a lightning, an illusion or a phantom. Practitioners should remember that external states or external realms are realms which are not created by the mind, but come from the outside. For this reason, if you can remain unperturbed by external states, then you are currently cultivating. On the contrary, if you are turned by external states, then you will fall. External states are also external conditions or circumstances which stir or tempt one to do evil. Problems and dissatisfaction do not develop because of external conditions, but from our own mind. If we don't have internal peace, nothing from outside can bring us happiness. There are different kinds of regions, states or conditions.

According to the Mind-Only theories, different realms mean the ideas, or mental states which arise according to the various objects or conditions toward which the mind is directed. According to the Fa-Hsiang School, this group of elements falls under the general category of "mental function" which has five elements: desire, verification, recollection, meditation, and wisdom. Gocara means experience, mental attitude. Gocara literally means "a range for cattle," or "a pasturage," is a field for action and an object of sense. In the Lankavatara Sutra, it means a general attitude one assumes toward the external world, or a better spiritual atmosphere in which one's being is

enveloped. In cultivation, practitioners should not try to find things behind the mirror, this indicates someone who fulfils what was promised in jest, only wastes the time without any result. As mentioned above, external states or external realms are realms which are not created by the mind, but come from the outside. However, the wind moving usually causes our minds moving. In Zen, the question for Zen practitioners is that the flag moving, the wind moving, or our minds moving? Several monks was arguing back and forth about the flag and the wind without reaching the truth in front of the Fa Hsin monastery in Kuang Chou. The sixth patriarch, Hui-Neng, said to them: "It is not the wind moving, neither the flag moving. It is your own minds that are moving."

Eight Consciousnesses Keep the Fires of Afflictions From Extinguishing: In Buddhism, eight consciousnesses are best fueling materials that not only keep flaring up all kinds of fires of afflictions, i.e., fires of greed, anger, ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, committing sexual misconducts, and lying, and so on. Furthermore, these eight consciousnesses are also best materials that keep these above mentioned fires from extinguishing. "Vijnana" is another name for "Consciousness." Theravada considered the six kinds of consciousness as "Vijnana." Mahayana considered the eight kinds of consciousness as "Vijnana." Externalists considered "vijnana" as a soul. Consciousness is another name for mind. Consciousness means the art of distinguishing, or perceiving, or recognizing, discerning, understanding, comprehending, distinction, intelligence, knowledge, learning. It is interpreted as the "mind," mental discernment, perception, in contrast with the object discerned. According to Buddhism, our "Nature" is the "Buddha". The "Consciousness" is the "Spirit", the "Intention" or "Mano-vijnana" is the "Discriminating Mind", and the "Mind" is what constantly engages in idle thinking. The "Nature" is originally perfect and bright, with no conception of self, others, beauty, or ugliness; no falling into numbers and discriminations. But as soon as there is "Consciousness", one falls into numbers and discriminations. The "Intention" or "Mano-vijnana" also makes discriminations, and it is the sixth consciousness. It is relatively turbid, while the seventh and eighth consciousnesses are relatively more pure. There are eight kinds of consciousness: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body,

mind, klista-mano-vijnana, and alaya-vijnana. Fundamentally speaking, consciousness is not of eight kinds, although there are eight kinds in name. We could say there is a single headquarters with eight departments under it. Although there are eight departments, they are controlled by just one single headquarters. “Vijnana” translated as “consciousness” is the act of distinguishing or discerning including understanding, comprehending, recognizing, intelligence, knowledge. There are eight consciousnesses. The first five arise as a result of the interaction of the five sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue, and mind) and the five dusts (Gunas); the sixth consciousness comes into play, all kinds of feelings, opinions and judgments will be formed (the one that does all the differentiating); the seventh consciousness (Vijnana) is the center of ego; the eighth consciousness is the Alayagarbha (a lai da), the storehouse of consciousness, or the storehouse of all deeds or actions (karmas), whether they are good, bad or neutral. “Vijnana” also means cognition, discrimination, consciousness, but as any one of these does not cover the whole sense contained in Vijnana. “Vijnana” also means relative knowledge. This term is usually used as contrasted to Jnana in purely intellectual sense. Jnana is transcendental knowledge dealing with such subjects as immortality, non-relativity, the unattained, etc., whereas Vijnana is attached to duality of things.

When we talk about “Consciousnesses” we usually misunderstand with the sixth consciousness according to Buddhist psychology. In fact, there are six basic sense consciousnesses, and the sixth one being the mental consciousness. Buddhist psychology bases the perception process on six sense faculties: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and thought. Each faculty relates to a sense organ (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind) and to a consciousness which functions specifically with that organ. The sixth consciousness, or the mind consciousness is not the mind, it is the function of the mind; it does not depend on any of the five sense faculties, but on the immediately preceding continuum of mind. Mental consciousness apprehends not only objects (form, sound, taste, smell and touch) in the present time, but it also apprehends objects and imagines in the past and even in the future, then it transfers these objects or imagines to the seventh consciousness, and in turn, the seventh consciousness will transfer these objects to the Alaya Consciousness. Let us examine the body and mind to see

whether in either of them we can locate the self, we will find in neither of them. Then, the so-called “Self” is just a term for a collection of physical and mental factors. Let us first look at the aggregate matter of form. The aggregate of form corresponds to what we would call material or physical factors. It includes not only our own bodies, but also the material objects that surround us, i.e., houses, soil, forests, and oceans, and so on. However, physical elements by themselves are not enough to produce experience. The simple contact between the eyes and visible objects, or between the ear and sound cannot result in experience without consciousness. Only the co-presence of consciousness together with the sense of organ and the object of the sense organ produces experience. In other words, it is when the eyes, the visible object and consciousness come together that the experience of a visible object is produced. Consciousness is therefore an extremely important element in the production of experience. Consciousness or the sixth sense, or the mind. This sense organ together with the other five sense organs of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body to produce experience. The physical and mental factors of experience worked together to produce personal experience, and the nature of the five aggregates are in constant change. Therefore, according to the Buddha’s teachings, the truth of a man is selfless. The body and mind that man misunderstands of his ‘self’ is not his self, it is not his, and he is not it.” Devout Buddhists should grasp this idea firmly to establish an appropriate method of cultivation not only for the body, but also for the speech and mind. Besides, we also have the seventh consciousness, or the *mano-vijnana*, which is the transmitting consciousness that relays sensory information from the mind to the *Alaya Consciousness*, or the eighth consciousness which functions as a storehouse of all sensory information. *First, Eye Consciousness*: The function of the eye consciousness is to perceive and apprehend visual forms. Without the eye consciousness we could not behold any visual form; however, the eye consciousness depends on the eye faculty. When the eye faculty and any form meet, the eye consciousness develops instantly. If the eye faculty and the form never meet, eye consciousness will never arise (a blind person who lacks the eye faculty, thus eye consciousness can never develop). Buddhist cultivators should always understand thoroughly this vital point to

minimize the meeting between eye faculty and visual forms, so that no or very limited eye consciousness will ever arise. The Buddha reminded his disciples that meditation is the only means to limit or stop the arising of the eye consciousness. *Second, Ear Consciousness:* The function of the ear consciousness is to perceive and apprehend sounds; however, ear consciousness depends on the ear faculty. Ear faculty and any sound meet, the ear consciousness develops instantly (in a deaf person, ear faculty and sounds never meet, therefore no ear consciousness will arise). Buddhist cultivators should always remember this and try to practise meditation stop or close the ear consciousness if possible. *Third, Smell Consciousness:* The nose consciousness develops immediately from the dominant condition of the nose faculty when it focuses on smell. Nose consciousness completely depends on the nose faculty. Someone who lacks smelling capability, nose faculty and smell never meet, therefore, nose consciousness will never arise. Buddhist cultivators should always practise meditation to stop or close the nose consciousness. *Fourth, Taste Consciousness:* The tongue consciousness develops immediately through the dominant condition of the tongue when the tongue faculty focuses on a certain taste. At that very moment, we experience and distinguish between tastes and desire arises. *Fifth, Tactile Sensation Consciousness:* Body consciousness develops when the dominant condition in which the body faculty meets an object of touch. The location of the body faculty is throughout the entire body. Cognition of the objects of touch, one of the five forms of cognition. Here a monk, on touching a tangible object with the body, is neither pleased nor displeased, but remains equable, mindful and clearly aware. This is one of the six stable states which the Buddha taught in the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses. *Sixth, Mano Consciousness:* The Mano Consciousness is the thinking consciousness that coordinates the perceptions of the sense organs. The mind consciousness, the sixth or the intellectual consciousness is not the mind, it's the function of the mind. The sentient being's mind is an ever-spinning whirlpool in which mental activities never cease. There are four stages of production, dwelling, change, and decay. A mind which does not depend on any of the five sense faculties, but on the immediately preceding continuum of mind. Mental consciousness apprehends not only objects (form, sound, taste, smell, touch) in the

present time, but it also apprehends objects in the past and imagines objects even in the future. Mental consciousness will go with us from one life to another, while the first five consciousnesses are our temporary minds. Consciousness is also one of the five skandhas. The function of Manovijnana is by hypothesis to reflect on Manas, as the eye-vijnana reflects on the world of forms and the ear-vijnana on that of sounds; but in fact as soon as Manas evolves the dualism of subject and object out of the absolute unity of the Alaya, Manovijnana and indeed all the other Vijnanas begin to operate. Thus, in the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha said: "Buddhist Nirvana consists in turning away from the wrongfully discriminating Manovijnana. For with Manovijnana as cause (hetu) and support (alambana), there takes place the evolution of the seven Vijnanas. Further, when Manovijnana discerns and clings to an external world of particulars, all kinds of habit-energy (vasana) are generated therefrom, and by them the Alaya is nurtured. Together with the thought of "me and mine," taking hold of it and clinging to it, and reflecting upon it, Manas thereby takes shape and is evolved. In substance (sarira), however, Manas and Manovijnana are not different—the one from the other, they depend upon the Alaya as cause and support. And when an external world is tenaciously held as real which is no other than the presentation of one's own mind, the mentation-system (citta-kalapa), mutually related, is evolved in its totality. Like the ocean waves, the Vijnanas set in motion by the wind of an external world which is the manifestation of one's own mind, rise and cease. Therefore, the seven Vijnanas cease with the cessation of Manovijnana." A mind which does not depend on any of the five sense faculties, but on the immediately preceding continuum of mind. Mental consciousness apprehends not only objects (form, sound, taste, smell, touch) in the present time, but it also apprehends objects in the past and imagines objects even in the future. Mental consciousness will go with us from one life to another, while the first five consciousnesses are our temporary minds. Consciousness is also one of the five skandhas. Consciousness refers to the perception or discernment which occurs when our sense organs make contact with their respective objects. The first five consciousness correspond to the five senses. The sixth consciousness integrates the perceptions of the five senses into coherent images and make judgments about the

external world. The seventh consciousness is the active center of reasoning, calculation, and construction or fabrication of individual objects. It is the source of clinging and craving, and thus the origin of self or ego and the cause of illusion that arises from assuming the apparent to be real. The terms “conscious” and “unconscious” are used with several different meanings. In one meaning, which might be called functional, “conscious” and “unconscious” refer to a subjective state within the individual. Saying that he is conscious of this or that psychic content means that he is aware of affects, of desires, of judgments, etc. *Seventh, Klistamanas Consciousness:* “Klista-mano-vijnana” is a Sanskrit term for “sentience.” In Buddhism, it is called “mental faculty” for it constitutes man as an intelligent and moral being. It is commonly thought to be equated with the terms “citta” or “consciousness.” It is derived from the Sanskrit root “man,” which means “to think” or “to imagine” and is associated with intellectual activity of consciousness. This is the discriminating and constructive sense. It is more than the intellectually perceptive. It is the cause of all egoism (it creates the illusion of a subject “I” standing apart from the object world) and individualizing of men and things (all illusion arising from assuming the seeming as the real). The self-conscious defiled mind, which thinks, wills, and is the principal factor in the generation of subjectivity. It is a conveyor of the seed-essence of sensory experiences to the eighth level of subconsciousness. It is described as a sea in which currents of thought surge and seethe. It is the transmitting consciousness that relays sensory information from the mind or mano consciousness to the storehouse or Alaya-vijnana. According to The Lankavatara Sutra, this system of the five sense-vijnanas is in union with Manovijnana and this mutuality makes the system distinguish between what is good and what is not good. Manovijnana in union with the five sense-vijnanas grasps forms and appearances in their multitudinous aspect; and there is not a moment’s cessation of activity. This is called the momentary character of the Vijnanas. This system of vijnanas is stirred uninterruptedly and all the time like the waves of the great ocean. Klistamanas consciousness is the thinking consciousness that coordinates the perceptions of the sense organs. The mind consciousness, the sixth or the intellectual consciousness is not the mind, it’s the function of the mind. The sentient being’s mind is an

ever-spinning whirlpool in which mental activities never cease. There are four stages of production, dwelling, change, and decay. A mind which does not depend on any of the five sense faculties, but on the immediately preceding continuum of mind. Mental consciousness apprehends not only objects (form, sound, taste, smell, touch) in the present time, but it also apprehends objects in the past and imagines objects even in the future. Mental consciousness will go with us from one life to another, while the first five consciousnesses are our temporary minds. Consciousness is also one of the five skandhas. This acts like the collection station for the first six consciousnesses. The seventh of the eight consciousnesses, which means thinking and measuring, or calculating. It is the active mind, or activity of mind, but is also used for the mind itself. The waves will be seen ruffling the surface of the ocean of Alayavijnana when the principle of individuation known as Vishaya blows over it like the wind. The waves thus started are this world of particulars where the intellect discriminates, the affection clings, and passions and desires struggle for existence and supremacy. This particularizing agency sits within the system of Vijnanas and is known as Manas; in fact it is when Manas begins to operate that a system of the Vijnanas manifests itself. They are thus called “object-discriminating-vijnana” (vastu-prativikalpa-vijnana). The function of Manas is essentially to reflect upon the Alaya and to create and to discriminate subject and object from the pure oceans of the Alaya. The memory accumulated (ciyate) in the latter is now divided into dualities of all forms and all kinds. This is compared to the manifoldness of waves that stir up the ocean of Alaya. Manas is an evil spirit in one sense and a good one in another, for discrimination in itself is not evil, is not necessarily always false judgment (abhuta-parikalpa) or wrong reasoning (prapanca-daushthulya). But it grows to be the source of great calamity when it creates desires based upon its wrong judgments, such as when it believes in the reality of an ego-substance and becomes attached to it as the ultimate truth. For manas is not only a discriminating intelligence, but a willing agency, and consequently an actor. Manyana is a kind of intuition, the sense that there is a separate self which can exist independently of the rest of the world. This intuition is produced by habit and ignorance. Its illusory nature has been constructed by vijnapti, and it, in turn, becomes a basis

for vijnapti. The object of this intuition is a distorted fragment of alaya which it considers to be a self, comprised of a body and a soul. It of course is never reality in itself, but just a representation of reality. In its role as a self as well as consciousness of the self, manyana is regarded as the basic obstacle to penetrating reality. Contemplation performed by vijnapti can remove the erroneous perceptions brought about by manas. The function of Manovijnana is by hypothesis to reflect on Manas, as the eye-vijnana reflects on the world of forms and the ear-vijnana on that of sounds; but in fact as soon as Manas evolves the dualism of subject and object out of the absolute unity of the Alaya, Manovijnana and indeed all the other Vijnanas begin to operate. Thus, in the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha said: "Buddhist Nirvana consists in turning away from the wrongfully discriminating Manovijnana. For with Manovijnana as cause (hetu) and support (alambana), there takes place the evolution of the seven Vijnanas. Further, when Manovijnana discerns and clings to an external world of particulars, all kinds of habit-energy (vasana) are generated therefrom, and by them the Alaya is nurtured. Together with the thought of "me and mine," taking hold of it and clinging to it, and reflecting upon it, Manas thereby takes shape and is evolved. In substance (sarira), however, Manas and Manovijnana are not different—the one from the other, they depend upon the Alaya as cause and support. And when an external world is tenaciously held as real which is no other than the presentation of one's own mind, the mentation-system (citta-kalapa), mutually related, is evolved in its totality. Like the ocean waves, the Vijnanas set in motion by the wind of an external world which is the manifestation of one's own mind, rise and cease. Therefore, the seven Vijnanas cease with the cessation of Manovijnana." *Eighth, Alaya Vijnana:* Alaya Vijnana, the receptacle intellect or consciousness, basic consciousness, Eighth consciousness, subconsciousness, and store consciousness. The storehouse consciousness or basis from which come all seeds of consciousness or from which it responds to causes and conditions, specific seeds are reconveyed by Manas to the six senses, precipitating new actions, which in turn produce other seeds. This process is simultaneous and endless. "Alayavijnana is also called "Open knowledge", the store of knowledge where all is revealed, either good or bad. Alaya means a house or rather a home, which is in turn a place where all the valued things

for use by us are kept and among which we dwell. Also called “Store consciousness,” “eighth consciousness,” or “karma repository.” All karma created in the present and previous lifetime is stored in the Alaya Consciousness. According to the Consciousness-Only, there are eight consciousnesses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, mind, Mana and Alaya). These consciousnesses enable sentient beings to discriminate between right and wrong of all dharmas (thoughts, feelings, physical things, etc). However, human beings have a deep consciousness which is called Alaya-consciousness which is the actual subject of rebirth, and is mistakenly taken to be an eternal soul or self by the other consciousnesses. It is in the Alaya-consciousness that the impressions of action and experience are stored in the form of ‘seeds’ and it is these seeds which engender further experiences according to the individual situation. According to Asvaghosa Bodhisattva in the Awakening of Faith and the Samparigraha, the Alaya or store is the consciousness in which the true and the false unite. When Alaya Consciousness becomes pure and taintless, it is Tathata (Thusness). Also known as Alayavijnana. In the Lankavatara Sutra, the Buddha told Mahamati: “Oh Mahamati! The Tathagata-garbha contains in itself causes alike good and not-good, and from which are generated all paths of existence. It is like an actor playing different characters without harboring any thought of ‘me and mine.’” Alaya means all-conserving. It is in company with the seven Vijnanas which are generated in the dwelling-house of ignorance. The function of Alayavijnana is to look into itself where all the memory (vasana) of the beginningless past is preserved in a way beyond consciousness (acintya) and ready for further evolution (parinama); but it has no active energy in itself; it never acts, it simply perceives, it is in this exactly like a mirror; it is again like the ocean, perfectly smooth with no waves disturbing its tranquillity; and it is pure and undefiled, which means that it is free from the dualism of subject and object. For it is the pure act of perceiving, with no differentiation yet of the knowing one and the known. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, when all things are reflected on our mind, our discriminating or imagining power is already at work. This called our consciousness (vijnana). Since the consciousness co-ordinating all reflected elements stores them, it is called the store-consciousness or ideation-store. The ideation-store itself is an existence of causal combination, and in it the pure and tainted elements are causally combined or intermingled. When the ideation-store begins to move and descend to the everyday world, then we have the manifold existence that is only an imagined world. The ideation-store, which is the seed-consciousness, is the conscious center and the world manifested by ideation is its environment. It is only from the Buddha’s Perfect Enlightenment that pure ideation flashed out. This pure ideation can purify the tainted portion of the

ideation-store and further develop its power of understanding. The world of imagination and the world of interdependence will be brought to the real truth (parinispanna). This having been attained, the seed-store, as consciousness, will disappear altogether and ultimately will reach the state where there is no distinction between subject and object. The knowledge so gained has no discrimination (Avikalpa-vijnana). This ultimate state is the Nirvana of No Abode (apratisthita-nirvana), that is to say, the attainment of perfect freedom, not being bound to one place. The function of Alayavijnana is to look into itself where all the memory (vasana) of the beginningless past is preserved in a way beyond consciousness (acintya) and ready for further evolution (parinama); but it has no active energy in itself; it never acts, it simply perceives, it is in this exactly like a mirror; it is again like the ocean, perfectly smooth with no waves disturbing its tranquillity; and it is pure and undefiled, which means that it is free from the dualism of subject and object. For it is the pure act of perceiving, with no differentiation yet of the knowing one and the known. The initiator of change, or the first power of change, or mutation, i.e. the alaya-vijnana, so called because other vijnanas are derived from it. An important doctrinal concept that is particularly important in the Yogacara tradition. This term is sometimes translated by Western scholars as “storehouse consciousness,” since it acts as the repository (kho) of the predisposition (thiên về) that one’s actions produce. It stores these predispositions until the conditions are right for them to manifest themselves. The Tibetan translators rendered (hoàn lại) it as “basis of all” because it serves as the basis for all of the phenomena of cyclic existence and nirvana. Through meditative practice and engaging in meritorious actions, one gradually replaces afflicted seeds with pure ones; when one has completely purified the continuum of the alaya-vijnana, it is referred to as the “purified consciousness.” Alaya means all-conserving mind. It is in company with the seven Vijnanas which are generated in the dwelling-house of ignorance. Alaya means the preconsciousness, or the eighth consciousness, or the store-consciousness. It is the central or universal consciousness which is the womb or store consciousness (the storehouse consciousness where all karmic seeds enter and cause all thought activities). All karma created in the present and previous lifetime is stored in the Alaya Consciousness. This is like a storage space receiving all information collected in the Mana consciousness. When a sentient being dies, the first seven consciousnesses die with it, but the Alaya-Consciousness carries on. It is the supreme ruler of one existence which ultimately determines where one will gain rebirth in the six realms of existence.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Happiness in the Midst of the World of Sufferings and Afflictions

The main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation; however, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In Contemplation of the Mind Sutra, the Buddha taught: "All my tenets are based on the mind that is the source of all dharmas." The mind has brought about the Buddhas, the Heaven, or the Hell. It is the main driving force that makes us happy or sufferings and afflictions, cheerful or sad, liberated or doomed. Thus, we clearly see that happiness comes from us, not from anybody else. Afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means "negative mental factors," that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis. Practitioners of mindfulness subdue afflictions in four basic ways: Subduing afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation. Subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develop, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Subduing afflictions with

phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Subduing afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha.

Affliction is the way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's stress and delusion), causes one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. However, according to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions.

The term "Klesa" literally means "pain," "external dust," "affliction," or "something tormenting" and is translated as "affliction." As there is nothing so tormenting spiritually as selfish, evil desires and passions, klesa has come to be understood chiefly in its derivative sense and external dust for *agantuklesa*. Klesa is a Sanskrit term for affliction, distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means "negative mental factors," that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Klesa also means

all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Klesa the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by practicing meditation on a regular basis.

Afflictions are also restlessness and worry, another disadvantage that makes progress difficult. When the mind becomes restless like flustered bees in a shaken hive, it can not concentrate. This mental agitation prevents calmness and blocks the upward path. mental worry is just as harmful. When a man worries over one thing and another, over things done or left undone, and over fortune and misfortune, he can never have peace of mind. All this bother and worry, this fidgeting and unsteadiness of mind prevents concentration. According to the Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, all afflictions, wrath, and folly are weapons of enlightening beings because they liberate sentient beings through afflictions. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can annihilate the afflictions, bondage, and compulsion accumulated by all sentient beings in the long night of ignorance. Bodhisattvas utilize “Giving” to destroy all stinginess; “Self-control” to get rid of all crime; Impartiality to remove all discrimination; Wisdom to dissolve all ignorance and afflictions; Right livelihood to lead away from all wrong livelihood; Skill in means to manifest in all places; All afflictions, wrath, and folly to liberate sentient beings through afflictions; Birth-and-death to continue enlightening practices and teach sentient beings; Teaching the truth to be able to break up all clinging; All knowledge to not give up the avenues of practice of enlightening beings.

The barrier of temptation, passion or defilement, which obstructs the attainment of the nirvana. Klesa is also means hindrance of the afflictions. Klesa is generally divided into two groups, primary and secondary. The primary comprises of such evil impulses that lie at the foundation of every tormenting thought and desire. The passions and delusion which aid rebirth and hinder entrance into nirvana. The suffering arising out of the working of the passions, which produce good or evil karma, which in turns results in a happy or suffering lot in one of the three realms, and again from the lot of suffering (or mortality) arises the karma of the passions. The pains arising from a life of illusion, such as greed, hatred, ignorance. Defilements of

transgression occur when people cannot keep the basic precepts, and perform actions of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication. Defilements of obsession is a little bit more subtle. One may not outwardly commit any immoral action, but one's mind is obsessed with desires to kill and destroy, hurt and harm other beings physically or otherwise. Obsessive wishes may fill the mind: to steal, manipulate people, deceive others, etc. If you have experienced this kind of obsession, you know it is a very painful state. If a person fails to control his obsessive afflictions, he or she is likely to hurt other beings in one way or another. Dormant or latent afflictions are ordinarily not apparent. They lie hidden, waiting for the right conditions to assault the helpless mind. Dormant afflictions may be likened to a person deeply asleep. As such a person awakes, when his or her mind begins to churn, it is as if the obsessive afflictions have arisen. When the person stands up from bed and becomes involved in the day's activities, this is like moving from the obsessive afflictions to the afflictions of transgression.

Besides, there are other kinds of afflictions, such as afflictions caused by desire or desire to have; afflictions caused by resentment or anger; afflictions caused by stupidity or ignorance; afflictions caused by pride or self-conceit; afflictions caused by doubt; afflictions caused by False views. Afflictions are considered six cauras or robbers, such as the six senses, the six sense organs are the match-makers, or medial agents of the six robbers. The six robbers are also likened to the six pleasures of the six sense organs. The only way to prevent them is by not acting with them: the eye avoiding beauty; the ear avoiding melodious sound; the nose avoiding fragrant scent; the tongue avoiding tasty flavour; the body avoiding seductions; and the mind should always control thoughts.

The passion or moral afflictions are bodhi. The one is included in the other. According to the Mahayana teaching, especially the T'ien-T'ai sect, afflictions are inseparable from Buddhahood. Affliction and Buddhahood are considered to be two sides of the same coin. When we realize that afflictions in themselves can have no real and independent existence, therefore, we don't want to cling to anything, at that very moment, afflictions are bodhi without any difference. Once we thoroughly understand the real meaning of "Afflictions are bodhi", we've already subdued our own afflictions. The Buddha witnessed that

all sentient beings undergo great sufferings, so He resolved to leave the home-life, to cultivate and find the way to help sentient beings escape these sufferings. Afflictions manifest themselves through our ignorance. Sometimes they show in our appearance; sometimes they are hidden in our minds, etc. In our daily life, we cannot do without sufferings and afflictions. However, if we know how to cultivate, we always consider “afflictions is Bodhi”. If we know how to use it, affliction is Bodhi; on the contrary, if we do not know how to use it, then Bodhi becomes affliction. According to Late Most Venerable Hsuan-Hua in Talks on Dharma, volume 7, Bodhi is analogous to water, and affliction to ice. Ice and water are of the same substance; there is no difference. In freezing weather, water will freeze into ice, and in hot weather, ice will melt into water. When there are afflictions, water freezes into ice; and when the afflictions are gone, ice melts into water. It is to say, having afflictions is having the affliction-ice of ignorance; having no afflictions is having the Bodhi-water of wisdom.

Practitioners of mindfulness can subdue afflictions with the mind by going deep into meditation or Buddha recitation; or subduing afflictions with noumenon. When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be subdued with mind through meditation or Buddha recitation, we should move to the next step by visualizing principles. Whenever afflictions of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence and no-self. When anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. Practitioners of mindfulness can also subdue afflictions with phenomena. When meditation, Buddha recitation and Noumenon don't work for someone with heavy karma, leaving phenomena (external form/leaving the scene) can be used. That is to say to leave the scene. When we know that anger or quarrel is about to burst out, we can leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of water to cool ourselves down. Practitioners of mindfulness can also subdue afflictions with repentance and recitation sutras, mantras, or reciting the noble name of Amitabha Buddha.

Chapter Thirty

Let's Face Impermanence and Experience Suffering & Afflictions Naturally!

Anitya is the state of not being permanent, of lasting or existing only for a short time, of changing continually. Physical changes operating from the state of formation, to that of development, decay and disintegration are exact manifestations of the law of transformation. All things in the universe, from the small grain of sand, the human body, to the big one such as the earth, moon and sun are governed by the aove law, and as such, must come through these four periods. This process of changes characterizes impermanence. Anitya is one of the three fundamentals of everything existing: Impermanence (Anitya), Suffering (Duhkha) and Non-ego (Anatman). Meanwhile, suffering should be used to describe the fact that things are not completely right in our lives and could be better. “Suffering” means “unsatisfactoriness.” This is the first of the four noble truths of Buddhism, which holds that cyclic existence is characterized by unsatisfactoriness or suffering. This is related to the idea that since the things of the world are transitory, beings are inevitably separated from what they desire and forced to endure what is unpleasant. The main stated goal of Buddhism from its inception is overcoming “duhkha.” There are three main types of duhkha: 1) the suffering of misery (duhkha-dukhata), which includes physical and mental sufferings; 2) the suffering of change (viparinama-dukhata), which includes all contaminated feelings of happiness. These are called sufferings because they are subject to change at any time, which leads to unhappiness; and 3) compositional suffering (samskara-dukhata), the suffering endemic to cyclic existence, in which sentient beings are prone to the dissatisfaction due to being under the influence of contaminated actions and afflictions. The Buddha teaches that suffering is everywhere, suffering is already enclosed in the cause, suffering from the effect, suffering throughout time, suffering pervades space, and suffering governs both philistine and saint. Impermanence and sufferings are two among the three dharma seals. These are truths that

nobody can escape. Devout Buddhists should try to cultivate so that we can face impermanence and experience suffering naturally. Dennis Genpo Merzel wrote in 'The Eye Never Sleeps': "We do not like always moving in the river, so we dig a hole and make a tiny little pool along the edge of the river to get out of the ceaseless flow. Can you see how your life is like that pool? Not a living pool, full of vital processes, cycles of new growth and decay, but completely stagnant: so sheltered and protected that it becomes static; the life goes out of it, the living thoughts and feelings die. Certainly, it is safe and secure... Then we wonder why we do not feel we are really alive and fully functioning... We have created such separation between the whole of life and ourselves, not just a thin membrane, but a whole suit of armor, because we do not want to face impermanence and experience sufferings and afflictions, especially the sufferings and afflictions of others." In short, in order to have a life full of peace, mindfulness and happiness, practitioners should bravely face impermanence and experience sufferings and afflictions naturally.

Chapter Thirty-One

Every Moment Be Moment of Practice in Life Is the Most Wonderful Way to Subdue Afflictions

I. Our Life Is Always Just This Life:

The Eastern ancient said: “Man is the most sacred and superior being,” however, to Buddhism, any living being’s life is precious and of the same value. That is to say no being’s life is more precious than the other’s. According to the Upasaka Sutra, Buddhism agrees that in all living beings, man is endowed with all necessary faculties, intelligence. Buddhism also agrees that conditions of human beings are not too miserable as those beings in the hell or the hungry ghosts. To Buddhism, human life is difficult to obtain. If we are born as human beings with many qualities, difficult to attain. We should try to make our lives meaningful ones. Besides, human beings have intelligence. This precious quality enables us to investigate the true meaning of life and to practice the path to enlightenment. Devout Buddhists should always remember that what rebirth we will take depends on our present actions and habits. Thus, our purpose in this very life is to attain liberation or enlightenment, either becoming liberated from cyclic existence (Arhats), or becoming fully enlightened Buddhas. Most of all, we should be able to take advantage of our precious human lives to live to the fullest, moment by moment. To achieve this, we must be mindful of each moment, not being in the here-and-now when we act. According to Buddhist point of view, we have precious human lives, endowed with many qualities to attain. Because of this, we can make our lives highly meaningful. We often take our lives for granted and dwell on the things that aren’t going the way we would like them to. Thinking this way is unrealistic and makes us depressed. However, if we think about the qualities we do have and everything that is going well, we’ll have a different and more joyful perspective on life. One of our greatest endowments is our human intelligence. This precious quality enables us to investigate the meaning of life and to practice to advance on the path to enlightenment. If all of our senses, eyes, ears, mental... are intact, we are able to hear the Dharma, read books on it,

and think about its meaning. We're so lucky to be born in an historical era when the Buddha has appeared and taught the Dharma. These teachings have been transmitted in a pure form from teacher to student in lineages stemming back to the Buddha. We have the opportunity to have qualified spiritual masters who can teach us, and there are communities of ordained people and dharma friends who share our interest and encourage us on the path. Those of us who are fortunate to live in countries that cherish religious freedom aren't restricted from learning and practicing the path. In addition, most of us don't live in desperate poverty and thus have enough food, clothing and shelter to engage in spiritual practice without worrying about basic material needs. Our minds aren't heavily obscured with wrong views and we are interested in self-development. We have the potential to do great things with our present opportunity. But to appreciate this, we must develop a long-term vision for our cultivation because our present lives are only a short one. Devout Buddhists should always remember that our mindstreams don't cease when our physical bodies die. Our minds are formless entities, but when they leave our present bodies at the time of death, they will be reborn in other bodies. What rebirth we'll take depends on our present actions. Therefore, one purpose of our lives can be to prepare for death and future lives. In that way, we can die peacefully, knowing our minds will be propelled towards good rebirths. The other way that we can utilize our lives is to attain liberation or enlightenment. We can become arhats, beings liberated from cyclic existence, or we can go on to become fully enlightened Buddhas, able to benefit others most effectively. Attaining liberation, our minds will be completely cleansed of all disturbing attitudes. Thus, we'll never become angry, jealous or proud again. We no longer feel guilty, anxious or depressed, and all our bad habits will be gone. In addition, if we aspire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of everyone, we'll have spontaneous affection for all beings, and will know the most appropriate ways to help them. Also, another way to take advantage of our precious human lives is to live life to the fullest, moment by moment. There are several ways to do this. One is to be mindful of each moment, being in the here-and-now as we act. When we eat, we can concentrate on eating, noting the taste and texture of the food. When we walk, we concentrate on the movements involved in walking,

without letting our minds wander to any other thoughts. When we go upstairs, we can think, “may I lead all beings to fortunate rebirths, liberation and enlightenment.” While washing dishes or clothes, we think, “may I help all beings cleanse their minds of disturbing attitudes and obscurations.” When we hand something to another person, we think, “May I be able to satisfy the needs of all beings.” We can creatively transform each action by generating the wish to bring happiness to others.

Charlotte Joko Beck wrote in *Nothing Special*: “Without awareness of our sensations, we are not fully alive. Life is unsatisfactory for most people because they are absent from their experience much of the time. If we have been sitting for several years, we do it somewhat less. I don't know anyone who is fully present all of the time, however. We're like the fish that is swimming about, looking for the great ocean of life, yet oblivious to its surroundings. Like the fish, we wonder about the meaning of life, not awake to the water all around us and the ocean that we are. The fish finally met a teacher who understood. The fish asked, 'What is the great ocean?' And the teacher simply laughed. Why?... The ocean was its life. Separate a fish from water, and there is no life for the fish. Likewise, if we separate ourselves from our life, which is what we see, hear, touch, smell, and so on, we have lost touch with what we are. Our life is always just this life.” We humans, with probably the most immense gifts of any creature, are the only beings on earth that say, “I don't know the meaning of my life. I don't know what I'm here for...” No other creature, certainly not the white blood cell, is confused like that. The white blood cell works tirelessly for us; it's inside of us, cleaning as long as it lives. And of course, that's just one of hundred thousand functions that take place within this enormous intelligence that we are. But because we have a large brain, which is given to us so we can function, we manage to misuse our native gifts and to do mischief that has nothing to do with the welfare of life. Having the gift of thinking, we misuse it and go astray. We expel ourselves from the Garden of Eden. We think not in terms of work that needs to be done for life, but in terms of how we can serve our separate self, an enterprise that never occurs to a white blood cell. In a short time, its life will be over; and it will be replaced by others. It doesn't think; it just does its work. There's an old saying to the effect

that human extremity is God's opportunity. When things are pleasant, we try to hold on to the pleasantness. In trying to cling to pleasure, we destroy it. When we are sitting and are truly still, however, the discomfort and pain draw us back to the present. Sitting makes more obvious our desire to escape or evade. When we are sitting well, there's no place to go. We tend not to learn that unless we're uncomfortable. The more unconscious we are of our discomfort and efforts to escape, the more mayhem is created within phenomenal life, from war between nations down to personal arguments between individuals, to arguments within ourselves; all such problems arise because we separate ourselves from our experience. The discomfort and pain are not the cause of our problems; the cause is that we don't know what to do about these discomfort, pain, and affliction.

II. Every Moment Be Moment of Practice in Life Is the Most Wonderful Way to Subdue Afflictions:

As mentioned above, the main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation; however, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In order to achieve this immediate goal, practitioners' every moment must be moment of practice in life for this is the most efficient and wonderful way to subdue afflictions. To cultivate means to practice the path. Practitioners should always remember that in any undertaking, the most difficult part is right at the start, but a thousand-mile journey begins with just one first step. According to Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki in *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, practice does not mean that whatever you do, even lying down, is zazen. When the restrictions you have do not limit you, this is what we mean by practice. When you say, "Whatever I do is Buddha nature, so it doesn't matter what I do, and there is no need to practice zazen," that is already a dualistic understanding of our everyday life. If it really does not matter, there is no need for you even to say so. As long as you are concerned about what you do, that is dualistic. If you are not concerned about what you do, you will not say so. When you sit, you will sit. When you eat, you will eat. That is all. If you say, "It doesn't matter," it means that you are making some excuse to do something in your own way with your small

mind. It means you are attached to some particular thing or way. That is not what we mean when we say, "Just to sit enough," or "Whatever you do is zazen." Of course, whatever we do is zazen, but if so, there is no need to say it. With every moment is moment of practice in life, we will have more opportunities to see things as they are. According to Charlotte Joko Beck in *Everyday Zen*, intelligent practice always deals with just one thing: the fear at the base of human existence, the fear that I am not. And of course I am not, but the last thing I want to know is that. I am impermanence itself in a rapidly changing human form that appears solid. I fear to see what I am: an ever-changing energy field. I don't want to be that. So good practice is about fear. Fear takes the form of constantly thinking, speculating, analyzing, fantasizing. With all that activity we create a cloud cover to keep ourselves safe in make-believe practice. True practice is not safe; it's anything but safe. But we don't like that, so we obsess with our feverish efforts to achieve our version of the personal dream. Such obsessive practice is itself just another cloud between ourselves and reality. The only thing that matters is seeing with an impersonal searchlight: seeing things as they are. When the personal barrier drops away, why do we have to call it anything? We just live our lives. And when we die, we just die. No problem anywhere. As a matter of fact, each moment is an opportunity to experience something. When True Zen practice is carried on in the midst of activities, each moment is an opportunity to experience something, to open our eyes more clearly. In the case of cultivation of elimination of afflictions, every moment be moment of practice in life is the most wonderful way to subdue afflictions ever!

Chapter Thirty-Two

To Reduce Afflictions by Being Content With Few Desires & Satisfying With What We Have at This Very Moment

Content with few desires. “Thiểu Dục” means having few desires; “tri túc” means being content. Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to practice the Way. “Knowing how to feel satisfied and being content with material conditions” is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of body and mind and accomplish our supreme goal of cultivation. Being content with few desires means having few desires. Here “desires” include not only the desire for money and material things but also the wish for status and fame. It also indicates seeking the love and service of others.

As mentioned above, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Zen vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life’s distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by cultivating on a regular basis. The main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation; however, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In order to achieve this immediate goal, practitioners’ every moment in life must be moment of living and cultivating in the spirit of being content with few desires and satisfying with what we have for this is the most efficient and wonderful way to

reduce afflictions. As a matter of fact, in Buddhism, one of the most effective ways of reducing afflictions is by being content with few desires and satisfying with what we have at this very moment. A person who has attained the mental stage of deep faith has very few desires and is indifferent to them. We must note carefully that though such a person is indifferent to worldly desires, he is very eager for the truth, that is, he has a great desire for the truth. To be indifferent to the truth is to be slothful in life. To be content with few desires also means to be satisfied with little material gain, that is, not to feel discontented with one's lot and to be free from worldly cares. Nevertheless, this does not mean to be unconcerned with self-improvement but to do one's best in one's work without discontent. Such a person will never be ignored by those around him. But even if people around him ignored him, he would feel quite happy because he lives like a king from a spiritual point of view. We must have few desires in two areas: the desires for food and sex. Food and sex support ignorance in perpetrating all sort of evil. Thus, Confucius taught: "Food and sex are part of human nature." That is to say we are born with the craving for food and sex. Why is that we have not been able to demolish our ignorance, eliminate our afflictions, and reveal our wisdom? Because we always crave for food and sex. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that food gives rise to sexual desire, and sexual desire gives rise to ignorance. Once the desire for food arises, the desire for sex arises as well. Men are attracted to beautiful women, and women are charmed by handsome men. People become infatuated and obsessed and cannot see through their desires. The nourishment from the food we eat is transformed into reproductive essence; and once that essence is full, sexual desire arises. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that the less tasty the food is, the better. Food should not be regarded as too important. Sincere Buddhists should practice moderation and eat only enough to sustain ourselves. We should neither eat very rich food, nor eat spoiled food, for either one could ruin our health. To be satisfied with what we have at this very moment means satisfaction or contentment is a characteristic of the really happy individual. The ordinary people seem to think that it is difficult to cultivate and develop contentment. However, with courage and determination to control one's evil inclination, as well as to understand the consequences of

these evil thoughts, one can keep the mind from being soiled and experience happiness through contentment. For those who have wisdom, know how to apply themselves and are able to endure life, and are able to think cleverly, will find peace in his fate under whatever circumstances. With the conditions of wealth, one satisfies and is at peace with being wealthy; with the conditions of poverty, one satisfies and is at peace with being impoverished. In fact, in our lifetime, we engage in all kinds of activities, think and calculate every imaginable method without abandoning any plot, so long as it is beneficial, but whether or not our actions affect others we never care. We have been doing all these for what? For a better life, clothes, house, and for storing more money. If we think carefully, we will see that the sun rises, reaches its stand still, and then it will set and disappears in the evening; a full moon will soon become half, quarter, then lose its brightness; mountains become deep canyons; oceans become hills of berries, etc. The way of life has always been rise and fall, success and failure, victory and defeat, lost and found, together and apart, life and death, etc., goes on constantly and there is absolutely nothing that remain unchanged and eternal. People with wisdom should always satisfy with their current circumstances. The Buddha extols simple living as being more conducive to the development of one's mind. Thus, the Buddha always preaches the self-contentment for the benefit of the Bhikkhus as follow: The robes or clothes they receive, whether coarse or fine; alms or food they receive, whether unpalatable or delicious; the abodes or houses they receive, whether simple or luxurious. Those who satisfy with these three conditions can reduce the desires, and at the same time develop the habits and values of simple living. As for lay people, in the Pattakamma Sutta, the Buddha reminded a person should spend his wealth in five areas. First, expenditure on food and clothing and other needs. Second, maintain of parents, wife and children and servants. Third, expenditure on illness and other emergencies. Fourth, expenditure on charitable purposes. Fifth, expenditures on the followings: treating one's relatives, treating one's visitors, offering alms in memory of the departed, offering merit to the deities, offerings to monks and nuns, and payment of state taxes and dues in time.

Devout Buddhists should always remember that to Buddhism, sensual pleasure is something fleeting, something that comes and goes. Can something be really called “Happiness” when it is here one moment and gone the next? Is it really so enjoyable to go around hunting for something so ephemeral, which is changing all the time? Look at the amount of trouble we have to go through to get all those sensual pleasures which we think will bring us happiness. Some people have such strong desire for pleasure that they will break the law, commit brutal crimes and cause others to suffer just so they can experience these pleasures. They may not understand how much suffering they themselves will have to endure in the future as a consequence of the unwholesome acts they have committed. Even ordinary people may become aware that a disproportionate amount of suffering is necessary to bring together a few moments of happiness, so much that it really is not worth it. Devout Buddhists should always remember that suffering will always follow craving. All the problems in this world are rooted in the desire for pleasure. It is on account of the need for pleasure that quarrels occur within the family, that neighbors do not get along well, that states have conflict and nations go to war. It is also on account of sense-based pleasures that sufferings, afflictions, and all kinds of problems plague our world, that people have gone beyond their humanness into great cruelty and inhumanity.

Chapter Thirty-Three

Cultivation of Letting Go to Reduce Afflictions

I. Main Causes Lead to Afflictions: Ignorance Leads to Attachments-Attachments Lead to Afflictions:

Ignorance Leads to Attachments: We are born from the desires of our father and mother. Then, when we emerge into this world, we become infatuated with many things, and become ourselves well-springs of desire. We relish physical comforts and the enjoyments of the senses. Thus, we are strongly attached to the body. But if we consider this attachment, we will see that this is a potential source of sufferings and afflictions. For the body is constantly changing. We wish we could remain alive forever, but moment after moment the body is passing from youth to old age, from life to death. We may be happy while we are young and strong, but when we contemplate sickness, old age, and the ever present threat of death, anxiety overwhelms us. Thus, we seek to elude the inevitable by evading the thought of it. The lust for life and the fear of death are forms of attachment. We are also attached to our clothes, our car, our storied houses, and our wealth. Besides, we are also attached to memories concerning the past or anticipations of the future. ***According to Buddhism, All These Attachments Originated from Ignorance:*** In Buddhism, ignorance (Avidya) is noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampada), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In Madhyamaka, “Avidya” refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. “Avidya” is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world,

which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its appearances. In the Yogachara’s view, “avidya” means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it.

Ignorance means Unenlightened, the first or last of the twelve nidanas. Ignorance is Illusion or darkness without illumination, the ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance of the way of escape from sufferings, one of the three affluences that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. Sometimes ignorance means “Maya” or “Illusion.” It means complete darkness without illumination. The ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance is only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Ignorance is one of the three fires which must be allowed to die out before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self.

In Buddhism, ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not developed our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the true nature of things. According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. Due to ignorance, people do not see things as they really are, and cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They become blind under the delusion of self, clinging to things which are impermanent, changeable, and perishable. Once anger arises, one has nothing but “ignorance.” In order to eliminate “ignorance,” you should meditate on causality. All of our psychological problems are rooted in ignorance, in delusion. Ignorance is the crowning corruption for ignorance itself leads us to attachments. Besides attachments, our greeds, hates, conceits and a host of other defilements also go hand in hand with our ignorance. The solutions are to be found in the problems

themselves and hence we should not run away from our problems. Analyze and scrutinize the problems, and you will see that they are human problems, so do not attribute them to non-humans. Our real problems can be solved only by giving up illusions and false concepts and bringing our lives into harmony with reality and this can be done only through meditation. Ignorance is also thoughts and impulses that try to draw us away from emancipation. If we wish to liberate ourselves from these hindrances, we should first recognize them through meditation. Just as the Buddha described in His discourses how He would exclaim, “Mara! I see you.” Zen practitioners should remember that the purpose of disciplined meditation practice is to eliminate ignorance, to open the essential nature of mind, and to stabilize awareness. Through meditation, we concentrate on things with an undistracted awareness. We are not thinking about anything, not analyzing, not getting lost in flux of things, but just seeing the nature of what is happening in the mind. Through practices of meditation, our mind becomes clearer and clearer; it is to say ‘ignorance’ is gradually eliminated through the course of meditation. If you think that your mind can only be opened by a certain master out there, you are never cultivating in accordance with Buddhism at all. If you think someone out there can eliminate ignorance for you, you are not a devout Buddhist. In short, we, devout Buddhists should turn inside and try our best to destroy ignorance. If we destroy a little ignorance, we will have a little more wisdom. If we destroy a lot of ignorance, we will have a lot more of wisdom. If we destroy ignorance completely, we will have a complete wisdom. At that time, our life is a life with complete wisdom at all times. At that time, what is our life if we don't want to say it is a life of peace, mindfulness, enlightenment, and complete happiness.

Attachments Lead to Afflictions: To grasp, hold, or cling to anything means to cling to things as real. A tendency for settling down in the mind. According to the Buddha Birth Story, there is a story about the Trapper and the Monkey. How does a trapper catch a monkey? He takes a coconut and makes a small hole in it. He then puts some peanuts inside and outside the coconut. Before long, a monkey will come and eat the peanuts on the ground. Then he will put his hand in the coconut to reach the peanuts inside. Holding the peanuts makes his

hand bigger, so now he cannot pull it out through the hole. He cries and gets angry, but will not open his hand and let the peanuts go. Finally, the trapper comes and catches him. We are like the monkey. We want to be free from sufferings and afflictions, but we will not let go our attachments. In this way we continue to suffer afflictions and remain caught in Samsara because of our own attachments.

II. Cultivation of Letting Go or Non-Attachment to Reduce Afflictions:

Our world is a world of desire. Every living being comes forth from desire and endures as a combination of desires. We are born from the desires of our father and mother. Then, when we emerge into this world, we become infatuated with many things, and become ourselves well-springs of desire. We relish physical comforts and the enjoyments of the senses. Thus, we are strongly attached to the body. But if we consider this attachment, we will see that this is a potential source of sufferings and afflictions. For the body is constantly changing. We wish we could remain alive forever, but moment after moment the body is passing from youth to old age, from life to death. We may be happy while we are young and strong, but when we contemplate sickness, old age, and the ever-present threat of death, anxiety overwhelms us. Thus, we seek to elude the inevitable by evading the thought of it. The lust for life and the fear of death are forms of attachment. We are also attached to our clothes, our car, our storied houses, and our wealth. Besides, we are also attached to memories concerning the past or anticipations of the future.

In Buddhist cultivation, cultivating of letting go or non-attachments also means to reduce afflictions. Buddhist practitioners should always have this attitude ‘Looking but not seeing, hearing but not listening, smelling but not noticing the scent.’ Why is it described as ‘looking, but not seeing?’ Because the person is returning the light to shine within, and introspecting. Why is it ‘hearing, but not listening?’ Because he is turning the hearing to listen his own nature. Why does it say, ‘smelling, but not noticing the scent?’ Because he has gathered back his body and mind, and is not disturbed any longer by scent. At this time, the cultivator’s eyes contemplate physical forms, but the forms do not exist for him. His ears hear sounds, but the sounds do not exist for him. His

nose smells scents, but those scents do not exist for him. His tongue tastes flavors, but for him, those flavors do not exist. His body feels sensations, but does not attach itself to those sensations. His mind knows of things, but does not attach to them. If we can sit in meditation until our state is such that ‘inside we have no body and mind,’ ‘outside we have no world,’ and ‘afar there are no objects’, then we reach the stage of nonattachment, or the state of “no trace of self, no trace of others, no trace of living beings, and no trace of life span.” This is also the stage described as, “Thoughts of the past cannot be obtained, thoughts of the present cannot be obtained, and thoughts of the future cannot be obtained.” This is also called the wonderful stage of lightness and ease in meditation. If we continue to meditate profoundly, we will approach wonderful stages in meditation: the stage of happiness that leaves living beings behind; it means that we have reached a stage of happiness beyond that which living beings enjoy. The stage of happiness that brings concentration, it means happiness in concentration which is completely unparalleled and indescribable. The stage of bliss beyond happiness, it means we leave coarse happiness behind and reach a level of subtle bliss that is most wonderful. The pure stage free of thoughts, where the mind is totally pure without any thoughts. According to the Sutra in Forty-Two Sections, Chapter 18, the Buddha said: “My Dharma is the mindfulness that is both mindfulness and no-mindfulness. It is the practice that is both practice and non-practice. It is words that are words and non-words. It is cultivation that is cultivation and non-cultivation. Those who understand are near to it; those who are confused are far from it indeed. The path of words and language is cut off; it cannot be categorized as a thing. If you are off (removed) by a hair’s breadth, you lose it in an instant.” The Vajra Sutra taught:

“All things born of conditions are like dreams,
Like illusions, bubbles, and shadows;
Like dewdrops, like flashes of lightning:
Contemplate them in these ways.”

Anything with shape or form is considered a “dharma born of conditions.” All things born of conditions are like dreams, illusory transformations, bubbles of foam, and shadows. Like dewdrops and lightning, they are false and unreal. By contemplating everything in

this way, we will be able to understand the truth, let go of attachments, and put an end to random thoughts. According to the Sutra in Forty-Two Sections, Chapter 18, the Buddha said: “My Dharma is the mindfulness that is both mindfulness and no-mindfulness. It is the practice that is both practice and non-practice. It is words that are words and non-words. It is cultivation that is cultivation and non-cultivation. Those who understand are near to it; those who are confused are far from it indeed. The path of words and language is cut off; it cannot be categorized as a thing. If you are off (removed) by a hair’s breadth, you lose it in an instant.”

III. Cultivation of Letting Go Through Meditation:

As mentioned above, the main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation; however, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In order to achieve this immediate goal, practitioners' every moment must be moment of practice of letting go in life for this is the most efficient and wonderful way to reduce afflictions. Buddhist practitioners should always have this attitude ‘Looking but not seeing, hearing but not listening, smelling but not noticing the scent.’ Why is it described as ‘looking, but not seeing?’ Because the person is returning the light to shine within, and introspecting. Why is it ‘hearing, but not listening?’ Because he is turning the hearing to listen his own nature. Why does it say, ‘smelling, but not noticing the scent?’ Because he has gathered back his body and mind, and is not disturbed any longer by scent. At this time, the cultivator’s eyes contemplate physical forms, but the forms do not exist for him. His ears hear sounds, but the sounds do not exist for him. His nose smells scents, but those scents do not exist for him. His tongue tastes flavors, but for him, those flavors do not exist. His body feels sensations, but does not attach itself to those sensations. His mind knows of things, but does not attach to them. If we do our sitting meditation for a considerable time, we may feel fatigued, we may need to ease our aching limbs a little bit. Then we can start our walking meditation. Walk slowly mindful of the movements, now we need not think of the breath but become aware of the walk. If our mind wanders give attention to our walking without getting involved in other

thoughts. If we stop, turn or look around, be mindful and apply clear comprehension. When our foot touches the earth we get the sensation, become aware of it. Walking is also an exercise in mindfulness. When we are following a meditation course let us try to be mindful always everywhere. When sitting, standing, walking, working, eating, drinking, talking, laughing, wearing clothes, or even when we are silent, etc., let us be always mindful. If our limbs get numbed while in meditation, rub and stretch them. We can also relax in a lying down position; however, this we may do at the end of a sitting meditation. Lie on our back on a flat surface, and try to avoid using a pillow or cushion under our head. Keep our legs stretched out slightly apart and arms loosely by our sides, keep our eyes shut, do not go to deep thinking, but allow your mind to relax, and not wander. Relax each muscle, be completely relaxed for a few minutes. At times, we may slightly fall asleep for a couple of minutes, at the end of the relaxation, get up feeling fit. We could do this type of relaxation, not only during the meditation hours, but also at any time we feel fatigued or when we have the inclination to relax.

A basic teaching of the Buddha on how to calm and rein in the “monkey” mind. When we feel asleep, just lie down in a quiet place, put the lights out and let go our minds and bodies. In Buddhism, we have always been hearing about letting go and not clinging to anything. What does the Buddha mean on letting go? He means in daily activities no way we can let go everything. We have to hold on things; however, try not to cling to them. For example, we try to make money for our living expenses, but not try to cling on making a lot of money to accumulate regardless of the means of making the money. Practitioners do everything with a mind that lets go. Do not expect any praise or reward. If we let go a little, we will have a little peace. If we let go a lot, we will have a lot of peace. If we let go completely, we will know complete peace and freedom. In Zen, this 'abandonment' means the moral courage of taking risks; it helps practitioners plunging into the unknown which lies beyond the topography of relative knowledge. This 'abandonment' may seem an easy thing to do, but after all it is the last thing any practitioner can do, for it is done only when we are most thoroughly convinced that there is no other way to meet the situation. We are always conscious of a tie, which we thought it's slender, but we

will see how strong it is when we try to cut it off. It is always holding us back when we wish to let go. Zen practitioners should always be careful!

To let go greed, anger, jealousy, and other evil thoughts to which people are subject, we need strength of mind, strenuous effort and vigilance. When we are free from the city life, from nagging preoccupation with daily life, we are not tempted to lose control; but when we enter in the real society, it becomes an effort to check these troubles. Meditation will contribute an immense help to enable us to face all this with calm. There are only two points of divergence between the deluded and the enlightened, i.e., Buddhas and Bodhisattvas: purity is Buddhahood, defilement is the state of sentient beings. Because the Buddhas are in accord with the Pure Mind, they are enlightened, fully endowed with spiritual powers and wisdom. Because sentient beings are attached to worldly Dusts, they are deluded and revolve in the cycle of Birth and Death. While to practice Pure Land is to go deep into the Buddha Recitation Samadhi, awakening to the Original Mind and attaining Buddhahood. Therefore, if any deluded, agitated thought develops during Buddha Recitation, it should be severed immediately, allowing us to return to the state of the Pure Mind. This is the method of dropping afflictions with the meditating mind. Devout Buddhists, even though seeing that letting go of greed-anger-ignorance is not an easy thing to do; this is not easy to do in one or two days, but when we want to follow the Buddha's Path, we have no other choice but to let them go.

IV. Buddha's Examples of Renunciation:

Detachment is the attitude of those who give up, forget, do not attach any importance for what they have done for the benefit of others. In general, we feel proud, self-aggrandized when we do something to help other people. Quarrels, conflicts, or clashes between men or groups of men are due to passions such as greed or anger whose source can be appraised as self-attachment or dharma-attachment. The Buddha taught that if there is someone who misjudges us, we must feel pity for him; we must forgive him in order to have peace in our mind. The Bodhisattvas have totally liberated themselves from both self-attachment and dharma-attachment. When people enjoy

material or spiritual pleasures, the Bodhisattvas also rejoice, from their sense of compassion, pity, and inner joy. They always consider human beings as their benefactors who have created the opportunities for them to practice the Four Immeasurable Minds on their way to Enlightenment. In terms of the Immeasurable Detachment, the Bodhisattvas consider all men equal, the clever as the stupid, themselves as others, they do everything as they have done nothing, say everything as they have said nothing, attain all spiritual levels as they have attained nothing. Renunciation in Buddhism means to renounce the worldly world. Basically, renunciation is the recognition that all existence is permeated by suffering. When you realize this, it leads to what we might call a turning point. That is to say, the realization that all of common life is permeated by suffering causes us to look for something more or something different, something which is absent of sufferings and afflictions. For the Buddha, after realizing all nature of life and human suffering in life; all living beings kill one another to survive, and that is a great source of suffering, Crown Prince Siddhattha stopped enjoying worldly pleasures. Furthermore, he himself saw an old man, a sick man, and a corpse, that led him to ponder why it was, he also felt unsettled by these sights. Clearly, he himself was not immune to these conditions, but was subject to the inevitable succession of old age, sickness and death. Thus He thought of leaving the world in search of truth and peace. In the silence of that moonlit and breezy night (it was the full-moon day of July) such thoughts as these arose in him “Youth, the prime of life ends in old age and man’s senses fail him at a time when they are most needed. The health is weakened when diseases suddenly creeps in. Finally death comes, sudden perhaps and unexpected, and puts an end to this brief span of life. Surely there must be an escape from this unsatisfactoriness, from aging and death.” Then, at the age of twenty-nine, in the flower of youthful manhood, on the day Princess Yasodara had given birth to Rahula, Prince Siddhartha Gotama, discarding and disdaining the enchantment of the royal life, scorning and spurning joys that most young people yearn for, the prince renounced wife and child, and a crown that held the promise of power and glory. He cut off his long locks of hair with his sword, doffed his royal robes, and putting on a hermit’s robe retreated into forest solitude to seek solution to those

problems of life that so deeply stirred his mind. He became a penniless wandering ascetic to struggle for enlightenment. First He sought guidance from two famous sages at the time, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta, hoping that they, being famous masters of meditation, would teach him all they know, leading him to the heights of concentrative thought. He practiced concentration and reached the highest meditative attainments, but was not satisfied with anything less than a Supreme Enlightenment. These teachers' range of knowledge and experience, however, was insufficient to grant him what he so earnestly sought. Though both sages asked him to stay to teach their followers, he declined and left. He continued to practice many penances and underwent much suffering. He practiced many forms of severe austerity. However, he got no hope after six years of torturing his body so much that it was reduced to almost a skeleton. He changed his method as his penances proved useless. He gave up extremes and adopted the Middle Path and became a Buddha at the age of 35. It is extremely important to remember that renunciation in Buddhism is never caused by despair in the ordinary course of life. As for the Buddha, he enjoyed the greatest possible happiness and privilege known in his day; however, he recognized the suffering inherent in sentient existence, and realized that, no matter how much we may indulge ourselves in pleasures of the sense, eventually we must face the realities of old age, sickness, and death. In short, renunciation in Buddhism means to renounce the worldly pleasures (which will eventually cause sufferings and afflictions) to seek the truth of life which is absent of greed, anger and ignorance, so that we can obtain a life of eternal happiness.

Chapter Thirty-Four

To Reduce Affliction by Means of Thoroughly Understanding That Everything Was Born From The Theory of Causation

According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, causation means everything arises from conditions (conditioned arising), or arising from the secondary causes, including afflictions, in contrast with arising from the primal nature or *bhutatatha* (Tánh giác); or everything arises from conditions and not being spontaneous and self-contained has no separate and independent nature. Practitioners who thoroughly understand this theory, they are in the inconceivable process of reducing afflictions. Buddhism does not give importance to the idea of the Root-Principle or the First Cause as other systems of philosophy often do; nor does it discuss the idea of cosmology. Naturally such a branch of philosophy as theology did not have grounds to develop in Buddhism. One should not expect any discussion of theology from a Buddhist philosopher. As for the problem of creation, Buddhism is ready to accept any theory that science may advance, for Buddhism does not recognize any conflict between religion and science. According to Buddhism, human beings and all living things are self-created or self-creating. The universe is not homocentric; it is a co-creation of all beings. Buddhism does not believe that all things came from one cause, but holds that everything is inevitably created out of more than two causes. The creations or becomings of the antecedent causes continue in time-series, past, present and future, like a chain. This chain is divided into twelve divisions and is called the Twelve Divisioned Cycle of Causation and Becomings. Since these divisions are interdependent, the process is called Dependent Production or Chain of causation. The formula of this theory is as follows: From the existence of this, that becomes; from the happening of this, that happens. From the non-existence of this, that does not become; from the non-happening of this, that does not happen.

According to the Madhyamaka philosophy, the doctrine of causal law (Pratityasamutpada) is exceedingly important in Buddhism. It is the causal law both of the universe and the lives of individuals. It is important from two points of view. Firstly, it gives a very clear idea of the impermanent and conditioned nature of all phenomena. Secondly, it shows how birth, old age, death and all the afflictions and miseries of phenomenal existence arise in dependence upon conditions, and how all the afflictions and miseries cease in the absence of these conditions. The rise and subsidence of the elements of existence is not the correct interpretation of the causal law. According to the Madhyamaka philosophy, the causal law (pratityasamutpada) does not mean the principle of temporal sequence, but the principle of essential dependence of things on each other. In one word, it is the principle of relativity. Relativity is the most important discovery of modern science. What science has discovered today, the Buddha had discovered more than two thousand five hundred years before. In interpreting the causal law as essential dependence of things on each other or relativity of things, the Madhyamaka means to controvert another doctrine of the Hinayanists. The Hinayanists had analyzed all phenomena into elements (dharma) and believed that these elements had a separate reality of their own. The Madhyamika says that the very doctrine of the causal law declares that all the dharmas are relative, they have no separate reality of their own. Without a separate reality is synonymous with devoid of real (sunyata), or independent existence. Phenomena are devoid of independent reality. The most importance of the causal law lies in its teaching that all phenomenal existence, all entities in the world are conditioned, are devoid of real (sunya), independent existence (svabhava). There is no real, dependent existence of entities. All the concrete content belongs to the interplay of countless conditions. Nagarjuna sums up his teaching about the causal law in the following words: "Since there is no elements of existence (dharma) which comes into manifestation without conditions, therefore there is no dharma which is not 'sunya,' or devoid of real independent existence."

There are many different kinds of Categories of Causation. *The first category is the "Causation by Action-influence":* Causation by action-influence is depicted in the Wheel of Life. There is law and

order in the progress of cause and effect. This is the theory of causal Sequence. In the Twelve Divisioned Cycle of Causations and Becomings, it is impossible to point out which one is the first cause, because the twelve make a continuous circle which is called the Wheel of Life. People are accustomed to regard time as progressing in a straight line from the infinite past through present to infinite future. Buddhism, however, regards time as a circle with no beginning or end. Time is relative. The death of a living being is not the end; at once another life begins to go through a similar process of birth and death, and thus repeats the round of life over and over again. In this way a living being, when considered in relation to time, forms an endless continuum. It is impossible to define what a living being is, for it is always changing and progressing through the Divisions or Stages of Life. The whole series of stages must be taken in their entirety as representing the one individual being. Thus, a living being, when regarded in relation to space, forms a complex of five elements. The Wheel of Life is a clever representation of the Buddhist conception of a living being in relation to both space and time. The Wheel of Life is a circle with no beginning, but it is customary to begin its exposition at Blindness (unconscious state). Blindness is only a continuation of Death. At death the body is abandoned, but Blindness remains as the crystallization of the effects of the actions performed during life. This Blindness is often termed Ignorance; but this ignorance should not be thought of as the antonym of knowing; it must include in its meaning both knowing and not knowing, blindness or blind mind, unconsciousness. Blindness leads to blind activity. The energy or the effect of this blind activity is the next stage, Motive or Will to Live. This Will to Live is not the kind of will which is used in the term “free will;” it is rather a blind motive toward life or the blind desire to live. Blindness and Will to Live are called the Two Causes of the past. They are causes when regarded subjectively from the present; but objectively regarded, the life in the past is a whole life just as much as is the life of the present.

The second category is the “Causation by the Ideation-Store”: Causation by the Ideation-store is used to explain the origin of action. Actions or karma are divided into three groups, i.e., those by the body, those by speech and those by volition. When one makes up one’s mind

to do something, one is responsible for it and is liable to retribution, because volition is a mind-action even if it is not expressed in speech or manifested in physical action. But the mind being the inmost recess of all actions, the causation ought to be attributed to the mind-store or Ideation-store. The Buddhist ideation theory divides the mind into eight faculties, i.e., the eye-sense, the ear-sense, the nose-sense, the tongue-sense, the body-sense, the co-ordinating sense-center or the sixth *mano-vijnana*, the individualizing thought-center of egotism or the seventh *manas-vijnana*, and the storing-center of ideation or the eighth *alaya-vijnana*, or Ideation-store. Of these eight faculties, the seventh and the eighth require explanation. The seventh, the Individualizing Center of Egotism is the center where all the selfish ideas, egotistic, opinions, arrogance, self-love, illusions, and delusions arise. The eighth, the Storing Center of Ideation, is where the 'seeds' of all manifestations are deposited and later expressed in manifestations. Buddhism holds that the origin of all things and events is the effect of ideation. Every seed lies in the Storing Center and when it sprouts out into the object-world a reflection returns as a new seed. That is, the mind reaches out into the outer world and, perceiving objects, puts new ideas into the mind-store. Again, this new seed sprouts out to reflect back a still newer seed. Thus, the seeds accumulate and all are stored there together. When they are latent, we call them seeds, but when active we call them manifestations. The old seeds, the manifestations and the new seeds are mutually dependent upon each other, forming a cycle which forever repeats the same process. This is called the Chain of Causation by Ideation. That which makes the seed or subconscious thought sprout out into actual manifestation, that is, the motive force which makes the chain of causation move, is nothing but ideation. It is easy to see from this theory of Causation by Ideation that Delusion, Action and Suffering originate from mind-action, or ideation. The Storing Center of Ideation is carried across rebirth to determine what the next form of life will be. This Storing Center might be regarded as similar to the soul in other forms of religion. According to the Buddhist doctrine, however, what is reborn is not the soul, but is the result of the actions performed in the preceding life. In Buddhism the existence of the soul is denied.

The third category is the "Causation By Thusness": Causation by Thusness is used to explain the origin of the ideation-store. The ideation-store of a human being is determined by his nature as a human being and this nature is a particular dynamic form of Thusness. One should not ask where Thusness or Matrix of Thus-come originates, because it is the noumenon, the ultimate indescribable Thusness. Thusness or suchness, is the only term which can be used to express the ultimate indefinable reality. It is otherwise called the Matrix of Thus-come. Thus-come is Buddha-nature hidden in ordinary human nature. "Thus-come" is a designation of the Buddha employed by himself instead of "I" or "we," but not without special meaning. After he had attained Enlightenment, he met the five ascetics with whom he had formerly shared his forest life. These five ascetics addressed him saying "Friend Gotama." The Buddha admonished them, saying that they ought not treat the Thus-come (thus enlightened I come) as their friend and their equal, because he was now the Enlightened One, the Victorious, All-wise One. When he had 'thus come' in his present position as the instructor of all men and even of devas, they should treat him as the Blessed One and not as an old friend. Again, when the Buddha went back to Kapilavastu, his former home, he did not go to the palace of his father, but lived in the banyan grove outside the town, and as usual went out to beg daily. Suddhodana, his king-father, could not bear the idea of his own son, the prince, begging on the streets of Kapilavastu. At once, the king visited the Buddha in the grove and entreated him to return to the palace. The Buddha answered him in the following words: "If I were still your heir, I should return to the palace to share the comfort with you, but my lineage has changed. I am now a successor to the Buddhas of the past, all of whom have 'thus gone' (Tathagata) as I am doing at present, living in the woods and begging. So, your Majesty must excuse me." The king understood the words perfectly and became a pupil of the Buddha at once. Thus, come and thus gone have practically the same meaning. The Buddha used them both and usually in their plural forms. Sometimes the words were used for a sentient being who thus come, i.e., comes in the contrary way. Thus-come and Thus-gone can therefore be used in two senses: 'The one who is enlightened but comes in an ordinary way' or 'The one who comes in an ordinary way simply.' Now, Thusness or the Matrix of

Thus-come or Thus-gone means the true state of all things in the universe, the source of an Enlightened One, the basis of enlightenment. When static, it is Enlightenment itself, with no relation to time or space; but, when dynamic, it is in human form assuming an ordinary way and feature of life. Thusness and the Matrix of Thus-come are practically one and the same, the ultimate truth. In Mahayana the ultimate truth is called Suchness or Thusness. We are now in a position to explain the Theory of Causation by Thusness. Thusness in its static sense is spaceless, timeless, all-equal, without beginning or end, formless, colorless, because the thing itself without its manifestation cannot be sensed or described. Thusness in its dynamic sense can assume any form; when driven by a pure cause it takes a lofty form; when driven by a tainted cause it takes a depraved form. Thusness, therefore, is of two states. The one is the Thusness itself; the other is its manifestation, its state of life and death.

The fourth category is the "Causation by the Universal Principle": Dharmadhatu means the elements of the principle and has two aspects: the state of Thusness or noumenon and the world of phenomenal manifestation. In this causation theory it is usually used in the latter sense, but in speaking of the ideal world as realized, the former sense is to be applied. Buddhism holds that nothing was created singly or individually. All things in the universe, matter and mind, arose simultaneously, all things in it depending upon one another, the influence of each mutually permeating and thereby making a universal symphony of harmonious totality. If one item were lacking, the universe would not be complete; without the rest, one item cannot be. When the whole cosmos arrives at a harmony of perfection, it is called the 'Universe One and True,' or the 'Lotus Store.' In this ideal universe all beings will be in perfect harmony, each finding no obstruction in the existence and activity of another. Although the idea of the interdependence and simultaneous rise of all things is called the Theory of Universal Causation, the nature of the rise being universal, it is rather a philosophy of the totality of all existence than a philosophy of origination.

Chapter Thirty-Five

To Reduce Afflictions by Means of Rejection of Pleasures, But Not Rejection of Means of Life

We are residing in the realm of passions or realm of desire where there exist all kinds of desires. The realm of desire, of sensuous gratification; this world and the six devalokas; any world in which the elements of desire have not been suppressed. The world of desire. The region of the wishes. This is the lowest of the three realms of existence, the other two being rupa-dhatu and arupa-dhatu. It is also the realm in which human live, and it receives its name because desire is the dominant motivation for its inhabitants. Most of us want to do good deeds; however, we are always contradictory ourselves between pleasure and cultivation. A lot of people misunderstand that religion means a denial or rejection of happiness in worldly life. In saying so, instead of being a method for transcending our limitations, religion itself is viewed as one of the heaviest forms of suppression. It's just another form of superstition to be rid of if we really want to be free. The worst thing is that nowadays, many societies have been using religion as a means of political oppression and control. They believe that the happiness we have here, in this world, is only a temporary, so they try to aim at a so-called "Almighty Creator" to provide them with a so-called eternal happiness. They deny themselves the everyday pleasures of life. They cannot enjoy a meal with all kinds of food, even with vegetarian food. Instead of accepting and enjoying such an experience for what it is, they tie themselves up in a knot of guilt "while so many people in the world are starving and miserable, how dare I indulge myself in this way of life!" This kind of attitude is just mistaken as the attitude of those who try to cling to worldly pleasures. In fact, this just another form of grasping. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that in cultivation of reducing afflictions, we deny to indulge in worldly pleasures so that we can eliminate "clinging" to make it easy for our cultivation. We will never reject means of life so we can continue to live to cultivate. In other words, devout practitioners reduce afflictions by means of rejection of pleasures, but

not rejection of means of life. So, a Buddhist still eats everyday, but never eats lives. A Buddhist still sleeps but is not eager to sleep round the clock as a pig. A Buddhist still converse in daily life, but not talk in one way and act in another way. In short, in cultivation of reducing afflictions, sincere Buddhists never reject any means of life, but refuse to indulge in or to cling to the worldly pleasures because they are only causes of sufferings and afflictions.

Chapter Thirty-Six

To Reduce Afflictions By Means of Seeing One's Own Faults, But Not Seeing the Faults of Others

Of course, enlightenment is a complete and deep realization of what it means to be a Buddha. In Buddhism, enlightenment is achieving a complete and deep realization of what it means to be a Buddha and how to reach Buddhahood. However, for lay practitioners, in daily life, enlightenment means to see our own faults, but not to see the faults of others, for this is one of the best methods that will help us reduce afflictions. And this will also help us a lot in transforming our karmas. For the majority of us, it is easy seen are others' faults, but hard indeed to see one's own faults. The Buddha taught that we should not evade self-responsibility for our own actions by blaming them on circumstances or unluckiness. Usually when a man is forced to see his own weakness, he avoids it and instead gives it to self-deceit. He will search his brain for an excuse, even the lamest one will do, to justify his actions. He may succeed in doing this. Sometimes he succeeds so well in trying to fool others, he even manages to fool himself with the very ghost created by his mind. However, you may fool some of the people for some of the time, but not all the people all the time. According to the Buddha, the fool who does not admit he is a fool is a real fool. And the fool who admits he is a fool is wise to that extent. If you have made a mistake, then admit it. You need courage, of course admission of your own mistake is not pleasant. You also need wisdom to see your own faults. Sincere Buddhists should not think that you have been unlucky, or you have been a victim of fate. Face your shortcomings. You must realize that your mind has created the conditions which gave rise to the miseries and difficulties you are experiencing. This is the only way that can help lead you to a happy life. In the Dhammapada Sutta, the Buddha taught very clearly on "Easy to see the faults of others, but it is difficult to perceive our own faults". It is easy to see the faults of others, but it is difficult to perceive our own faults. A man winnows his neighbor's faults like chaff, but hides his own, as a dishonest gambler conceals a losing dice

(Dharmapada 252). He who sees others' faults, is easy to get irritable and increases afflictions. If we abandon such a habit, afflictions will also be gone (Dharmapada 253). Those who perceive wrong as wrong and what is right as right, such men, embracing right views and go to the blissful state (Dharmapada 319).

Chapter Thirty-Seven

To Reduce Afflictions Through Cultivation of Kusala Dharma & By Staying Away from Akusala Dharma

As mentioned above, afflictions include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Zen vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment. Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to reduce afflictions and to eliminate these defilements by cultivation of kusala dharma and staying away from akusala dharma on a regular basis.

I. To Reduce These Robbers of Afflictions Through Cultivation of Kusala Dharma:

“Kusala” means volitional action that is done in accordance with the Aryan Eightfold Noble Path. So, Kusala is not only in accordance with the right action, but it is also always in accordance with the right view, right understanding, right speech, right livelihood, right energy, right concentration and right samadhi. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 183, the Buddha taught: Not to do evil, to do good, to purify one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas.” Kusala karmas or good deeds will help a person control a lot of troubles arising from his mind. Inversely, if a person does evil deeds he will receive bad results in this life and the next existence which are suffering. Thus, wholesome deeds clean our mind and give happiness to oneself and others. Kusala means good, right, or wholesome. It is contrary to the unwholesome. According to Buddhism, kusala karma means volitional action that is done in accordance with the Aryan Eightfold Noble Path. So, Kusala karma is not only in accordance with the right action, but it

is also always in accordance with the right view, right understanding, right speech, right livelihood, right energy, right concentration and right samadhi. According to the Dharmapada Sutra, verse 183, the Buddha taught: Not to do evil, to do good, to purify one's mind, this is the teaching of the Buddhas." Kusala karmas or good deeds will help a person control a lot of troubles arising from his mind. Inversely, if a person does evil deeds he will receive bad results in this life and the next existence which are suffering. An honest man, especially one who believes in Buddhist ideas of causality and lives a good life. There are two classes of people in this life, those who are inclined to quarrel and addicted to dispute, and those who are bent to living in harmony and happy in friendliness. The first class can be classified wicked, ignorant and heedless folk. The second class comprised of good, wise and heedful people. The Buddha has made a clear distinction between wickedness and goodness and advises all his disciples not to do evil actions, to perform good ones and to purify their own heart. He knows that it is easy to do evil action. To perform meritorious one far more difficult. But His disciples should know how to select in between evil and good, because wicked people will go to hell and undergo untold suffering, while good ones will go to Heaven and enjoy peaceful bliss. Moreover, Good one even from afar shines like the mountain of snow with their meritorious actions, while bad ones are enveloped in darkness like an arrow shot in the night." According to The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, Chapter Ambapali, there are two starting points of wholesome states. First, virtue that is well purified which includes basing upon virtue and establishing upon virtue. Second, view that is straight. According to The Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are three good (wholesome) roots. For Monks and Nuns, there are the wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion (no selfish desire, no ire, no stupidity); the wholesome roots of almsgiving, kindness, and wisdom; and the wholesome roots of good deeds, good words, good thoughts. Three good roots for all moral development: the wholesome root of no lust or selfish desire, the wholesome root of no ire or no hatred, and the wholesome root of no stupidity. For Ordinary People, there are three wholesome roots: the wholesome root of almsgiving; the wholesome root of mercy; and the wholesome root of wisdom. There are also three good upward directions or states of

existence. The first path is the wholesome path. This is the highest class of goodness rewarded with the deva life. The second path is the path of human beings. The middle class of goodness with a return to human life. The third path is the path of asuras. The inferior class of goodness with the asura state. According to The Long Discourses of the Buddha, Sangiti Sutra, there are three kinds of wholesome element. First, the wholesome element of renunciation. Second, the wholesome element of non-enmity. Third, the wholesome element of non-cruelty. According to the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are three kinds of right conduct: right conduct in body, right conduct in speech, and right conduct in thought. Three good deeds (the foundation of all development) include no lust (no selfish desire), no anger, and no stupidity (no ignorance). According to the Abhidharma, there are three doors of wholesome kamma pertaining to the sense-sphere. First, bodily action pertaining to the door of the body: not to kill, not to steal, and not to commit sexual misconduct. Second, verbal action pertaining to the door of speech: not to have false speech, not to slander, not to speak harsh speech, and not to speak frivolous talk. Third, mental action pertaining to the door of the mind: not to have Covetousness, not to have Ill-will, and not to have wrong views. According to The Long Discourses of the Buddha, Sangiti Sutra, there are three kinds of wholesome investigation. First, the wholesome investigation of renunciation. Second, the wholesome investigation of non-enmity. Third, the wholesome investigation of non-cruelty. According to The Long Discourses of the Buddha, Sangiti Sutra, there are three kinds of wholesome perception. First, the wholesome perception of renunciation. Second, the wholesome perception of non-enmity. Third, the wholesome perception of non-cruelty. According to the Mahayana, there are four good roots, or sources from which spring good fruit or development: Sravakas, Pratyeka-buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas. According to the Kosa Sect, there are four good roots, or sources from which spring good fruit or development: the level of heat, the level of the summit, the level of patience, and the level of being first in the world. According to the Surangama Sutra, book Eight, There are four good roots, or sources from which spring good fruit or development. The Buddha reminded Ananda as follows: “Ananda! When these good men have completely purified these forty-one minds, they further

accomplish four kinds of wonderfully perfect additional practices.” The first root is the level of heat. When the enlightenment of a Buddha is just about to become a function of his own mind, it is on the verge of emerging but has not yet emerged, and so it can be compared to the point just before wood ignites when it is drilled to produce fire. Therefore, it is called ‘the level of heat.’ The second root is the level of the summit. He continues on with his mind, treading where the Buddhas tread, as if relying and yet not. It is as if he were climbing a lofty mountain, to the point where his body is in space but there remains a slight obstruction beneath him. Therefore it is called ‘the level of the summit.’ The third root is the level of patience. When the mind and the Buddha are two and yet the same, he has well obtained the middle way. He is like someone who endures something when it seems impossible to either hold it in or let it out. Therefore it is called ‘the level of patience.’ The fourth root is the level of being first in the world. When numbers are destroyed, there are no such designations as the middle way or as confusion and enlightenment; this is called the ‘level of being first in the world.’ According to the Long Discourses of the Buddha, Sangiti Sutra, there are eight right factors: Right views, Right thinking, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness, and Right concentration. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “As a flower that is colorful and beautiful, but without scent, even so fruitless is the well-spoken words of one who does not practice it (Dharmapada 51). As the flower that is colorful, beautiful, and full of scent, even so fruitful is the well-spoken words of one who practices it (Dharmapada 52). As from a heap of flowers many a garland is made, even so many good deeds should be done by one born to the mortal lot (Dharmapada 53). If a person does a meritorious deed, he should do it habitually, he should find pleasures therein, happiness is the outcome of merit (Dharmapada 118). Even a good person sees evil as long as his good deed has not yet ripened; but when his good deed has ripened, then he sees the good results (Dharmapada 120). Do not disregard small good, saying, “It will not matter to me.” Even by the falling of drop by drop, a water-jar is filled; likewise, the wise man, gathers his merit little by little (Dharmapada 122).” In the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, chapter 14, the Buddha taught: “A Sramana asked the Buddha: “What is goodness? What is the

foremost greatness?” The Buddha replied: “To practice the Way and to protect the Truth is goodness. To unite your will with the Way is greatness.” For lay Buddhists, kusala dharmas can be going to a temple to do good deeds there, but kusala dharmas can also be what we do to make others happier or moraler so that they can come closer to enlightenment and emancipation. Devout Zen practitioners should always remember that before entering meditation practices, we should do a lot of good deeds, for the level of mind stillness depends not only on methods of Zen, but also greatly depends the good deeds that we accomplished. If we are not completely emancipated, our happiness in meditation also synonymous with the happiness that we did for others. Therefore, a Zen practitioner must be the one who always gives the happiness, peace, and mindfulness to others all his life. In other words, beside the effort for meditation, Zen practitioners should always try to do many good deeds, for good deeds will support meditation result very well.

II. To Reduce These Robbers of Afflictions By Staying Away From Akusala Dharmas:

Unwholesome deeds (anything connected with the unwholesome root or akusala mula) accompanied by greed, hate or delusion and cause undesirable karmic results or future sufferings and afflictions. There are two kinds of causes in the world: good causes and bad causes. If we create good causes, we will reap good results; if we create bad causes, we will surely reap bad results. According to The Path of Purification, unwholesome deeds are both unprofitable action and courses that lead to unhappy destinies. Unwholesome mind creates negative or unwholesome thoughts (anger, hatred, harmful thoughts, wrong views, etc), speech (lying, harsh speech, double-tongued, etc), as well as deeds which are the causes of our sufferings, confusion and misery. Unwholesome or negative mind will destroy our inner peace and tranquility. According to Buddhism, if we create bad causes, we will surely reap bad results. People who create many offenses and commit many transgressions will eventually have to undergo the retribution of being hell-dwellers, hungry-ghosts, and animals, etc. In general, doing good deeds allows us to ascend, while doing evil causes us to descend. In everything we do, we must take the responsibility

ourselves; we cannot rely on others. According to The Path of Purification, “Bad Ways” is a term for doing what ought not to be done and not doing what ought to be done, out of desire, hate, delusion, and fear. They are called “bad ways” because they are ways not to be traveled by Noble Ones. Incorrect conduct in thought, word or deed, which leads to evil recompense. Unwholesome speech or slanderous or evil-speech which cause afflictions. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Do not speak unwholesome or harsh words to anyone. Those who are spoken to will respond in the same manner. Angry speech nourishes trouble. You will receive blows in exchange for blows (Dharmapada 133). If like a cracked gong, you silence yourself, you already have attained Nirvana. No vindictiveness (quarrels) will be found in you (Dharmapada 134).” Unwholesome views or wrong views mean seeing or understanding in a wrong or wicked and grasping manner. There are five kinds of wrong views: wrong views of the body, one-sided views, wrong views which are inconsistent with the dharma, wrong views caused by attachment to one’s own erroneous understanding, and wrong views or wrong understandings of the precepts. Unwholesome deeds are bad, wrong, cruel, evil or mischievous acts. Unwholesome or wicked deeds which are against the right. Maliciousness is planning to harm others. It includes thinking how to revenge a wrong done to us, how to hurt others’ feelings or how to embarrass them. From the earliest period, Buddhist thought has argued that immoral actions are the result of ignorance (avidya), which prompts beings to engage in actions (karma) that will have negative consequences for them. Thus, evil for Buddhism is a second-order problem, which is eliminated when ignorance is overcome. Thus the definition of sin and evil is pragmatic: evil actions are those that result in suffering and whose consequences are perceived as painful for beings who experience them. Unwholesome or evil karmas of greed, hatred and ignorance, all created by body, mouth and speech. Unwholesome or harmful actions, or conduct in thought, word, or deed (by the body, speech, and mind) to self and others which leads to evil recompense (negative path, bad deeds, or black path). Unwholesome or negative Karma includes: greed, anger, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and unwholesome thoughts. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, there are four causes of

unwholesome or evil actions: unwholesome action springs from attachment, ill-will, ignorance, and fear. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, the Buddha taught: “If the Ariyan disciple does not act out of attachment, ill-will, folly or fear, he will not do evil from any one of the four above mentioned causes.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “As rust sprung from iron eats itself away when arisen, just like ill deeds lead the doer to a miserable state (Dharmapada 240). There are three kinds of unwholesome paths (the states of woe, realms of woe, evil realms, or evil ways). Also called evil ways or three evil paths, or destinies of hells, hungry ghosts and animals. These are three paths which can be taken as states of mind, i.e., when someone has a vicious thought of killing someone, he is effectively reborn, for that moment, in the hells. Sentient beings in evil realms do not encounter the Buddhadharma, never cultivate goodness, and always harm others. Sometimes the Asura realm is also considered an unwholesome or evil realm because though they have heavenly merits, they lack virtues and have much hatred. There are four fundamental unwholesome passions. These four are regarded as the fundamental evil passions originating from the view that there is really an eternal substance known as ego-soul. First, the belief in the existence of an ego-substance. Second, ignorance about the ego. Third, conceit about the ego. The fourth fundamental unwholesome passion is self-love. All karmas are controlled by the threefold deed (body, speech, and mind). Three deeds of the body, four deeds of the mouth, and three deeds of the mind. According to Buddhism, evil phenomena refers to supernatural phenomena which are said to be side effects of Zazen, such as clairvoyance and other magical abilities, as well as hallucinations. They are considered to be distractions, and so meditators are taught to ignore them as much as possible and to concentrate on meditative practice only. “Akusala” is a Sanskrit term for “bonds of assumptions of bad states.” These are obstructions of body (kayavarana) and of mind (manas-avarana). Some Buddhist exegetes also add the third type, obstructions of speech (vag-avarana). These are said to be caused by influences of past karma, in imitation of past activities, and are the subtle traces that remain after the afflictions (klesa) have been destroyed. An example that is commonly given is of an Arhat, who has eliminated the afflictions, seeing a monkey then jumping up and down

while making noises like a monkey, but the subtle traces still remain deep in the conscious. According to Buddhism, an unwholesome person means an evil person, one who has evil ideas of the doctrine of voidness, to deny the doctrine of cause and effect. Thus, the Buddha advises us not make friends with wicked ones, but to associate only with good friends. He points out very clearly that if we yearn for life, we should avoid wickedness like we shun poison because a hand free from wound can handle poison with impunity. The dhammas of the good ones do not decay, but go along with the good ones to where meritorious actions will lead them. Good actions will welcome the well doer who has gone from this world to the next world, just as relatives welcome a dear one who has come back. So the problem poses itself very clear and definite. Wickedness and goodness are all done by oneself. Wickedness will lead to dispute and to war, while goodness will lead to harmony, to friendliness and to peace. Also according to the Buddhism, the unwholesome people are those who commit unbelievable crimes and whose minds are filled with greed, hatred and ignorance. Those who commit lying, gossip, harsh speech, and double-tongued. Those who abuse others' good heart; those who cheat others for their own benefits; those who kill, steal; those who act lasciviously; those who think of wicked plots; those who always think of wicked (evil) scheme. There are three unwholesome paths or three evil paths: hells, hungry ghosts, and animals. Great Master Ying-Kuang reminded Buddhist followers to singlemindedly recite the Buddha's name if they wish for their mind not to be attaching and wandering to the external world. Do not forget that death is lurking and hovering over us, it can strike us at any moment. If we do not wholeheartedly concentrate to practice Buddha Recitation, praying to gain rebirth to the Western Pureland, then if death should come suddenly, we are certain to be condemned to the three unwholesome realms where we must endure innumerable sufferings and sometime infinite Buddhas have in turn appeared in the world, but we are still trapped in the evil paths and unable to find liberation. Thus, cultivators should always ponder the impermanence of a human life, while death could come at any moment without warning. We should always think that we have committed infinite and endless unwholesome karmas in our former life and this life, then, the sufferings awaiting for us in the unwholesome realms.

Upon thinking all these, we will be awakened in every moment, and we no longer have greed and lust for the pleasures of the five desires and six elements of the external world. If condemned to hell, then we will experience the torturous and agonizing conditions of a mountain of swords, a forest of knives, stoves, frying pans; in each day and night living and dying ten thousand times, the agony of pain and suffering is inconceivable. If condemned to the path of hungry ghost, then the body is hideously ugly wreaking foul odors. Stomach is large as a drum but neck is as small as a needle; though starving and thirsty, the offenders cannot eat or drink. When seeing food and drinks, these items transform into coals and fires. Thus, they must endure the torture and suffering of famine and thirst, throwing, banging their bodies against everything, crying out in pain and agony for tens and thousands of kalpas. If condemned to the animal realm, then they must endure the karmic consequences of carrying and pulling heavy loads, get slaughtered for food, or the strong prey on the weak, mind and body always paranoid, frightened, and fearful of being eaten or killed, without having any moment of peace. There are five kinds of unwholesome deeds in this world. The first kind of unwholesome deed is Cruelty. Every creature, even insects, strives against one another. The strong attack the weak; the weak deceive the strong; everywhere there is fighting and cruelty. The second kind of unwholesome deed is Deception and lack of Sincerity. There is a lack of a clear demarcation between the rights of a father and a son, between an elder brother and a younger; between a husband and a wife; between a senior relative and a younger. On every occasion, each one desires to be the highest and to profit off others. They cheat each other. They don't care about sincerity and trust. The third kind of unwholesome deed is wicked behavior that leads to Injustice and wickedness. There is a lack of a clear demarcation as to the behavior between men and women. Everyone at times has impure and lascivious thoughts and desires that lead them into questionable acts and disputes, fighting, injustice and wickedness. The fourth kind of unwholesome deed is Disrespect the rights of others. There is a tendency for people to disrespect the rights of others, to exaggerate their own importance at the expense of others, to set bad examples of behavior and, being unjust in their speech, to deceive, slander and abuse others. The fifth kind of unwholesome deed

is to neglect their duties. There is a tendency for people to neglect their duties towards others. They think too much of their own comfort and their own desires; they forget the favors they have received and cause annoyance to others that often passes into great injustice. According to the Long Discourses of the Buddha, Sangiti Sutra, there are eight unwholesome factors: wrong views, wrong thinking, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, and wrong concentration. Eight wrong perceptions of thought: desire, hatred, vexation with others, home-sickness, patriotism or thoughts of the country's welfare, dislike of death, ambition for one's clan or family, and slighting or being rude to others. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are nine unwholesome causes of malice which are stirred up by the thought "There is no use to think that a person has harmed, is harming, or will harm either you, someone you love, or someone you hate". First, he has done me an injury. Second, he is doing me an injury. Third, he will do me an injury. Fourth, he has done an injury to someone who is dear and pleasant to me. Fifth, he is doing an injury to someone and pleasant to me. Sixth, he will do an injury to someone who is dear and pleasant to me. Seventh, he has done an injury to someone who is hateful and unpleasant to me. Eighth, he is doing an injury to someone who is hateful and unpleasant to me. Ninth, he will do an injury to someone who is hateful and unpleasant to me. Ancient virtues taught on unwholesome doings as followed: "Those who spit at the sky, immediately the spit will fall back on their face." Or to harbor blood to spit at someone, the mouth is the first to suffer from filth. Five practical suggestions to prevent evil thoughts given by the Buddha. First, harbouring a good thought opposite to the encroaching one, e.g., loving-kindness in the case of hatred. Second, reflecting upon possible evil consequences, e.g., anger sometimes results in murder. Third, simple neglect or becoming wholly inattentive to them. Fourth, tracing the cause which led to the arising of the unwholesome thoughts and thus forgetting them in the retrospective process. Fifth, direct physical force. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Let's hasten up to do good. Let's restrain our minds from evil thoughts, for the minds of those who are slow in doing good actions delight in evil (Dharmapada 116). If a person commits evil, let him not do it again and again; he

should not rejoice therein, sorrow is the outcome of evil (Dharmapada 117). Even an evil-doer sees good as long as evil deed has not yet ripened; but when his evil deed has ripened, then he sees the evil results (Dharmapada 119). Do not disregard (underestimate) small evil, saying, “It will not matter to me.” By the falling of drop by drop, a water-jar is filled; likewise, the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gathers it little by little (Dharmapada 121). A merchant with great wealth but lacks of companions, avoids a dangerous route, just as one desiring to live avoids poison, one should shun evil things in the same manner (Dharmapada 123). With a hand without wound, one can touch poison; the poison does not affect one who has no wound; nor is there ill for him who does no wrong. (Dharmapada 124). Whoever harms a harmless person who is pure and guiltless, the evil falls back upon that fool, like dust thrown against the wind (Dharmapada 125). Some are born in a womb; evil-doers are reborn in hells; the righteous people go to blissful states; the undefiled ones pass away into Nirvana (Dharmapada 126). Neither in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in mountain cave, nowhere on earth where one can escape from the consequences of his evil deeds (Dharmapada 127). The evil is done by oneself; it is self-born, it is self-nursed. Evil grinds the unwise as a diamond grinds a precious stone (Dharmapada 161). Bad deeds are easy to do, but they are harmful, not beneficial to oneself. On the contrary, it is very difficult to do that which is beneficial and good for oneself (Dharmapada 163). The foolish man who slanders the teachings of the Arhats, of the righteous and the Noble Ones. He follows false doctrine, ripens like the kashta reed, only for its own destruction (Dharmapada 164). By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one is defiled or purified. Purity or impurity depend on oneself. No one can purify another (Dharmapada 165). Not to slander, not to harm, but to restrain oneself in accordance with the fundamental moral codes, to be moderate in eating, to dwell in secluded abode, to meditate on higher thoughts, this is the teaching of the Buddhas (Dharmapada 185).” In the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, the Buddha taught: “The Buddha said: “When an evil person hears about virtue and intentionally or voluntarily comes to cause trouble, you should restrain yourself and should not become angry or upbraid him. Then, the one who has come to do evil will do evil to himself.” There was one who, upon hearing

that I protect the way and practice great humane compassion, intentionally or voluntarily came to scold me. I was silent and did not reply. When he finished scolding me, I asked, 'If you are courteous to people and they do not accept your courtesy, the courtesy returns to you, does it not?' He replied, 'It does.' I said, 'Now you are scolding me but I do not receive it. So, the misfortune returns to you and must remain with you. It is just as inevitable as the echo that follows a sound or as the shadow that follows a form. In the end, you cannot avoid it. Therefore, be careful not to do evil.' An evil person who harms a sage is like one who raises his head and spits at heaven. Instead of reaching heaven, the spittle falls back on him. It is the same with one who throws dust into the wind instead of going somewhere else, the dust returns to fall on the thrower's body. The sage cannot be harmed; misdeed will inevitably destroy the doer."

Chapter Thirty-Eight

To Reduce Afflictions by Not Breaking Precepts, But Always Keeping Precepts

(A) To Reduce Afflictions by Not Breaking Precepts

I. An Overview & Meanings of Breaking Precepts:

According to Buddhism, breaking precepts means to violate or to break religious commandments. Breaking precepts also means to turn one's back on the precepts. To offend against or break the moral or ceremonial laws of Buddhism. The Buddha taught in the thirty-sixth of the forty-eight secondary precepts in the Brahma-Net Sutra: "I vow that I would rather pour boiling metal in my mouth than allow such a mouth ever to break the precepts and still partake the food and drink offered by followers. I would rather wrap my body in a red hot metal net than allow such a body to break the precepts and still wear the clothing offered by the followers." What can be called "Breaking-Precepts" in Buddhism? In Buddhism, non-ethical behaviors are serious forms of "Breaking Precepts". Nonvirtuous actions that can cause harm to ourselves or to others. There are three kinds of nonvirtuous actions. We can only restrain such nonvirtuous acts once we have recognized the consequences of these actions: nonvirtuous acts done by the body which compose of three different kinds: killing, stealing and sexual misconduct; nonvirtuous acts by speech which compose of lying, divisive, offensive, and senseless speeches; and nonvirtuous thoughts which compose of covetousness, malice and wrong views. To break the monastic rule of the time for meals, for which the punishment is hell, or to become a hungry ghost like with throats small as needles and distended bellies, or become an animal.

Sanghabheda is another form of breaking precepts. To disrupt the harmony of the community of monks and cause schism by heretical opinions, e.g. by heretical opinions. According to the Buddha, causing a split in the Sangha was one of the six heinous crimes. This is the most serious violation in all violations in Buddhism. This demonstrates the

Buddha's concerns of the Sangha and the future of Buddhism. However, it is not necessarily the case that all such splits were intentional or adversarial in origin, and it seems likely that geographical isolation, possibly resulting from the missionary activities may have played its part in generating differences in the moralities recited by various gatherings. After several Buddhist Councils, differences appeared and different sects also appeared. The differences were usually insignificant, but they were the main causes that gave rise to the origination of different sects. If we take a close look on these differences, we will see that they are only differences in Vinaya concerning the Bhiksus and Bhiksunis and had no relevance for the laity. Besides, to break (disrupt or destroy) a monk's meditation or preaching as in the case of Devadatta is also considered as breaking precepts.

There are four metaphors addressed by the Buddha to monks and nuns about he who breaks the vow of chastity. *The first metaphor:* He who breaks the vow of chastity is as a needle without an eye. *The second metaphor:* As a dead man. *The third metaphor:* As a broken stone which cannot be united. *The fourth metaphor:* As a tree cut in two which cannot live any longer. According to the Mahaparinibbana Sutta and the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five dangers to the immoral through lapsing from morality (bad morality or failure in morality). *The first danger:* He suffers great loss of property through neglecting his affairs. *The second danger:* He gets bad reputation for immorality and misconduct. *The third danger:* Whatever assembly he approaches, whether of Khattiyas, Bramins, Ascetics, or Householders, he does so differently and shyly. *The fourth danger:* At the end of his life, he dies confused. *The fifth danger:* After death, at the breaking up of the body, he arises in an evil state, a bad fate, in suffering and hell.

II. Afflictions of Remnants of Habits: Clouds of Ignorance That Cause Beings to Break Precepts & to Commit Offenses:

Afflictions of remnants of habits are old habits or the accumulation of the past thoughts, affections, deeds, and passions. According to Buddhism, these are big demonic obstructions which are very difficult to subdue for Buddhists on their paths of cultivation. Practitioner should

be clear about the basic problem of the 'vasana' (old habits). We cultivate to eliminate those bad habits and faults, to wash the mind so it can have clean and pure thoughts, to purge ourselves of jealousy towards worthy and capable individuals, to bannish forever all thoughts of envy and obstructiveness, of ignorance and afflictions. If we can do this, then our true mind, our wisdom, will manifest. The remnants of habits which persist after passion has been subdued, only the Buddha can eliminate or uproot them all. The Sanskrit word for "internal formation" is "Samyojana." It means "to crystallize." Every one of us has internal formations that we need to take care of. With the practice of meditation, we can undo these knots and experience transformation. According to Buddhism, remnants of habits are the impression of any past action or experience remaining unconsciously in the mind, or the present consciousness of past perceptions, or past knowledge derived from memory. Remnants of habits are the force of habit. Good or evil karma from habits or practice in a former existence. The uprising or recurrence of thoughts, passions or delusions after the passion or delusion has itself been overcome, the remainder or remaining influence of illusion. This is the perfuming impression or memory. The habit-energy of memory from past actions (recollection of the past or former impression) which ignites discriminations and prevents Enlightenment. Remnants of habits also mean memory-seeds (vasanavija). Every act, mental and physical, leaves its seeds behind, which is planted in the Alaya for future germination under favorable conditions. This notion plays an important role in the Vijnap. Remnants of habits are habitual perfuming, perfumed habits, or knowledge which is derived from memory. According to the Abhidharma, remnants of habits mean habitual karmas, which are deeds that one habitually or constantly performs either good or bad. Habits, whether good or bad, become second nature. They more or less tend to mould the character of a person. In the absence of weighty karma and a potent-death-proximate karma, this type of karma generally assumes the rebirth generative function. According to the Awakening of Faith, the indescribable vasana or the influence of primal ignorance on the bhutatathata, producing all illusions. The permeation of the pure self-essence of the mind of true thusness by ignorance or wisdom which then appears in the manifest world. However, there are also habits that

help people staying away from afflictions. According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, Chapter 38, there are ten kinds of habit energy of Great Enlightening Beings. Enlightening Beings who abide by these can forever get rid of all afflictive habit energies and attain Buddhas' habit energies of great knowledge, the knowledge that is not energized by habit: the habit energy of determination for enlightenment; the habit energy of roots of goodness; the habit energy of edifying sentient beings; the habit energy of seeing Buddha; the habit energy of undertaking birth in pure worlds; the habit energy of enlightening practice; the habit energy of vows; the habit energy of transcendence; the habit energy of meditation on equality; and the habit energy of various differentiations of state.

Remnants of habits also mean "Internal formations". The Sanskrit word for "internal formation" is "Samyojana." It means "to crystallize." Every one of us has internal formations that we need to take care of. With the practice of Buddhist teachings we can undo these knots and experience transformation. In our consciousness there are blocks of pain, anger, and frustration called internal formations. They are also called knots because they tie us up and obstruct our freedom. After a while, it become very difficult for us to transform, to undo the knots and we cannot ease the constriction of this crystal formation. Not all internal formations are unpleasant. There are also pleasant internal formations, but they still make us suffer. When you taste, hear, or see something pleasant, then that pleasure can become a strong internal knot. When the object of your pleasure disappears, you miss it and you begin searching for it. You spend a lot of time and energy trying to experience it again. If you smoke marijuana or drink alcohol, and begin to like it, then it becomes an internal formation in your body and in your mind. You cannot get it off your mind. You will always look for more. The strength of the internal knot is pushing you and controlling you. So internal formations deprive us of our freedom.

When someone insults us, or does something unkind to us, an internal formation is created in our consciousness. If we don't know how to undo the internal knots and transform them, the knots will stay there for a long time. And the next time someone says something or does something to us of the same nature, that internal formation will grow stronger. As knots or blocks of pain in us, our internal formations

have the power to push us, to dictate our behavior. Falling in love is a big internal formation. Once you are in love, you think only of the other person. You are not free anymore. You cannot do anything; you cannot study, you cannot work, you cannot enjoy the sunshine or the beauty of nature around you. You can think only of the object of your love. So love can also be a huge internal knot. Pleasant or unpleasant, both kinds of knots take away our liberty. That's why we should guard our body and our mind very carefully, to prevent these knots from taking root in us. Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco can create internal formations in our body. And anger, craving, jealousy, despair can create internal formations in our mind. Anger is an internal formation, and since it makes us suffer, we try our best to get rid of it. Psychologists like the expression "getting it out of your system." As a Buddhist, you should generate the energy of mindfulness and take good care of anger every time it manifests through meditation practice. Mindfulness does not fight anger or despair. Mindfulness is there in order to recognize. To be mindful of something is to recognize that something is the capacity of being aware of what is going on in the present moment. According to Most Venerable Thích Nhất Hạnh in "Anger," the best way to be mindful of anger is "when breathing in I know that anger has manifested in me; breathing out I smile towards my anger." This is not an act of suppression or of fighting. It is an act of recognizing. Once we recognize our anger, we are able to take good care of it or to embrace it with a lot of awareness, a lot of tenderness. Mindfulness recognizes, is aware of its presence, accepts and allows it to be there. Mindfulness is like a big brother who does not suppress his younger brother's suffering. He simply says: "Dear brother, I'm here for you." You take your younger brother in your arms and you comfort him. This is exactly our practice. Our anger is us, and our compassion is also us. To meditate does not mean to fight. In Buddhism, the practice of meditation should be the practice of embracing and transforming, not of fighting. When anger comes up in us, we should begin to practice mindful breathing right away: "Breathing in, I know that anger is in me. Breathing out, I am taking good care of my anger. If you don't know how to treat yourself with compassion, how can you treat another person with compassion? When anger arises, continue to practice mindful breathing and mindful walking to generate the energy of

mindfulness. Continue to tenderly embrace the energy of anger within you. Anger may continue to be there for some time, but you are safe, because the Buddha is in you, helping you to take good care of your anger. The energy of mindfulness is the energy of the Buddha. When you practice mindful breathing and embracing your anger, you are under the protection of the Buddha. There is no doubt about it: the Buddha is embracing you and your anger with a lot of compassion. In short, remnants of habits are clouds of afflictions caused by ignorance that leads us to break precepts and to commit offenses. Cultivation means to clear these clouds of afflictions of remnants of habits in order to have the energy of mindfulness, which is the energy of the Buddha, and to be able to see things as they are.

III. Afflictions Caused by Attachment to An Ego and Mine:

Holding to the concept of the reality of the ego, the innate and unconscious clinging to the false idea or false image of self or ego which is, in fact, non-existent. The present consciousness of past perceptions cause us to cling to the idea of self. The false tenet of a soul, or ego, or permanent individual, that the individual is real, the ego an independent unit and not a mere combination of the five skandhas produced by cause and effect disintegrating. This attachment is developed as the result of erroneous reasoning. In the Four Noble Truth, Sakyamuni Buddha taught that “attachment to self” is the root cause of sufferings and afflictions. From attachment springs grief; from grief springs fear. In other words, attachment to an ego and mine are also clouds of afflictions caused by ignorance that play an important role in breaking precepts and committing offenses that cause sentient beings to continue to drift in the samsara of birth and death. For him who is wholly free from afflictions of attachment, there is no grief and much less fear. If you don’t have attachments, naturally you are liberated.

The self and its possession, two of the biggest demonic obstructions on the practitioners' path of cultivation. The main goal of Buddhism is the extinction of separate individuality, which is brought about when we cease to identify anything with ourselves. From long habit it has become quite natural to us to think of our own experience in the term of “I” and “Mine.” Even when we are convinced that strictly speaking

such words are too nebulous to be tenable and that their unthinking use leads to unhappiness in our daily lives, even then do we go on using them. The reasons for this are manifold. One of them is that we see no alternative way of explaining our experiences to ourselves except by way of statements which include such words as “I” and “Mine.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “These are my sons; this is my wealth; with such thought a fool is tormented. Verily, he is not even the owner of himself. Whence sons? Whence wealth? (Dharmapada 62). He who has no thought of “I” and “mine,” for whatever towards his mind and body he does not grieve for that which he has not. He is indeed called a Bhikkhu (Dharmapada 367).”

According to the Pudgala-vada Sect, “Pudgala” is a Sanskrit term for “personalist.” A term applied to several early Indian Buddhist schools, which shared a common belief that there is a self (pudgala) which is the basis for karma and transmigration, or the substance that is the bearer of the cycle of rebirth and that this self is neither the same, nor different from the five aggregates. However, Buddhism denies the existence of such an eternal person or soul. Buddhism sees the person only a conventional name or a combination of physical and psychological factors that change from moment to moment. The pudgala doctrine was eventually declared heretical in Buddhism, though at one time Pudgalavadins appear to have been quite numerous. If we carefully look into the Buddha’s teachings, we will see that the Buddha always denies such a permanent and partless self. The teaching of “pudgala” caused such a violent reaction on the part of its opponents was that while the “anatman” doctrine of the Buddha was entirely true in a conventional sense, there was still a “pudgala,” or person. This person is an ultimately real thing, the substratum which allows for continuity between rebirths, for memory, and for the future ripening of intentional actions or “karman” which are performed in the present or the past. If there was no person at all, as its opponents claimed, then Buddhism would be open to the charge of “Nihilism” and immortality, for there would be nobody who could undertake moral actions. It insisted that the “pudgala” was indeterminate in relation to the skandhas, neither outside them nor within them; neither identical with them, nor different from them. In fact, this pudgala was only perceptible to the Buddhas. In support of its position it frequently quoted sayings of the Buddha such as “Monks, there is a single person born into the world for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men. One might see this kind of position reflected in the Tathagatagarbha doctrines of the Mahayana, the Ch’an and T’ien-T’ai schools in China. Thus, it is believed that

this school was formed on the basis of a doctrinal division within the Sthaviravadin School in the third century B.C., and survived until the ninth or tenth centuries A.D. It originally called Vatsiputriya, after its teacher, Vatsiputra, it was later named the Sammitiya, and give rise to several sub-sects of its own.

IV. To Reduce Afflictions by Not Breaking Precepts:

According to the Mahaparinibbana Sutta and the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five dangers to the immoral through lapsing from morality (bad morality or failure in morality). First, precept breaker suffers great loss of property through neglecting his affairs. Second, precept breaker gets bad reputation for immorality and misconduct. Third, whatever assembly the precept breaker approaches, whether of Khattiyas, Bramins, Ascetics, or Householders, he does so differently and shyly. Fourth, at the end of his life, he dies confused. Fifth, after death, at the breaking up of the body, he arises in an evil state, a bad fate, in suffering and hell. As mentioned above, remnants of habits are clouds of ignorance that cause us to break precepts and to commit offenses. Cultivation means to clear these clouds of afflictions of remnants of habits in order to have the energy of mindfulness, which is the energy of the Buddha, and to be able to see things as they are. Besides, attachment to an ego and mine play an important role in breaking precepts and committing offenses that cause sentient beings to continue to drift in the samsara of birth and death. For him who is wholly free from afflictions of attachment, there is no grief and much less fear. If you don't have attachments, naturally you are liberated. So, devout Buddhists should always remember that to reduce afflictions by not breaking precepts is one of the most wonderful methods of Buddhist cultivation.

(B) To Reduce Afflictions by Always Keeping Precepts

I. Summaries of Roles of Precepts in Buddhist Cultivation:

In Buddhism, there is no so-called cultivation without discipline, and also there is no Dharma without discipline. Precepts are rules which keep us from committing offenses. For Buddhist practitioners, precepts are considered as cages to capture the thieves of greed, anger, stupidity, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, lust, and lying. Although there are the Five Precepts, the Ten Precepts, the Bodhisattva Precepts, and so on, the Five Precepts are the most fundamental. They are: do not kill, do not steal, do not engage in sexual misconduct, do not engage in false speech, and do not consume

intoxicants. If one can hold the precepts, one will not make transgressions. Learning by commandments is one of the three important practices of all Buddhists. The other two are meditation and wisdom. Learning by the commandments or prohibitions, so as to guard against the evil consequences of error by mouth, body or mind. Morality is one of the most important factors in meditation. Especially for Buddhist practitioners, virtues also include compassion, loving-kindness, modest, patience, tolerance, courage, and gratitude, and so on. A good Buddhist practitioner is needed to be a good virtue one, and cultivation progress is valued from the cultivator's behavior toward people around. Buddhist practitioners always live peacefully and tolerantly with people, not retreat in deep jungle to be away from people. Therefore, in order to cultivate, first of all, we must be able to live together with everyone before turning into solitude life for deep meditation. While living in the community, we have chances and conditions to improve our morality. Beside the times of practicing, we use the rest of our time to live nicely and kindly to people. According to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, it is essential for us to discipline ourselves in speech and action before we undertake the arduous task of training our mind through meditation. The aim of Buddhism morality is the control of our verbal and physical action, in other words, purity of speech and action. This is called training in virtue. Three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path form the Buddhist code of conduct. They are right speech, right action, and right livelihood. If you wish to be successful in meditation practice, you should try to observe at least the five basic precepts of morality, abstinence from killing, stealing, illicit sexual indulgence, speaking falsehood and from taking any liquor, including narcotic drugs that cause intoxication and heedlessness.

Buddhist practitioners should always remember that sila plays an extremely important role in cultivation. The good root of keeping the commandments, from which springs the power for one who keeps the five to be reborn as a man; or for one who keeps the ten to be reborn in the heaven, or as a king. As a matter of fact, sila or morality forms the foundation of further progress on the right path. The contents of morality in Buddhism compose of right speech, right action, and right livelihood. The moral code taught in Buddhism is very vast and varied and yet the function of Buddhist morality is one and not many. It is the control of man's verbal and physical actions. All morals set forth in Buddhism lead to this end, virtuous behavior, yet moral code is not an end in itself, but a means, for it aids concentration (samadhi). Samadhi, on the other hand, is a means to the acquisition of wisdom (panna), true wisdom, which in turn brings about deliverance of mind, the final goal of the teaching of the Buddha. Virtue, Concentration, and Wisdom therefore is a blending of man's emotions and intellect. Dainin

Katagiri wrote in *Returning to Silence*: "The Triple Treasure in Buddhism, 'I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dharma, I take refuge in the Sangha,' is the foundation of the precepts. The precepts in Buddhism are not a moral code that someone or something outside ourselves demands that we follow. The precepts are the Buddha-nature, the spirit of the universe. To receive the precepts is to transmit something significant beyond the understanding of our sense, such as the spirit of the universe or what we call Buddha-nature. What we have awakened to, deeply, through our body and mind, is transmitted from generation to generation, beyond our control. Having experienced this awakening, we can appreciate how sublime human life is. Whether we know it or not, or whether we like it or not, the spirit of the universe is transmitted. So, we all can learn what the real spirit of a human being is... Buddha is the universe and Dharma is the teaching from the universe, and Sangha is the group of people who make the universe and its teaching alive in their lives. In our everyday life we must be mindful of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha whether we understand this or not."

II. Thoroughly Understanding Advantages & Disadvantages of Afflictions Caused by Heedlessness & Heedfulness Is One of the Best Methods in Purifying Morality:

Thoroughly Understanding Advantages & Disadvantages of Heedlessness & Heedfulness: Before entering Nirvana, the Buddha emphasized in front of his disciples that Buddhists must definitely build up their foundation of knowledge in cultivation in which we cannot lack understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of heedlessness and heedfulness. In Buddhism, to give rein to one's emotion means to surrender one's heedlessnesses. According to Buddhism, this is one of the big demonic obstructions for Buddhists on their paths of cultivation. In the *Dharmapada Sutra*, the Buddha taught: "Craving grows like a creeper which creeps from tree to tree just like the ignorant man wanders from life to life like a fruit-loving monkey in the forest (*Dharmapada* 334). Self-conquest is, indeed, better than the conquest of all other people. To conquer oneself, one must be always self-controlled and disciplined one's action. By sustained effort, earnestness, temperance and self-control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm (*Dharmapada* 25)." The Buddha knows very well the mind of human beings. He knows that the foolish indulge in heedlessness, while the wise protect heedfulness. So, he advises the wise with right effort, heedfulness and discipline to build up an island which no flood can overflow. Who is heedless before but afterwards heedless no more, will outshine this world, like a moon free from clouds. To the Buddhas, a person who has conquered

thousands of thousands of people in the battlefield cannot be compared with a person who is victorious over himself because he is truly a supreme winner. A person who controls himself will always behave in a self-tamed way. And a self well-tamed and restrained becomes a worthy and reliable refuge, very difficult to obtain. A person who knows how to sit alone, to sleep alone, to walk alone, to subdue oneself alone will take delight in living in deep forests. Such a person is a trustworthy teacher because being well tamed himself, he then instructs others accordingly. So the Buddha advises the well-tamed people to control themselves. Only the well tamed people, the heedful people, know the way to stop contentions, quarrels and disputes and how to live in harmony, in friendliness and in peace.

In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught about Heedlessness: One who conquers himself is greater than one who is able to conquer a thousand men in the battlefield. Oneself is indeed one's own saviour, who else could be the saviour? With self-control and cultivation, one can obtain a wonderful saviour. Whoever was formerly heedless and afterwards overcomes his sloth; such a person illuminates this world just like the moon when freed from clouds. Before teaching others, one should act himself as what he teaches. It is easy to subdue others, but to subdue oneself seems very difficult. He who sits alone, sleeps alone, walks and stands alone, unwearied; he controls himself, will find joy in the forest. You are your own protector. You are your own refuge. Try to control yourself as a merchant controls a noble steed.

Also, in the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught about Heedlessness: Heedfulness or watchfulness is the path of immortality. Heedlessness is the path of death. Those who are heedful do not die; those who are heedless are as if already dead (Dharmapada 21). Those who have distinctly understood this, advance and rejoice on heedfulness, delight in the Nirvana (Dharmapada 22). If a man is earnest, energetic, mindful; his deeds are pure; his acts are considerate and restraint; lives according to the Law, then his glory will increase (Dharmapada 24). The ignorant and foolish fall into sloth. The wise man guards earnestness as his greatest treasure (Dharmapada 26). Do not indulge in heedlessness, nor sink into the enjoyment of love and lust. He who is earnest and meditative obtains great joy (Dharmapada 27). When the learned man drives away heedlessness by heedfulness, he is as the wise who, climbing the terraced heights of wisdom, looks down upon the fools, free from sorrow he looks upon sorrowing crowd, as the wise on a mountain peak, surveys the ignorant far down on the ground (Dharmapada 28). The heedful among the heedless, awake among the sleepers, the wise man advances as does a swift racehorse outrun a weak jade (Dharmapada 29). It was through earnestness that Maghavan rised to the lordship of the gods.

Earnestness is ever praised; negligence is always despised (blamed) (Dharmapada 30). A mendicant who delights in earnestness, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, cannot fall away, advances like a fire, burning all his fetters both great and small (Dharmapada 31). A mendicant who delights in earnestness, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, cannot fall away, he is in the presence of Nirvana (Dharmapada 32). Mara never finds the path of those who are virtuous, careful in living and freed by right knowledge (Dharmapada 57). Do not follow the evil law, do not live in heedlessness. Do not embrace false views, do not be a world-upholder (Dharmapada 167). Eagerly try not to be heedless, follow the path of righteousness. He who observes this practice lives happily both in this world and in the next (Dharmapada 168).

Thoroughly Understanding Advantages & Disadvantages of Afflictions Caused By Heedlessness & Heedfulness Is One of the Best Methods In Purifying Morality: Virtue of morality or the power of the discipline. Morality is one of the most important factors in meditation, so, a devout practitioner must be a good virtue one. One's cultivation progress is valued from his or her behavior toward people around. Through the purification of morality and behavior, practitioners always live peacefully and tolerantly with people, not necessarily retreat in deep jungle to be away from people. In fact, while living in the community, we have chances and conditions to improve our morality. Therefore, a beginner must be able to live together with everyone before turning into solitude life for profound cultivation. That is to say, besides practicing in cultivation, we use the rest of our time to live nicely and kindly to people. Some people say that they do not need to do good deeds, nor do they need to prevent unwholesome deeds. Those who dare to say so, they are really not devout Buddhists. In the contrary, there are a lot of small virtues need be prepared before and during we practice meditation. The so-called 'small virtues' are, in fact, play a big role on our way of cultivation. We would be happy with other's success and sympathy with other's miseries. We will keep ourselves modest when achieving success. For these above mentioned reasons, after arriving in Kusinagara, at his death approached, the Buddha asked the assembly of monks if they had any questions. The gathering remained silent. The Buddha took a quick look at all of his

disciples before summarized his Last Teachings which include some of his reminders on the previously preached teachings. The Buddha emphasized in front of his disciples that Buddhists must definitely build up their foundation of knowledge in cultivation in which we cannot lack understanding of the advantages of Purification of Morality.

Pure precepts (impeccable observation of the precepts) mean pure commandments that help keep practitioners in purity. According to Buddhism, there are three collections of pure precept or three accumulations of pure precepts of the Bodhisattvas. Those cultivating Hinayana's Sravaka Way do not have these three accumulations of purity precepts. Only Mahayana Bodhisattvas practice them. Bodhisattvas always maintain the Buddha's pure precepts, and their thoughts, words, and deeds are faultless, but because they want to edify immoral sentient beings, they appear to perform the acts of ordinary ignorant people; though they are already filled with pure virtues and abide in the course of Enlightening Beings, yet they appear to live in such realms as hells, animality, ghosthood, and in difficulty and poverty, in order to enable the beings therein to gain liberation; really the Enlightening Beings are not born in those states. These three accumulations of pure precepts encompass the "Four Propagation Vows." *First, the Pure Precepts Which Include All Rules and Observances, or to Avoid Evil by Keeping the Discipline:* Which means to gather all precepts such as five precepts, eight precepts, ten precepts of Sramanera, 250 precepts of Bhiksus, 348 precepts of Bhiksunis, 10 major and 48 minor precepts of Bodhisattvas, and maintain them purely without violating a single precept. *Second, the Pure Precepts Which Include All Wholesome Dharmas:* Accumulating wholesome precepts means Bodhisattvas who must learn all the wholesome dharmas that the Buddha taught in various sutras, so they will know all the clear paths and means necessary to "lead and guide sentient beings" to liberation and enlightenment. Thus, no matter how insignificant a dharma teaching may seem, they are not to abandon any dharma door. This vow is made by all Mahayana practicing Buddhists that "Innumerable Dharma Door, I vow to master." *Third, the Pure Precepts Which Include All Living Beings:* This means to develop the compassionate nature to want to benefit and aid all sentient beings, and this is the vow "Infinite sentient beings, I vow to take across."

III.To Reduce Afflictions by Always Keeping Precepts:

According to the Mahaparinibbana Sutta and the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five advantages to one of good morality and of success in morality. First, through careful attention to his affairs, he gains much wealth. Second, precept keeper gets a good reputation for morality and good conduct. Third, whatever assembly he approaches, whether of Khattiyas, Brahmins, Ascetics, or Householders, he does so with confidence and assurance. Fourth, at the end of his life, he dies unconfused. Fifth, after death, at breaking up of the body, he arises in a good place, a heavenly world. According to the Uttarasanghati Sutta, there are five benefits for the virtuous in the perfecting of virtue. First, one who is virtuous, possessed of virtue, comes into a large fortune as consequence of diligence. Second, one who is virtuous, possessed of virtue, a fair name is spread abroad. Third, one who is virtuous, possessed of virtue, enters an assembly of Khattiyas, Brahmins, householders or ascetics without fear or hesitation. Fourth, one who is virtuous, dies unconfused. Fifth, one who is virtuous, possessed of virtue, on the break up of the body after death, reappears in a happy destiny or in the heavenly world. In the Dharmapada Sutta, the Buddha taught: “The scent of flowers does not blow against the wind, nor does the fragrance of sandalwood and jasmine, but the fragrance of the virtuous blows against the wind; the virtuous man pervades every direction (Dharmapada 54). Of little account is the fragrance of sandal-wood, lotus, jasmine; above all these kinds of fragrance, the fragrance of virtue is by far the best (Dharmapada 55). Of little account is the fragrance of sandal; the fragrance of the virtuous rises up to the gods as the highest (Dharmapada 56). Mara never finds the path of those who are virtuous, careful in living and freed by right knowledge (Dharmapada 57). To be virtuous until old age is pleasant; to have steadfast faith is pleasant; to attain wisdom is pleasant; not to do evil is pleasant (Dharmapada 333).

Chapter Thirty-Nine

To Reduce Afflictions with Balancing Lust

I. An Overview & Meanings of Desire:

Desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings' greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings' lives, especially, those of human beings' are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. Greed is the first of the three poisons. Coveting others' possessions is when we plan how to procure something belonging to another person. While coveting is a mental action no one else can see, it can lead us to flatter, bribe, cheat or steal from others to obtain what we desire. Greed, the first unwholesome root, covers all degrees of selfish desire, longing, attachment, and clinging. Its characteristic is grasping an object. Its function is sticking, as meat sticks to a hot pan. It is manifested as not giving up. Its proximate cause is seeing enjoyment in things that lead to bondage. People usually have greed for wealth, sex, fame, food, sleep or greed for forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch, and so on, and so on. According to Most Venerable in The Buddha and His Teachings, there are three conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of covetousness: first, another's possession; second, adverting to it, thinking "would this be mine"; and third, to actually take another's possession without permission. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five kinds of begrudging: first, begrudging as to dwelling-place; second, begrudging as to family; third, begrudging as to gains; fourth, begrudging as to beauty; and fifth, begrudging as to Dhamma. There are also five kinds of selfishness: first, this abode (house or place) is mine and no one else's; second, this almsgiving household is mine and no one else's; third, I am the only one who receive this

alms; fourth, I am the only one who deserve this praise; no one else who deserves this; and fifth, I am the only one who has the knowledge of truth, but I don't want to share with any one else. According to The Path of Purification, there are five kinds of avarice: first, avarice about dwellings; second, avarice about families; third, avarice about gain; fourth, avarice about Dharma; and fifth, avarice about praise.

Desire for and love of the things of this life and craving for worldly properties is unlimited. Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. The Buddha taught: "Craving and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness." Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. In the Middle Length Discourses, the Buddha taught: "O Bhikkhus, with sense desires as cause, with sense desires as motives, kings are fighting with kings, khattiya are fighting with khattiya, brahmanas are fighting with brahmanas, householders are fighting with householders, mother is fighting with son, son is fighting with mother, father is fighting with brother, brother is fighting with sister, sister is fighting with brother, friend is fighting with friend. When they engage themselves in fighting, in quarrels, in disputes, they attack each other with hands, they attack each other with stones, they attack each other with sticks, they attack each other with swords. Thus, they are going to death, or to suffer like death. O Bhikkhus, with sense desires as cause, with sense desires as motives, they take hold of spears, they take hold of shields, they wear bows and arrows. They arrange themselves in two lines, and arrows are thrown at each other, knives are thrown at each other, swords are slashed at each other. They pierce each other with arrows, they slash each other with knives, they cut each other heads with swords. Thus, they are going to death, or to suffer like death." Buddhist practitioners should always remember that to cultivate without thoughts of seeking fame and benefit, for they have already eradicated the five roots of the hell: wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep in all circumstances. We should cultivate the Way with our own effort. Do not crave

fame and profits. We should follow the spirit of the Bodhisattvas Manjusri, Samantabhadra, Avalokitesvara, Ksitigarbha, and other Bodhisattvas for they feel that living beings' accomplishments are the same as their own accomplishment. They do not make distinctions between self and others. Bodhisattvas joyfully support the merit and virtue they see and hear others doing.

The defilements we call lust or greed, anger and delusion, are just outward names and appearances, just as we call a house beautiful, ugly, big, small, etc. These are only appearances of things. If we want a big house, we call this one small. We create such concepts because of our craving. Craving causes us to discriminate, while the truth is merely what is. Look at it this way. Are you a person? Yes. This is the appearance of things. But you are really only a combination of elements or a group of changing aggregates. If the mind is free it does not discriminate. No big and small, no you and me, nothing. We say 'anatta' or 'not self', but really, in the end, there is neither 'atta' nor 'anatta'. Greed should be balanced by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from greed.

II. To Reduce These Robbers of Afflictions with Balancing Lust:

Only if we have no desire for ourselves; if we are working and earning money in order to help other people; if we make cultivation our business and our business is cultivation only, then how clear and happy our life will be! However, most people don't understand this. They are only interested in making a lot of money or becoming successful in worldly business. Remember, this is only a small 'I'. Devout Buddhists should make a lot of money to help all people, then even we create our worldly business, it is a good business. It is a selfish desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings' greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small

rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings' lives, especially, those of human beings' are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more sufferings and afflictions for us and for others. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. The Buddha taught: "Greed and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness." Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. Cultivation helps us balance 'Lust' by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from lust. Furthermore, through Zen, we can see the string of craving and attachment confines us to samsara's prison. In other words, craving and attachment are not only roots that prevent us from being sufficiently moved to renounce samsara, but they are also two of the main things that bind us to samsara. In order to overcome craving and attachment, we should contemplate on the impurity of the body. When we are attached to someone, for example, consider how that person is just a sack full of six kinds of filthy substances. Then our attachment and craving will diminish; at the same time, sufferings and afflictions will also be reduced.

Chapter Forty

To Reduce Afflictions with Balancing Anger

I. An Overview & Meanings of Ill Will:

Ill-will or anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Ill-will or Hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: “Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten of thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles.” In the Dhammapada Sutra, the Buddha’s teachings, to subdue anger and resentment,

we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus the Buddha taught: "When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own." A man was rowing his boat upstream on a very misty morning. Suddenly, he saw another boat coming downstream, not trying to avoid him. It was coming straight at him. He shouted, "Be careful!" but the boat came right into him, and his boat was almost sunk. The man became very angry, and began to shout at the other person, to give him a piece of his mind. But when he looked closely, he saw that there was no one in the other boat. Charlotte Joko Beck wrote in 'Nothing Special': "There's a killer shark in everybody. And the killer shark is unexperienced fear. Your way of covering it up is to look so nice and do so much and be so wonderful that nobody can possibly see who you really are, which is someone who is scared to death. As we uncover these layers of rage, it's important not to act out; we shouldn't inflict our rage on others. In genuine practice, our rage is simply a stage that passes. But for a time, we are more uncomfortable than when we started. That's inevitable; we're becoming more honest, and our false surface style is beginning to dissolve. The process doesn't go on forever, but it certainly can be most uncomfortable while it lasts. Occasionally we may explode, but that's better than evading or covering our reaction." Zen practitioners should always remember that hatred is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger is also one of the mula-klesa, or root causes of suffering. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. As in the case of lust or sense-desire, it is unwise or unsystematic attention that brings about ill-will, which when not checked propagates itself, saps the mind and clouds the vision. It distorts the entire mind and its properties and thus hinders awakening to truth, and blocks the path to freedom. Lust and ill-will based on ignorance, not only hamper mental growth, but act as the root cause of strife and dissension between man and man and nation and nation. Besides, Zen practitioner should always pay close attention to your breathing because there is surely a so-called reciprocal character of mind and breathing (Prana), which means that a certain type of mind or mental activity is invariably accompanied by a breathing of corresponding character, whether transcendental or mundane. For instance, a particular mood, feeling, or thought is always accompanied, manifested, or reflected by a breathing of

corresponding character and rhythm. Thus, anger produces not merely an inflamed thought-feeling, but also a harsh and accentuated "roughness" of breathing. On the other hand, when there is a calm concentration on an intellectual problem, the thought and the breathing exhibit a like calmness.

The Buddha taught that in order to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves.

II. To Cultivate to Reduce Afflictions with Balancing Anger:

Anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Thus, according to the Buddha's teachings in the Dharmapada Sutra, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry when we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus, the Buddha taught: "When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own." Anger is a fire that burns in all human beings, causing a feeling of displeasure or hostility toward others. Angry people speak and act

coarsely or pitiless, creating all kinds of sufferings. Of the three great poisons of Greed, Hatred and Ignorance, each has its own unique evil characteristic. However, of these poisons, hatred is unimaginably destructive and is the most powerful enemy of one's cultivated path and wholesome conducts. The reason is that once hatred arises from within the mind, thousands of karmic obstructions will follow to appear immediately, impeding the practitioner from making progress on the cultivated path and learning of the philosophy of Buddhism. Therefore, the ancient virtuous beings taught: "One vindictive thought just barely surfaced, ten of thousands of doors of obstructions are all open." Supposing while you were practicing meditation, and your mind suddenly drifted to a person who has often insulted and mistreated you with bitter words. Because of these thoughts, you begin to feel sad, angry, and unable to maintain peace of mind; thus, even though your body is sitting there quietly, your mind is filled with afflictions and hatred. Some may go so far as leaving their seat, stopping meditation, abandoning whatever they are doing, and getting completely caught up in their afflictions. Furthermore, there are those who get so angry and so depressed to the point where they can't eat and sleep; for their satisfaction, sometimes they wish their wicked friend to die right before their eyes. Through these, we know that hatred is capable of trampling the heart and mind, destroying people's cultivated path, and preventing everyone from practicing wholesome deeds. Devout Buddhist practitioners should always remember that in order to reduce afflictions caused by hatred, in daily living and cultivation, we must try to balance hatred on a regular basis. Thus, the Buddha taught the way to tame afflictions of hatred in the Lotus Sutra as follows: "Use great compassion as a home, use peace and tolerance as the armor, use all the Dharma of Emptiness as the sitting throne." We should think that when we have hatred and afflictions, the first thing that we should be aware of is we are bringing miseries on ourselves. The very fire of hatred and afflictions internally burns at our soul, and externally influences our bodies, standing and sitting restlessly, crying, moaning, screaming, etc. In this way, not only are we unable to change and tame the enemy, but also unable to gain any peace and happiness for ourselves. Cultivation also helps us balance 'Anger' by contemplation of loving-kindness. When angry states of mind arise strongly, balance them by developing feelings of loving-kindness. If someone does something bad or gets angry, do not get angry ourselves. If we do, we are being more ignorant than they. Be wise. Keep compassion in mind, for that person is suffering. Fill our mind with loving-kindness as if he was a dear brother. Concentrate on the feeling of loving-kindness as a meditation subject. Spread it to all beings in the world. Only through loving-kindness is hatred overcome.

Chapter Forty-One

To Reduce Afflictions by Replacing Ignorance With Wisdom

I. Ignorance In Buddhist Point of View:

An Overview & Meanings of Ignorance: According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In other words, Avidya is noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampada), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In Madhyamaka, “Avidya” refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. “Avidya” is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world, which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its appearances. In the Yogachara’s view, “avidya” means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it. In Zen, ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not developed our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the true nature of things. In short, delusion or ignorance is not seeing things as they really are. It is failing to understand the truth about life. As long as we have not developed our minds to obtain wisdom, we remain ignorant of the true

nature of things. According to Buddhism, ignorance means regarding the self as real. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance is only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Ignorance of the way of escape from sufferings, one of the three affluences that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. Sometimes ignorance means “Maya” or “Illusion.” It means complete darkness without illumination. The ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance is one of the three fires of afflictions which must be allowed to die out before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self. Due to ignorance, people do not see things as they really are, and cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They become blind under the delusion of self, clinging to things which are impermanent, changeable, and perishable. Once anger arises, one has nothing but “ignorance.”

The Buddha's Teachings on Ignorance: In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “Long is the night to the wakeful; long is the road to him who is tired; long is samsara to the foolish who do not know true Law (60). If a traveler does not meet a companion who is better or at least equal, let him firmly pursue his solitary career, rather than being in fellowship with the foolish (61). These are my sons; this is my wealth; with such thought a fool is tormented. Verily, he is not even the owner of himself. Whence sons? Whence wealth? (62). A foolish man who knows that he is a fool, for that very reason a wise man; the fool who think himself wise, he is indeed a real fool (63). If a fool associates with a wise man even all his life, he will understand the Dharma as little as a spoon tastes the flavour of soup (64). An intelligent person associates with a wise man, even for a moment, he will quickly understand the Dharma, as the tongue tastes the flavour of soup (65). A fool with little wit, goes through life with the very self as his own greatest enemy. In the same manner, evil doers do evil deeds, the fruit of which is bitter (66). The deed is not well done of which a man must repent, and the reward of which he receives, weeping, with tearful face; one reaps the fruit thereof (67). The deed is well done when, after having done it, one repents not, and when, with joy and

pleasure, one reaps the fruit thereof (68). As long as the evil deed done does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is as sweet as honey; but when it ripens, then he comes to grief (69). Let a fool, month after month, eat only as much food as can be picked up on the tip of a kusa blade; but he is not worth a sixteenth part of them who have comprehended the truth (70). An evil deed committed may not immediately bear fruit, just as newl drawn milk does not turn sour at once. In the same manner, smouldering, it follows the fool like fire covered with ashes (71). The knowledge and fame that the fool gains, so far from benefiting; they destroy his bright lot and cleave his head (72). The fool always desire for an undue reputation or undeserved honour, precedence among the monks, authority in the monasteries, honour among other families (73). Let both monks and laymen think, "by myself was this done; in every work, great or small, let them refer to me." Such is the ambition of the fool; his desires and pride increase (74).

II. Wisdom In Buddhist Point of View:

According to Buddhism, wisdom means knowledge of things and realization of truth; the wisdom that is arosen from right perception or knowing of all things; the wisdom that is based on right understanding and right thought. Higher intellect or spiritual wisdom; knowledge of the ultimate truth (reality). Jnana is the essential clarity and unerring sensibility of a mind that no longer clings to concepts of any kind. It is direct and sustained awareness of the truth, for a Bodhisattva, that meaning and existence are found only in the interface between the components of an unstable and constantly shifting web of relationships, which is everyday life, while prajna is the strength of intellectual discrimination elevated to the status of a liberating power, a precision tool capable of slicing through obstructions that take the form of afflictions and attachments to deeply engrained hereditary patterns of thought and action. Jnana is a very flexible term, as it means sometimes ordinary worldly knowledge, knowledge of relativity, which does not penetrate into the truth of existence, but also sometimes transcendental knowledge, in which case being synonymous with Prajna or Arya-jnana. In Indian Buddhism it is commonly held that this results from the attainment of meditative concentration (samadhi), but Hui-Neng taught that the two are identical and that both are inherent in

every moment of thought. This notion has subsequently been accepted by most Zen traditions.

In Buddhism, wisdom means decision or judgment as to phenomena or affairs and their principles, of things and their fundamental laws. Prajna is often interchanged with wisdom. Wisdom means knowledge, the science of the phenomenal, while prajna more generally to principles or morals. The difference between Buddhi and Jnana is sometimes difficult to point out definitively, for they both signify worldly relative knowledge as well as transcendental knowledge. While Prajna is distinctly pointing out the transcendental wisdom. The Prajna-paramita-sutra describes “prajna” as supreme, highest, incomparable, unequalled, unsurpassed. Wisdom or real wisdom. According to the Mahayana Buddhism, only an immediate experienced intuitive wisdom, not intelligence can help man reach enlightenment. Therefore, to achieve prajna is synonymous with to reach enlightenment. One of the two perfections required for Buddhahood. The wisdom which enables us to transcend desire, attachment and anger so that we will be emancipated (not through the mercy of any body, but rather through our own power of will and wisdom) and so that we will not be reborn again and again in “samsara” or transmigration.

Knowing reveals itself in many ways. Knowing can be active whenever there is hearing, seeing, feeling, comparing, remembering, imagining, reflecting, worrying, hoping and so forth. In the Vijñānavādin school of Buddhism, which specialized in the study of “consciousnesses,” many more fields of activity were attributed to knowing. For instance, in *alayavijñāna*, or “storehouse of consciousness,” the fields of activity of knowing are maintaining, conserving, and manifesting.” Also according to the Vijñānavādins, all sensation, perception, thought, and knowledge arise from this basic store-house consciousness. *Manovijñāna* is one of the ways of knowing based on this consciousness and its function is to grasp onto the object and take it as a “self.” *Manovijñāna* serves as the headquarters for all sensations, perceptions, and thoughts, and makes creation, imagination, as well as dissection of reality possible. *Amala* is the consciousness that shines like a pure white light on the store-house consciousness. In any phenomena, whether psychological, physiological, or physical,

there is dynamic movement, life. We can say that this movement, this life, is the universal manifestation, the most commonly recognized action of knowing. We must not regard “knowing” as something from the outside which comes to breathe life into the universe. It is the life of the universe itself.

According to Buddhism, understanding is not an accumulation of knowledge. To the contrary, it is the result of the struggle to become free of knowledge. Understanding shatters old knowledge to make room for the new that accords better with reality. When Copernicus discovered that the Earth goes around the sun, most of the astronomical knowledge of the time had to be discarded, including the ideas of above and below. Today, physics is struggling valiantly to free itself from the ideas of identity and cause effect that underlie classical science. Science, like the Way, urges us to get rid of all preconceived notions. Understanding, in human, is translated into concepts, thoughts, and words. Understanding is not an aggregate of bits of knowledge. It is a direct and immediate penetration. In the realm of sentiment, it is feeling. In the realm of intellect, it is perception. It is an intuition rather than the culmination of reasoning. Every now and again it is fully present in us, and we find we cannot express it in words, thoughts, or concepts. “Unable to describe it,” that is our situation at such moments. Insights like this are spoken of in Buddhism as “impossible to reason about, to discuss, or to incorporate into doctrines or systems of thought.” Besides, understanding also means a shield to protect cultivator from the attack of greed, hatred and ignorance. A man often does wrong because of his ignorance or misunderstanding about himself, his desire of gaining happiness, and the way to obtain happiness. Understanding will also help cultivators with the ability to remove all defilements and strengthen their virtues.

Higher intellect or spiritual wisdom; knowledge of the ultimate truth (reality). Jnana is the essential clarity and unerring sensibility of a mind that no longer clings to concepts of any kind. It is direct and sustained awareness of the truth, for a Bodhisattva, that meaning and existence are found only in the interface between the components of an unstable and constantly shifting web of relationships, which is everyday life, while prajna is the strength of intellectual discrimination elevated to the status of a liberating power, a precision tool capable of slicing through obstructions that take the form of afflictions and attachments to deeply engrained hereditary patterns of thought and action. Jnana is a very flexible term, as it means sometimes ordinary worldly knowledge, knowledge of relativity, which does not penetrate into the truth of existence, but also sometimes transcendental knowledge, in which case being synonymous with Prajna or Arya-jnana.

Wisdom is described as the understanding of the Four Noble Truths, the understanding of interdependent origination, and the like. The attainment of wisdom is the ability of transformation of these doctrinal items from mere objects of intellectual knowledge into real, personal experience. In other words, according to Buddhism, wisdom is the ability to change our knowledge of the four Noble Truths and the like from mere sutra learning into actual, living truth. To attain wisdom, we must first cultivate good conduct, then cultivate mental development. It should be noted that reading and understanding the meaning of a sutra doesn't mean attaining wisdom. Wisdom means reading, understanding, and transforming doctrinal items from sutras into real, personal experience. Wisdom gives us the ability of "seeing the truth" or "seeing things as they really are" because the attainment of wisdom is not an intellectual or academic exercise, it is understanding or seeing these truths directly.

In Buddhism, wisdom is the highest virtue of all. It is usual to translate the Sanskrit term "Prajna" (pali-Panna) by "wisdom," and that is not positively inaccurate. When we are dealing with the Buddhist tradition, however, we must always bear in mind that there Wisdom is taken in a special sense that is truly unique in the history of human thought. "Wisdom" is understood by Buddhists as the methodical contemplation of 'Dharmas.' This is clearly shown by Buddhaghosa's formal and academic definition of the term: "Wisdom has the characteristic of penetrating into dharmas as they are themselves. It has the function of destroying the darkness of delusion which covers the own-being of dharmas. It has the manifestation of not being deluded. Because of the statement: 'He who is concentrated knows, sees what really is,' concentration is its direct and proximate cause."

Wisdom understanding that emptiness of inherent existence is the ultimate nature of all phenomena. This specific type of wisdom is the sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing states. It is also the most powerful tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. In addition, it enables us to benefit others effectively, for we can then teach them how to gain this wisdom themselves. This is also the first key to liberation and enlightenment. In order to be able to obtain this type of wisdom, we must invest all our efforts in cultivating Buddhist laws and practicing Buddhist meditation. Conventional intelligence knowing, logic, science, arts, and so forth. This type of wisdom is from birth; however, the person who possesses this type of wisdom is believed that in previous lives, he or she had already cultivated or practiced so many good deeds.

Fundamental wisdom which is inherent in every man and which can manifest itself only after the veil of ignorance, which screens it, has been transformed by means of self-cultivation as taught by the Buddha. According

to the Buddha, wisdom is extremely important for it can be commensurate with enlightenment itself. It is wisdom that finally opens the door to freedom, and wisdom that removes ignorance, the fundamental cause of suffering. It is said that while one may sever the branches of a tree and even cut down its trunk, but if the root is not removed, the tree will grow again. Similarly, although one may remove attachment by means of renunciation, and aversion by means of love and compassion, as long as ignorance is not removed by means of wisdom, attachment and aversion will sooner or later arise again. As for the Buddha, immediately after witnessing the unhappy incident involving the worm and the bird at the plowing ceremony, the prince sat under a nearby rose-apple tree and began to contemplate. This is a very early experience of meditation of the Buddha. Later, when he renounced the world and went forth to seek the ultimate truth, one of the first disciplines he developed was that of meditation. Thus, the Buddha himself always stressed that meditation is the only way to help us to achieve wisdom.

The resulting wisdom, or training in wisdom. Even though wisdom involves cause and effect. Those who cultivated and planted good roots in their past lives would have a better wisdom. However, in this very life, if you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom is one of the three studies in Buddhism. The other two are precepts and meditation. According to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or panna-sikkha. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing.

According to Buddhism, precepts are rules which keep us from committing offenses. When we are able to refrain from committing offenses, our mind is pure to cultivate meditation in the next step to achieve the power of concentration. The resulting wisdom, or training in wisdom. If you want to get rid of greed, anger, and ignorance, you have no choice but cultivating discipline and samadhi so that you can obtain wisdom paramita. With wisdom paramita, you can destroy these thieves and terminate all afflictions. Wisdom (training in wisdom). In other words, Wisdom or Prajna is the power to penetrate into the nature of one's being, as well as the truth itself thus intuited. Study of principles and solving of doubts. Also, according to Bhikkhu Piyadassi Mahathera in *The Spectrum of Buddhism*, high concentration is the means to the acquisition of wisdom or insight. Wisdom consists of right

understanding and right thought, the first two factors of the path. This is called the training in wisdom or *panna-sikkha*. Wisdom helps us get rid of the clouded view of things, and to see life as it really is, that is to see life and things pertaining to life as arising and passing. According to Prof. Junjiro Takakusu in *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Buddhism lays stress on the Threefold Learning (*siksa*) of Higher Morality, Higher Thought, and Higher Insight. That is to say, without higher morals one cannot get higher thought and without higher thought one cannot attain higher insight. In other words, morality is often said to lead to *samadhi*, and *samadhi* to *prajna*. Higher thought here comprises the results of both analytical investigation and meditative intuition. Buddhism further instructs the aspirants, when they are qualified, in the Threefold Way (*marga*) of Life-View, Life-Culture and Realization of Life-Ideal or No-More Learning. These are three stages to be passed through in the study of the Fourfold Truth by the application of the Eightfold Noble Path; in the second stage it is investigated more fully and actualized by the practice of the Seven Branches of Enlightenment, life-culture here again means the results of right meditation; and in the last stage the Truth is fully realized in the Path of No-More-Learning. In other words, without a right view of life there will be no culture, and without proper culture there will be no realization of life. In the *Dharmapada Sutra*, the Buddha taught: “Swans can only fly in the sky, man who has supernatural powers can only go through air by their psychic powers. The wise rise beyond the world when they have conquered all kinds of Mara (*Dharmapada* 175).”

In summary, in Buddhism, wisdom is of the highest importance; for purification comes through wisdom, through understanding; and wisdom in Buddhism is the key to enlightenment and final liberation. But the Buddha never praised mere intellect. According to him, knowledge should go hand in hand with purity of heart, with moral excellence (*vijja-caranasampanna-p*). Wisdom gained by understanding and development of the qualities of mind and heart is wisdom par excellence (*bhavanamaya panna-p*). It is saving knowledge, and not mere speculation, logic or specious reasoning. Thus, it is clear that Buddhism is neither mere love of, nor inducing the search after wisdom, nor devotion, though they have their significance and bearing on mankind, but an encouragement of a practical application of the teaching that leads the follower to dispassion, enlightenment and final deliverance. Wisdom in Buddhism is also a sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing attitudes. It is also a tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. Many people say that wisdom is gained from information or knowledge. The Buddha told us the opposite! He taught us that wisdom is already within our self-nature; it does not come from the outside. In the world, there are some very intelligent and wise people, such as scientists and philosophers, etc.

However, the Buddha would not recognize their knowledge as the proper Buddhist enlightenment, because they have not severed their afflictions. They still dwell on the rights and wrongs of others, on greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance. They still harbor wandering discriminatory thoughts and attachments. In other words, their minds are not pure. Without the pure mind, no matter how high the level of realization one reaches, it is still not the proper Buddhist enlightenment. Thus, our first hindrance to enlightenment and liberation is ego, our self-attachment, our own wandering thoughts. Only the wisdom that is based on concentration has the ability to eliminate attachments and ignorance. That is to say the wisdom that arises from a pure mind, not the wisdom that is attained from reading and studying books, for this wisdom is only worldly knowledge, not true wisdom. Thus, the Buddha said: "He who is concentrated knows and sees what really is." According to the Flower Adornment Sutra, all sentient beings possess the same wisdom and virtuous capabilities as the Buddha, but these qualities are unattainable due to wandering thoughts and attachments. Practicing Buddhism will help us rid of wandering, discriminating thoughts and attachments. Thus, we uncover our pure mind, in turn giving rise to true wisdom. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that our innate wisdom and abilities are temporarily lost due to the cloud of ignorance, attachments and wandering discriminatory thoughts, but are not truly or permanently lost. Our goal in Practicing Buddhism is to break through this cloud and achieve enlightenment.

III. To Reduce Afflictions by Replacing Ignorance with Wisdom:

One of the Main Characteristics and Powers of Wisdom Is to Eliminate the Veil of Afflictions of Ignorance: Talking about the main characteristics of wisdom, wisdom understanding that emptiness of inherent existence is the ultimate nature of all phenomena: This specific type of wisdom is the sole means to eliminate our ignorance and other disturbing states. It is also the most powerful tool for purifying negative karmic imprints. In addition, it enables us to benefit others effectively, for we can then teach them how to gain this wisdom themselves. This is also the first key to liberation and enlightenment. In order to be able to obtain this type of wisdom, we must invest all our efforts in cultivating Buddhist laws and practicing Buddhist meditation. Conventional intelligence knowing, logic, science, arts, and so forth: This type of wisdom is from birth; however, the person who possesses this type of wisdom is believed that in previous lives, he or she had already cultivated or practiced so many good deeds. In Buddhism, wisdom is of the highest importance; for purification comes through wisdom, through understanding.

Talking about powers of wisdom, wisdom, discernment or understanding is the power to discern things and their underlying principles. Wisdom has the power to decide the doubtful. Right Understanding and Right Thought constitute wisdom. Fundamental wisdom which is inherent in every man and which can manifest itself only after the veil of afflictions of ignorance, which screens it, has been transformed by means of self-cultivation as taught by the Buddha. According to the Buddha, wisdom is extremely important for it can be commensurate with enlightenment itself. It is wisdom that finally opens the door to freedom, and wisdom that removes ignorance, the fundamental cause of suffering and afflictions. It is said that while one may sever the branches of a tree and even cut down its trunk, but if the root is not removed, the tree will grow again. Similarly, although one may remove attachment by means of renunciation, and aversion by means of love and compassion, as long as ignorance is not removed by means of wisdom, attachment and aversion will sooner or later arise again. As for the Buddha, immediately after witnessing the unhappy incident involving the worm and the bird at the plowing ceremony, the prince sat under a nearby rose-apple tree and began to contemplate. This is a very early experience of meditation of the Buddha. Later, when he renounced the world and went forth to seek the ultimate truth, one of the first disciplines he developed was that of meditation. Thus, the Buddha himself always stressed that meditation is the only way to help us to achieve wisdom.

To Reduce Afflictions by Replacing Ignorance with Wisdom: According to Buddhism, to reduce afflictions, we must, by all means, to replace ignorance with wisdom, without any exception. In order to eliminate “ignorance,” practitioners should meditate on causality. All of our psychological problems are rooted in ignorance, in delusion. Ignorance is the crowning corruption. Our greeds, hates, conceits and a host of other defilements go hand in hand with our ignorance. The solutions are to be found in the problems themselves and hence we should not run away from our problems. Analyze and scrutinize the problems, and you will see that they are human problems, so do not attribute them to non-humans. Our real problems can be solved only by giving up illusions and false concepts and bringing our lives into harmony with reality and this can be done only through meditation. Just as the Buddha described in His discourses how He would exclaim, “Mara! I see you.” Zen practitioners should remember that the purpose of disciplined meditation practice is to eliminate ignorance, to open the essential nature of mind, and to stabilize awareness. Through meditation, we concentrate on things with an undistracted awareness. We are not thinking about anything, not analyzing, not getting lost in flux of things, but just seeing the nature of what is happening in the mind. Through practices of meditation, our mind becomes

clearer and clearer; it is to say 'ignorance' is gradually eliminated through the course of meditation. If you think that your mind can only be opened by a certain master out there, you are never cultivating in accordance with Buddhism at all. If you think someone out there can eliminate ignorance for you, you are not a devout Buddhist.

Insight Will Dispel Illusions: Wisdom, one of the eight chief characteristics of 'satori.' In Zen. That there is a quality in mystic experience has been pointed out by James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, and this applies also to the Zen experience known as satori. Another name for satori is 'to see the essence or nature,' which apparently proves that there is 'seeing' or 'perceiving' in satori. That this seeing is of quite a different quality from what is ordinarily designated as knowledge need not be specifically noticed. Hui-K'o is reported to have made this statement concerning his satori which was confirmed by Bodhidharma himself: "As to my satori, it is not a total annihilation; it is knowledge of the most adequate kind; only it cannot be expressed in words." In this respect, Shen-Hui was more explicit, for he says that "The one character of knowledge is the source of all mysteries." Without this noetic quality satori will lose all its pungency, for it is really the reason of satori itself. It is noteworthy that the knowledge contained in satori is concerned with something universal and at the same time with the individual aspect of existence. When a finger is lifted, the lifting means, from the viewpoint of satori, far more than the act of lifting. Some may call it symbolic, but satori does not point to anything beyond itself, being final as it is. Satori is the knowledge of an individual object and also that of Reality which is, if we may say so, at the back of it.

Master Mohnyin Sayadaw was one of the most outstanding meditation masters in Burmese Buddhism in the modern time. According to the master, meditators should become familiar with the most basic concepts of the Abhidharma before undertaking practice. This prior knowledge will help them direct attention to the true nature of all phenomena in a precise and clear way. The most essential concepts one should understand before meditation are descriptions those ultimate realities that make up our seemingly solid and continuous world. The elements as we perceive them, consciousness, the sense organs and their objects, and the corporeal groups of matter, appear to us as a solid world because of their rapid change. It is by examining the arising and dissolution of these groups and elements and consciousness in the body and the mind that the meditator develops true insight knowledge. As this deepens, he sees all perceivable events as fleeting and unsubstantial, no place to cling or look for happiness. No longer fooled by their nature, no longer clinging, he experiences true liberation. Therefore, meditators should always remember that all physical phenomena are destructible, impersonal, and non-

substantial. In the same manner, all mental phenomena are impersonal and non-substantial. The ultimate truths exist in all physical and mental phenomena and can be seen when we examine their functions and properties. However, these truths are hard to see because of our own concepts, because of illusion we have of solidity or permanence in the physical and mental world. And this true knowledge can only be perceived through direct experience in the meditation. A meditator who contemplates the arising and vanishing of phenomena at every posture during the four modes of deportment will eventually realize that the mental and physical phenomena having arisen disappear immediately and the new formations of existence arise in place of the older ones, just as sesame seeds are disintegrated with craking sounds when heated in a frying pan. During the practice of Vipassana at the point where the practitioner can clearly perceive the arising and vanishing of all phenomena, there arises in him the defilements of insight. These are especially likely to arise in the meditator who has been practicing Vipassana combined with tranquility or concentration meditation. Some of the subtle defilements that arise are attachment to the rapture, tranquility, happiness, energy, awareness, equanimity, and delight that arise in him. These subtle attachments or defilements are overcome when the meditator realizes that none of them are the true path to the cessation of suffering, and that he must relinquish his attachment and simply continue contemplating clearly the process of all phenomena arising and vanishing. So, in practicing the Vipassana meditation according to these instructions, a meditating disciple will find that by paying constant attention to the characteristics of the alterations, displacements, disturbances, modes of changing of body and mind, he is developing his mental faculties in such a way that the deep insight experienced by him will be free from both eternity and annihilation beliefs. His insight will dispel the following illusions: 1) the idea of permanence, 2) the idea of worldly happiness, 3) the idea of ego or fixed personality, 4) the idea of pleasure in lust, 5) greed, 6) becoming, 7) grasping, 8) the idea of compactness or solidity, 9) wrong view about karma formations, 10) the idea of stability, 11) the conditions of becoming, 12) delight, 13) clinging, 14) grasping and adherence to the idea of substance, 15) adherence to delusion regarding the ego and the world, 16) attachment, 17) thoughtlessness, and 18) getting entangled in any aspect of body or mind. These are the fruits of proper Vipassana practice. This truth will help practitioners eliminate afflictions of ignorance and eventually escape from old age, sickness, death, and rebirth.

Chapter Forty-Two

Buddhists Firmly Prevent Robbers of Afflictions Infiltration by Closing Doors of Sense Organs in Daily Activities

The worldly way is outgoing exuberant; the way of the devoted Buddhist's life is restrained and controlled. Constantly work against the grain, against the old habits; eat, speak, and sleep little. If we are lazy, raise energy. If we feel we can not endure, raise patience. If we like the body and feel attached to it, learn to see it as unclean. Virtue or following precepts, and concentration or meditation are aids to the practice. They make the mind calm and restrained. But outward restraint is only a convention, a tool to help gain inner coolness. We may keep our eyes cast down, but still our mind may be distracted by whatever enters our field of vision. Perhaps we feel that this life is too difficult, that we just can not do it. But the more clearly we understand the truth of things, the more incentive we will have. Keep our mindfulness sharp. In daily activity, the important point is intention. ; know what we are doing and know how we feel about it. Learn to know the mind that clings to ideas of purity and bad karma, burdens itself with doubt and excessive fear of wrongdoing. This, too, is attachment. We must know moderation in our daily needs. Robes need not be of fine material, they are merely to protect the body. Food is merely to sustain us. The Path constantly opposes defilements and habitual desires. Although the main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In order to achieve this immediate goal, practitioners' every moment in life must be moment of living and cultivating in firmly preventing the infiltration of robbers of afflictions by closing the six sense doors for this is the most efficient and wonderful way to reduce afflictions. However, in Buddhist cultivation, practitioners should always be extremely careful!!! Sense restraint is proper practice. We should be mindful of it throughout the

day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally.

As matter of fact, in Buddhist teachings, sense restraint is the most effective way to subdue afflictive robbers (robbers that cause afflictions) of desires-anger-ignorance-arrogance-doubt-wrong views-killing-stealing-sexual misconduct-lying. As a matter of fact, in order to achieve the ends of peace, mindfulness, happiness, and eventual emancipation, practitioners should always try to prevent the infiltration of these above mentioned ten robbers. In Buddhist teachings, closing doors of sense-organs also means to guard these sense-doors. Buddhist practitioners should always contemplate on the six faculties are the main reasons that cause human beings to fall into hells, to be reborn in the realm of the hungry ghosts, or animals, asuras, devas, or human beings, etc. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. They are the main agents that cause us to create unwholesome karma, and eventually we will fall into evil ways because of them. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, the Buddha advised his disciples thus: “You should cultivate until you are unaware of heaven above, people in between, and earth below.” If we cultivate until the time heaven, earth, people, east, west, south, north, etc., can no longer impact our six faculties, then at that point we are liberated from all hindrances. The six sense-organs can be entrances to the hells; at the same time, they can be some of the most important entrances to the great enlightenment; for with them, we create karmas and sins, but also with them, we can practise the right way. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the

Buddha, there are five roots or faculties (indriyani): Eye is one of the six senses on which one relies or from which knowledge is received. Ear is one of the six unions of the six sense organs with the six objects of the senses, the ears is in union with sound heard. Nose is in union with the smell smelt, this is one of the six unions of the six sense organs with the six objects of the senses. Tongue is in union with the taste tasted, this is one of the six unions of the six sense organs with the six objects of the senses. Body is in union with the thing touched, this is one of the six unions of the six sense organs with the six objects of the senses. And the mind is in union with the dharma thought about. The Buddha said: “Karma that you have made for yourself can only disappear if you want it to. No one can make you want it to disappear. I have many kinds of medicine, but I can’t take it for you.” Therefore, we should be mindful of it throughout the day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally. It is obvious that during meditation, the six organs are closed and purified in order to develop their unlimited power and interchange (in the case of Buddha). This full development enables the eye to see everything in a great chiliocosm from its highest heaven down to its lowest hells and all the beings past, present, and future with all the karma of each. In the six sense-organs, thought, the mind-sense, the sixth of the senses, the perception of thinking or faculty of thinking or the thinking mind. According to Most Venerable Piyadassi in “The Buddha’s Ancient Path,” faculty of mind recognizes mental objects, we know, is not something tangible and perceptible like the other five faculties, which recognizes the external world. The eye cognizes the world of colors (vanna) or visible objects, the ear audible sounds, and so forth. The mind, however, cognizes the world of ideas and thoughts. Faculty of mind literally means “chief” or “lord”. Forms can only be seen by the faculty of the eye and not by the ear, hearing by the faculty of the ear, and so on. When it comes to the world of thoughts and ideas the faculty of the mind lord over the mental realm. The eye can not think thoughts, and collect ideas, but it is instrumental in seeing visible forms, the world of colors. Buddhist Practitioners’s

sense restraint is proper practice. We should be mindful of it throughout the day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally. Besides, practicing meditation can lead to pure and objective observation and is intended to prevent emotions such as joy, sadness, love, jealousy, sympathy, antipathy, desire, hatred, and so on. Buddhist Practitioners always consider the six senses are objects of meditation practices. According to Bikkhu Piyananda in *The Gems of Buddhism Wisdom*, you must always be aware of the sense organs such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and body and the contact they are having with the outside world. You must be aware of the feelings that are arising as a result of this contact. Eye is now in contact with forms (rupa). Ear is now in contact with sound. Nose is now in contact with smell. Tongue is now in contact with taste. Body is now in contact with touching. Mind is now in contact with all things (dharma). According to the *Samannaphala Sutta* in the *Long Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha taught about “a guardian of the sense-door.” How does a monk become a guardian of the sense-door? Here a monk, on seeing a visible object with the eye, does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics. Because greed and sorrow, evil unskilled states, would overwhelm him if he dwelt leaving this eye-faculty unguarded, so he practises guarding it, he protects the eye-faculty, develops restraint of the eye-faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear...; on smelling an odour with the nose...; on tasting a flavour with the tongue...; on feeling an object with the body...; on thinking a thought with the mind, he does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics, he develops restraint of the mind-faculty. He experiences within himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Ariyan guarding of the faculties.

According to Buddhist teachings, ten robbers of greed, anger, ignorance, pride, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and unwholesome thoughts... are unwholesome or negative Karmas. Unwholesome or evil karmas of greed, hatred and ignorance, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual

misconduct, lying... are all created by body, mouth and speech. Unwholesome or harmful actions, or conduct in thought, word, or deed (by the body, speech, and mind) to self and others which leads to evil recompense (negative path, bad deeds, or black path). In other words, evil actions are those that result in suffering and whose consequences are perceived as painful for beings who experience them. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, there are four causes of unwholesome or evil actions: unwholesome action springs from attachment, ill-will, ignorance, and fear. According to the Sigalaka Sutra, the Buddha taught: "If the Ariyan disciple does not act out of attachment, ill-will, folly or fear, he will not do evil from any one of the four above mentioned causes." From the earliest period, Buddhist thought has argued that the reasons these robbers mentioned above can infiltrate sentient beings are the result of ignorance (avidya), which cause sentient beings to open widely doors of their six sense-organs for these robbers come and go freely. It means these robbers can no longer come and go freely once ignorance is overcome.

The worldly way is outgoing exuberant; the way of the devoted Buddhist's life is restrained and controlled. Constantly work against the grain, against the old habits; eat, speak, and sleep little. If we are lazy, raise energy. If we feel we can not endure, raise patience. If we like the body and feel attached to it, learn to see it as unclean. Virtue or following precepts, and concentration or meditation are aids to the practice. They make the mind calm and restrained. But outward restraint is only a convention, a tool to help gain inner coolness. We may keep our eyes cast down, but still our mind may be distracted by whatever enters our field of vision. Perhaps we feel that this life is too difficult, that we just can not do it. But the more clearly we understand the truth of things, the more incentive we will have. Keep our mindfulness sharp. In daily activity, the important point is intention. ; know what we are doing and know how we feel about it. Learn to know the mind that clings to ideas of purity and bad karma, burdens itself with doubt and excessive fear of wrongdoing. This, too, is attachment. We must know moderation in our daily needs. Robes need not be of any fine material, they are merely to protect the body. Food is merely to sustain us. The Path constantly opposes defilements and habitual desires.

The Buddha taught about “Restraining oneself” in the Dharmapada Sutra. “He who strictly adorned, lived in peace, subdued all passions, controlled all senses, ceased to injure other beings, is indeed a holy Brahmin, an ascetic, a bhikshu (Dharmapada 142). Rarely found in this world anyone who restrained by modesty, avoids reproach, as a well-trained horse avoids the whip (Dharmapada 143). Like a well-trained horse, touch by the whip, even so be strenuous and zealous. By faith, by virtue, by effort, by concentration, by investigation of the Truth, by being endowed with knowledge and conduct, and being mindful, get rid of this great suffering (Dharmapada 144). Irregators guide the water to their fields; fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend the wood, the virtuous people control themselves (Dharmapada 145). What should have been done is left undone; what should not have been done is done. This is the way the arrogant and wicked people increase their grief (Dharmapada 292). Those who always earnestly practice controlling of the body, follow not what should not be done, and constantly do what should be done. This is the way the mindful and wise people end all their sufferings and impurities (Dharmapada 293). As an elephant in the battlefield endures the arrows shot from a bow, I shall withstand abuse in the same manner. Truly, most common people are undisciplined (who are jealous of the disciplined) (Dharmapada 320). To lead a tamed elephant in battle is good. To tame an elephant for the king to ride it better. He who tames himself to endure harsh words patiently is the best among men (Dharmapada 321). Tamed mules are excellent; Sindhu horses of good breeding are excellent too. But far better is he who has trained himself (Dharmapada 322). Never by those vehicles, nor by horses would one go to Nirvana. Only self-tamers who can reach Nirvana (Dharmapada 323). It is good to have control of the eye; it is good to have control of the ear; it is good to have control of the nose; it is good to have control of the tongue (Dharmapada 360). It is good to have control of the body; it is good to have control of speech; it is good to have control of everything. A monk who is able to control everything, is free from all suffering (Dharmapada 362). He who controls his hands and legs; he who controls his speech; and in the highest, he who delights in meditation; he who is alone, serene and contented with himself. He is truly called a Bhikshu (Dharmapada 362). Censure or control yourself. Examine

yourself. Be self-guarded and mindful. You will live happily (Dharmapada 379). You are your own protector. You are your own refuge. Try to control yourself as a merchant controls a noble steed (Dharmapada 380). One who conquers himself is greater than one who is able to conquer a thousand men in the battlefield (Dharmapada 103). Self-conquest is, indeed, better than the conquest of all other people. To conquer oneself, one must be always self-controlled and disciplined one's action (Dharmapada 104). Neither the god, nor demigod, nor Mara, nor Brahma can win back the victory of a man who is self-subdued and ever lives in restraint (Dharmapada 105)."

Practitioners' practicing of sense restraint is proper practice. We should be mindful of it throughout the day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally. Besides, practicing meditation can lead to pure and objective observation and is intended to prevent emotions such as joy, sadness, love, jealousy, sympathy, antipathy, desire, hatred, etc. Practitioners should always contemplate on the six faculties are the main reasons that cause human beings to fall into hells, to be reborn in the realm of the hungry ghosts, or animals, asuras, devas, or human beings, etc. It is agreeable that the six faculties that help us maintain our daily activities, but they are also the main factors that bring sufferings and afflictions to our body and mind. They are the main agents that cause us to create unwholesome karma, and eventually we will fall into evil ways because of them. Do not think that the eyes are that great, just because they help us see things. It is exactly because of their help that we give rise to all kinds of sufferings and afflictions. For instance, when we see an attractive person of the opposite sex, we become greedy for sex. If we do not get what we want, we will be afflicted; and if we get what we want, we will also be afflicted. The other faculties, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are the same way. They make one give rise to many sufferings and afflictions. Therefore, the Buddha advised his disciples thus: "You should cultivate until you are unaware of heaven above, people in between, and earth below." If we cultivate until the time heaven, earth, people, east, west, south,

north, etc., can no longer impact our six faculties, then at that point we are liberated from all hindrances.

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The Buddha said: “Karma that you have made for yourself can only disappear if you want it to. No one can make you want it to disappear. I have many kinds of medicine, but I can’t take it for you.” Therefore, we should be mindful of it throughout the day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally. It is obvious that during meditation, the six organs are closed and purified in order to develop their unlimited power and interchange (in the case of Buddha). This full development enables the eye to see everything in a great chiliocosm from its highest heaven down to its lowest hells and all the beings past, present, and future with all the karma of each.

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colors (vanna) or visible objects, the ear audible sounds, and so forth. The mind, however, cognizes the world of ideas and thoughts. Faculty of mind literally means “chief” or “lord”. Forms can only be seen by the faculty of the eye and not by the ear, hearing by the faculty of the ear, and so on. When it comes to the world of thoughts and ideas the faculty of the mind lord over the mental realm. The eye can not think thoughts, and collect ideas, but it is instrumental in seeing visible forms, the world of colors.

Practitioners’s sense restraint is proper practice. We should be mindful of it throughout the day. But do not overdo it. Walk, eat, and act naturally, and then develop natural mindfulness of what is going on within ourselves. To force our meditation or force ourselves into awkward patterns is another form of craving. Patience and endurance are necessary. If we act naturally and are mindful, wisdom will come naturally. Besides, practicing meditation can lead to pure and objective observation and is intended to prevent emotions such as joy, sadness, love, jealousy, sympathy, antipathy, desire, hatred, etc. Zen Practitioners always consider the six senses are objects of meditation practices. According to Bikkhu Piyananda in *The Gems of Buddhism* Wisdom, you must always be aware of the sense organs such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and body and the contact they are having with the outside world. You must be aware of the feelings that are arising as a result of this contact. Eye is now in contact with forms (rupa). Ear is now in contact with sound. Nose is now in contact with smell. Tongue is now in contact with taste. Body is now in contact with touching. Mind is now in contact with all things (dharma). According to the *Samannaphala Sutta* in the *Long Discourses of the Buddha*, the Buddha taught about “a guardian of the sense-door.” How does a monk become a guardian of the sense-door? Here a monk, on seeing a visible object with the eye, does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics. Because greed and sorrow, evil unskilled states, would overwhelm him if he dwelt leaving this eye-faculty unguarded, so he practises guarding it, he protects the eye-faculty, develops restraint of the eye-faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear...; on smelling an odour with the nose...; on tasting a flavour with the tongue...; on feeling an object with the body...; on thinking a thought with the mind, he does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics, he

develops restraint of the mind-faculty. He experiences within himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Ariyan guarding of the faculties. In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: Like a frontier fortress is well guarded, so guard yourself, inside and outside. Do not let a second slip away, for each wasted second makes the downward path (315). A wise monk must first control the senses, practise equanimity, follow discipline as laid down in the sutra (375). In short, those who try to restraint the six senses are not only advancing on the path to Buddhahood, but they also have peace, mindfulness and happiness in their daily life.

According to Buddhist teachings, these robbers such as afflictions are distress, worldly cares, vexations, and as consequent reincarnation. They are such troubles as desire, hate, stupor, pride, doubt, erroneous views, etc., leading to painful results in future rebirths, for they are karma-messengers executing its purpose. Klesa also means “negative mental factors,” that lead beings to engage in non-virtuous actions, which produce karmic results. Afflictions are all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. Afflictions also mean all defilements that dull the mind, the basis for all unwholesome actions as well as kinks that bind people to the cycle of rebirths. People also call Afflictions the thirst of Mara. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by cultivating on a regular basis. The worldly way is letting the doors of the six sense organs widely opened and outgoing exuberant. The way of the devoted Buddhist’s life is to close the doors of the six sense organs, restrained and controlled. The ancient have said: “If inside the door there are mean-spirited people, mean-spirited people will arrive at the door; if inside the door there are virtuous, superior people, noble superior people will arrive at the door.” As an example, when thieves try to enter a house through the side door, if the owner calmly scolds them in a loud voice, they will naturally be frightened and leave. If on the other hand, he is terrified and panic-stricken, and begs them to desist, he will unwittingly be inviting them into his house. Generally speaking, when the doors are wide opened, afflictive robbers (robbers that cause afflictions) are encouraged to freely enter, while closed doors can delay or slow down their infiltration, and hoping that practitioners’ life and cultivation could be more peaceful, mindful, and happier.

Chapter Forty-Three

To Subdue Afflictive Robbers (Robbers That Cause Afflictions) of Greed-Anger-Delusion According to The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and Practice

Vehement longing or desire or coveting others' possessions is when we plan how to procure something belonging to another person. Raga is also interpreted as tainted by and in bondage to the five desires. While coveting is a mental action no one else can see, it can lead us to flatter, bribe, cheat or steal from others to obtain what we desire. Greed, the first unwholesome root, covers all degrees of selfish desire, longing, attachment, and clinging. Its characteristic is grasping an object. Its function is sticking, as meat sticks to a hot pan. It is manifested as not giving up. Its proximate cause is seeing enjoyment in things that lead to bondage. Anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. Thus, according to the Buddha's teachings in the Dharmapada Sutra, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. Ignorance is an unenlightened mind that led astray. In Buddhism, delusion or moha is a synonym for avijja, ignorance. Its characteristic is mental blindness or unknowing. Its function is non-penetration, or concealment of the real nature of the object. It is manifested as the absence of right understanding or as mental darkness. Its proximate cause is unwise attention. It should be seen as the root of all that is unwholesome. The karma of greed, anger, delusion, arrogance, doubt, wrong views, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying... manifest themselves in

many forms, which are impossible to describe fully. To refrain from greed, anger, jealousy, and other evil thoughts to which people are subject, we need strength of mind, strenuous effort and vigilance. When we are free from the city life, from nagging preoccupation with daily life, we are not tempted to lose control; but when we enter in the real society, it becomes an effort to check these troubles. Meditation will contribute an immense help to enable us to face all this with calm. The defilements we call lust or greed, anger and ignorance, are just outward names and appearances, just as we call a house beautiful, ugly, big, small, etc. These are only appearances of things. If we want a big house, we call this one small. We create such concepts because of our craving. Craving causes us to discriminate, while the truth is merely what is. Look at it this way. Are you a person? Yes. This is the appearance of things. But you are really only a combination of elements or a group of changing aggregates. If the mind is free it does not discriminate. No big and small, no you and me, nothing. We say 'anatta' or 'not self', but really, in the end, there is neither 'atta' nor 'anatta'. Truly speaking, not only Buddhists but the whole world also are indebted to the Buddha for it is He who first showed the Way to free human beings from lust, anger, stupidity, arrogance... If we, Buddhists, can enter and advance on the path of cultivation, not talking about becoming a Buddha, at every moment, at least, we can reduce evil thoughts, ignorance, selfishness, hatred, anger, jealousy, grudges, and ill-will. Furthermore, if we can identify them in our daily life, that is similar to the reduction of the effects of the bad karma that we committed in many aeons in the past, for this the way that the Buddha advanced for overcoming the bad effects.

I. An Overview of Greed Anger Ignorance:

Poison is also called Defilement or Hindrances. These poisons are sources of all passions and delusions. The fundamental evils inherent in life which give rise to human suffering. The three poisons are regarded as the sources of all illusions and earthly desires. They pollute people's lives. Men worry about many things. Poisons include harsh or stern words for repressing evil; misleading teaching. Poisons are also the turbidity of desire or the contamination of desire. The poison of desire or love which harms devotion to Buddhist practices. Besides, the poison

of delusion, one of the three poisons, and the poison of touch, a term applied to woman. According to the Buddha, there are four poisons in our body, or four poisonous snakes in a basket which imply the four elements in a body (of which a man is formed). The four elements of the body, earth, water, fire and wind which harm a man by their variation, i.e. increase and decrease. Three Poisons or three sources of all passions and delusions. The fundamental evils inherent in life which give rise to human suffering. The three poisons are regarded as the sources of all illusions and earthly desires. They pollute people's lives. Men worry about many things. Broadly speaking, there are 84,000 worries. But after analysis, we can say there are only 10 serious ones including the three evil roots of greed, hatred, and delusion. Three poisons of greed, hatred and ignorance do not only cause our afflictions, but also prevent us from tasting the pure and cool flavor of emancipation (liberation).

In Buddhism, desire means greed and love of the things of this life or craving (greed, affection, desire). Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. Anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. Unenlightened and led astray. In Buddhism, delusion or moha is a synonym for avijja, ignorance. Its characteristic is mental blindness or unknowing. Its function is non-penetration, or concealment of the real nature of the object. It is manifested as the absence of right

understanding or as mental darkness. Its proximate cause is unwise attention. It should be seen as the root of all that is unwholesome.

Among the three poisons of greed, anger and ignorance, the defilements we call lust or greed, anger and delusion, are just outward names and appearances, just as we call a house beautiful, ugly, big, small, etc. These are only appearances of things. If we want a big house, we call this one small. We create such concepts because of our craving. Craving causes us to discriminate, while the truth is merely what is. Look at it this way. Are you a person? Yes. This is the appearance of things. But you are really only a combination of elements or a group of changing aggregates. If the mind is free it does not discriminate. No big and small, no you and me, nothing. We say 'anatta' or 'not self', but really, in the end, there is neither 'atta' nor 'anatta'.

According to the Samyutta Nikaya or the Kindred Sayings, volume 35, after the Buddha met the three brothers of Kasyapa and their one thousand followers, the Buddha found out that they belonged to the Fire-worshipping Sect, so the Blessed One expounded to them the discourse on fire. "Thus, have I heard, the Blessed One was once staying at Gaya Sisa with a thousand Bhiksus. There he addressed the Bhiksus: "O Bhiksus, all is on fire. And what all is on fire? The eye, o Bhiksus, is on fire. Forms are on fire. Eye-consciousness is on fire. Eye-contact is on fire. Feeling, which is pleasant or painful, or neither pleasant nor painful, arising from eye-contact is on fire. With what is it burning? It is burning with the fire of lust, the fire of hate, ignorance, birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair. So, I declare. The ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, the mind... is on fire. Seeing thus, o Bhiksus, a well-taught Ariyan disciple gets disgusted with the eye, forms, eye-consciousness, eye-contact, feeling... He gets disgusted with the ear, sounds, ear-consciousness, ear-contact; ... the nose, odours, nose-consciousness, nose-contact; ... the body, tactile objects, body-consciousness, body-contact; ... the mind, mental objects, mind-consciousness, mind-contact and any feeling that arises. With disgust, he gets detached; with detachment, he is liberated. When he is liberated, there is knowledge that he is liberated. And he understands thus: "Birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done, there is no more of this state again." After the Buddha

expounded the “Discourse on Fire,” all the Bhiksus were pleased at his words and welcomed them. When the Buddha concluded his sermon, the hearts of the thousand Bhiksus were liberated from defilements, without attachment and they all became Arahants.

II. Details of Three Robbers of Afflictions of Greed Anger Ignorance:

The First Robber of Afflictions Is Selfish Desire: Desire for more than we need or deserve, such as food, house, car, wealth, honors, etc. Eyes are longing for viewing beautiful forms without any satisfaction, ears are longing for melodious sounds, nose is longing for fragrance, tongue is longing for delicate tastes, body is longing for soothing touches, and mind is longing for various emotions of love and hate from self and others. Human beings’ greediness is like a barrel without bottom. It is just as the great ocean obtaining continuously the water from hundreds and thousands of large and small rivers and lakes everyday. In this Dharma Ending Age, sentient beings, especially human beings use every method to manipulate and harm one another. Sentient beings’ lives, especially, those of human beings’ are already filled with pain and sufferings, now there are even more pain and sufferings. Through tricks, expedients, and manipulations we try to reach our goal irrespective of whatever happens to others. Greed is a powerful mental force that drives people to fight, kill, cheat, lie and perform various forms of unwholesome deeds. Greed is the first of the three poisons. Coveting others’ possessions is when we plan how to procure something belonging to another person. While coveting is a mental action no one else can see, it can lead us to flatter, bribe, cheat or steal from others to obtain what we desire. Greed, the first unwholesome root, covers all degrees of selfish desire, longing, attachment, and clinging. Its characteristic is grasping an object. Its function is sticking, as meat sticks to a hot pan. It is manifested as not giving up. Its proximate cause is seeing enjoyment in things that lead to bondage. People usually have greed for wealth, sex, fame, food, sleep or greed for forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and objects of touch, and so on, and so on. *According to Most Venerable in The Buddha and His Teachings, there are three conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of covetousness: first, another’s possession; second, adverting to it, thinking “would this be mine”; and third, to actually take another’s possession without permission. According to the Sangiti Sutta in the Long Discourses of the Buddha, there are five kinds of begrudging: first, begrudging as to dwelling-place; second, begrudging as to family; third, begrudging as to gains; fourth, begrudging as to beauty; and fifth, begrudging as to Dhamma. There are also five kinds of selfishness: first, this*

abode (house or place) is mine and no one else's; second, this almsgiving household is mine and no one else's; third, I am the only one who receive this alms; fourth, I am the only one who deserve this praise; no one else who deserves this; and fifth, I am the only one who has the knowledge of truth, but I don't want to share with any one else. *According to The Path of Purification, there are five kinds of avarice:* first, avarice about dwellings; second, avarice about families; third, avarice about gain; fourth, avarice about Dharma; and fifth, avarice about praise.

Craving (greed, affection, and desire) means desire for and love of the things of this life. Most people define happiness as the satisfaction of all desires. The desires are boundless, but our ability to realize them is not, and unfulfilled desires always create suffering. When desires are only partially fulfilled, we have a tendency to continue to pursue until a complete fulfillment is achieved. Thus, we create even more suffering for us and for others. We can only realize the true happiness and a peaceful state of mind when our desires are few. This is one of the great steps towards the shore of liberation. The Buddha taught: "Greed and desire are the cause of all unhappiness or suffering. Everything sooner or later must change, so do not become attached to anything. Instead devote yourself to clearing your mind and finding the truth, lasting happiness." Knowing how to feel satisfied with few possessions help us destroy greed and desire. This means being content with material conditions that allow us to be healthy and strong enough to cultivate. This is an effective way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of mind and have more time to help others. The defilements we call lust or greed, anger and delusion, are just outward names and appearances, just as we call a house beautiful, ugly, big, small, etc. These are only appearances of things. If we want a big house, we call this one small. We create such concepts because of our craving. Craving causes us to discriminate, while the truth is merely what is. Look at it this way. Are you a person? Yes. This is the appearance of things. But you are really only a combination of elements or a group of changing aggregates. If the mind is free, it does not discriminate. No big and small, no you and me, nothing. We say 'anatta' or 'not self', but really, in the end, there is neither 'atta' nor 'anatta'. Greed should be balanced by contemplation of loathsomeness. Attachment to bodily form is one extreme, and one should keep the opposite in mind. Examine the body as a corpse and see the process of decay, or think of the parts of the body, such as lungs, spleen, fat, feces, and so forth. Remembering these and visualizing the loathsome aspects of the body will free us from greed.

We are living in a material world where we must encounter all kinds of objects such as sights, sounds, tastes, sensations, thoughts and ideas, etc. Desire arises from contact with these pleasing objects. Buddhists should

always remember that “Desire” not only obscures our mind, but it is also a main cause of grasping which causes sufferings and afflictions, forces us to continue to wander in the samsara. Desire is one of the twelve links in the chain of Causation (nidanas). Its source is delusion caused by attraction to the six objects of sense. Thus, the Buddha taught in the Dharmapada Sutra: “It is difficult to renounce the world. It is difficult to be a householder. It is painful to associate with those who are not friends. It is painful to be wandering in the samsara forever. Reaching the enlightenment and let wander no more! Let’s suffer no more! (Dharmapada 302). Whoever binds to craving, his sorrows flourish like well-watered birana grass (Dharmapada 335). Whoever in this world overcomes this unruly craving, his sorrows fall away just like water-drops from a lotus leaf (Dharmapada 336). This is my advice to you: “Root out craving; root it out, just like birana grass is rooted out. Let not Mara crush you again and again as a flood crushes a reed! (Dharmapada 337). Latent craving is not conquered, suffering recovers and grows again and again, just like a tree hewn down grows up again as long as its roots is unrooted (Dharmapada 338). If in any man, the thirty-six streams of craving are still flowing, such deluded person is still looking for pleasure and passion, and torrential thoughts of lust sweep him away (Dharmapada 339). Streams of pleasure and passion flow in all directions, just like the creeper sprouts and stands. Seeing the creeper that has sprung up in your mind, cut it off with wisdom (Dharmapada 340). Common people are subject to attachment and thirst; they are always happy with pleasure; they run after passion. They look for happiness, but such men caught in the cycle of birth and decay again and again (Dharmapada 341). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified like hunted hares. The more they hold fast by fetters, bonds, and afflictions, the longer they suffer (Dharmapada 342). Men who are crazed with craving, are terrified just like hunted hares. Therefore, a monk who wishes his own passionlessness, should first banish craving (Dharmapada 343). He who is free from desire for the household, finds pleasure (of asceticism or monastic life) in the forest, yet run back to that very home. Look at that man! He runs right back into that very bondage again! (Dharmapada 344). To a wise man, the bondage that is made of hemp, wood or iron, is not a strong bond, the longing for wives, children, jewels, and ornaments is a greater and far stronger attachment (Dharmapada 345). The wise people say that that bond is very strong. Such fetters seem supple, but hard to break. Break them! Cut off desire and renounce the world! (Dharmapada 346). A man infatuated with lust falls back into the stream as a spider into the web spun by itself. He who cuts off this bond, retire from the world, with no clinging, will leave all sorrow behind (Dharmapada 347). He who has reached the goal, without fear, without craving and without desire, has cut off the thorns of life. This is his final mortal body (Dharmapada 351).

He who is without craving, without attachment; who understands subtleties of words and meanings; they are truly a great wise who bear the final mortal body (Dharmapada 352). Strive hard to cut off the stream of desires. Oh! Brahman! Knowing that all conditioned things will perish. Oh! Brahman! You are a knower of the Unmade Nirvana! (Dharmapada 383)."

The Second Robber of Afflictions Is Anger or Resentment: Ill-will or Hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: "Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten of thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles." In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: "One should give up anger; one should abandon pride. One should overcome all fetters. No suffering befalls him who calls nothing his own (Dharmapada 221). He who controls his anger which arises as a rolling chariot. He is a true charioteer. Other people are only holding the rein (Dharmapada 222). Conquer anger by love; conquer evil by good; conquer stingy by giving; conquer the liar by truth (Dharmapada 223). One should guard against the bodily anger, or physical action, and should control the body. One should give up evil conduct of the body. One should be of good bodily conduct (Dharmapada 231). One should guard against the anger of the tongue; one should control the tongue. One should give up evil conduct in speech. One should be of good conduct in speech (Dharmapada 232). One should guard against the anger of the mind; one should control the mind. One

should give up evil conduct of the mind. One should practice virtue with the mind (Dharmapada 233)."

Resentment or ill-will is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger and ignorance). Anger is an emotional response to something that is inappropriate or unjust. If one does not obtain what one is greedy can lead to anger. Anger is an emotion involved in self-protection. However, according to Buddhist doctrines, anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. The Buddha makes it very clear that with a heart filled with hatred and animosity, a man cannot understand and speak well. A man who nurtures displeasure and animosity cannot appease his hatred. Only with a mind delighted in harmlessness and with loving kindness towards all creatures in him hatred cannot be found. Thus, according to the Buddha's teachings in the Dharmapada Sutra, to subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind by meditating on loving kindness, pity and compassion. According to Buddhism, the basis of anger is usually fear for when we get angry we feel we are not afraid any more, however, this is only a blind power. The energy of anger, if it's not so destructive, it may not be of any constructive. In fact, extreme anger could eventually lead us even to taking our own life. Thus the Buddha taught: "When you are angry at someone, let step back and try to think about some of the positive qualities of that person. To be able to do this, your anger would be reduced by its own." It is a fire that burns in all human beings, causing a feeling of displeasure or hostility toward others. Angry people speak and act coarsely or pitiless, creating all kinds of sufferings. Of the three great poisons of Greed, Hatred and Ignorance, each has its own unique evil characteristic. However, of these poisons, hatred is unimaginably destructive and is the most powerful enemy of one's cultivated path and wholesome conducts. The reason is that once hatred arises from within the mind, thousands of karmic obstructions will follow to appear immediately, impeding the practitioner from making progress on the cultivated path and learning of the philosophy of Buddhism. Therefore, the ancient virtuous beings taught: "One vindictive thought just barely surfaced, ten thousands of doors of obstructions are all open." Supposing while you were practicing meditation, and your mind suddenly drifted to a person who has often insulted and mistreated you with bitter words. Because of these thoughts, you begin to feel sad, angry, and unable to maintain peace of mind; thus, even though your body is sitting there quietly, your mind is filled with afflictions and hatred. Some may go so far as leaving their seat, stopping meditation, abandoning whatever they are doing, and getting completely caught up in their afflictions. Furthermore, there are those who get so angry and so depressed to the point where they can't eat and

sleep; for their satisfaction, sometimes they wish their wicked friend to die right before their eyes. Through these, we know that hatred is capable of trampling the heart and mind, destroying people's cultivated path, and preventing everyone from practicing wholesome deeds. Thus, the Buddha taught the way to tame hatred in the Lotus Sutra as follows: "Use great compassion as a home, use peace and tolerance as the armor, use all the Dharma of Emptiness as the sitting throne." We should think that when we have hatred and afflictions, the first thing that we should be aware of is we are bringing miseries on ourselves. The fire of hatred and afflictions internally burns at our soul, and externally influences our bodies, standing and sitting restlessly, crying, moaning, screaming, etc. In this way, not only are we unable to change and tame the enemy, but also unable to gain any peace and happiness for ourselves.

The anger or *dosa* is the root of suffering and the rebirth in hell. Anger, ire, wrath, resentment, one of the six fundamental *klesas*. Anger happens when one represses the emotional feelings deep inside. This is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). One of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. The Buddha taught: "Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, A thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten of thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles."

According to Most Venerable Narada in *The Buddha and His Teaching*, there are two conditions that are necessary to complete the evil of ill-will: first, from another person; and second, from the thought of doing harm. *Doso*,

the second unwholesome root, comprises all kinds and degrees of aversion, ill-will, anger, irritation, annoyance, and animosity. Its characteristic is ferocity. Its function is to spread, or burn up its own support, i.e. the mind and body in which it arises. It is manifested as persecuting, and its proximate cause is a ground for annoyance. Anger, Ill-will or hatred is one of the three poisons in Buddhism (greed, anger, ignorance). This is one of the three fires which burn in the mind until allowed to die for fuelling. Anger manifests itself in a very crude manner, destroying the practitioner in a most effective way. To subdue anger and resentment, we must develop a compassionate mind. According to Buddhist psychology, the mental factor of aversion is always linked to the experience of pain. One may be greedy and happy, but never angry and happy at the same time. Anyone who cultures hatred, anger, or malice, nurses revenge or keeps alive a grudge is bound to experience much suffering for he has laid hold a very potent source of it. Those who exercise their hatred on others as in killing, torturing or maiming may expect birth in a state, compared in the scriptural simile to a pitfull of glowing situations, where they will experience feelings which are exclusively painful, sharp, and severe. Only in such an environment will they be able to experience all the misery which they, by their own cruelty to others, have brought upon themselves. It is a fire that burns in all human beings, causing a feeling of displeasure or hostility toward others. Angry people speak and act coarsely or pitiless, creating all kinds of sufferings. Of the three great poisons of Greed, Hatred and Ignorance, each has its own unique evil characteristic. However, of these poisons, hatred is unimaginably destructive and is the most powerful enemy of one's cultivated path and wholesome conducts. The reason is that once hatred arises from within the mind, thousands of karmic obstructions will follow to appear immediately, impeding the practitioner from making progress on the cultivated path and learning of the philosophy of Buddhism. Therefore, the ancient virtuous beings taught: "One vindictive thought just barely surfaced, ten of thousands of doors of obstructions are all open." Supposing while you were practicing meditation, and your mind suddenly drifted to a person who has often insulted and mistreated you with bitter words. Because of these thoughts, you begin to feel sad, angry, and unable to maintain peace of mind; thus, even though your body is sitting there quietly, your mind is filled with afflictions and hatred. Some may go so far as leaving their seat, stopping meditation, abandoning whatever they are doing, and getting completely caught up in their afflictions. Furthermore, there are those who get so angry and so depressed to the point where they can't eat and sleep; for their satisfaction, sometimes they wish their wicked friend to die right before their eyes. Through these, we know that hatred is capable of trampling the heart and mind, destroying people's cultivated path, and preventing everyone from

practicing wholesome deeds. Thus the Buddha taught the way to tame hatred in the Lotus Sutra as follows: “Use great compassion as a home, use peace and tolerance as the armor, use all the Dharma of Emptiness as the sitting throne.” We should think that when we have hatred and afflictions, the first thing that we should be aware of is we are bringing miseries on ourselves. The fire of hatred and afflictions internally burns at our soul, and externally influences our bodies, standing and sitting restlessly, crying, moaning, screaming, etc. In this way, not only are we unable to change and tame the enemy, but also unable to gain any peace and happiness for ourselves.

When angry states of mind arise strongly, balance them by developing feelings of loving-kindness. If someone does something bad or gets angry, do not get angry ourselves. If we do, we are being more ignorant than they. Be wise. Keep compassion in mind, for that person is suffering. Fill our mind with loving-kindness as if he was a dear brother. Concentrate on the feeling of loving-kindness as a meditation subject. Spread it to all beings in the world. Only through loving-kindness is hatred overcome. Also according to Most Venerable Narada in *The Buddha and His Teachings*, these are the inevitable consequences of ill-will: first, ugliness; second, manifold diseases; and third, detestable nature. In order to repent the mind of anger one must first repent the mind-karma. Sincere Buddhists should always remember that the mind consciousness is the reason to give rise to infinite offenses of the other five consciousnesses, from Sight, Hearing, Scent, Taste, and Touch Consciousnesses. The mind consciousness is similar to an order passed down from the King to his magistrates and chancellors. Eyes take great pleasure in looking and observing unwholesome things, ears take great pleasure in listening to melodious sounds, nose takes great pleasure in smelling aromas and fragrance, tongue takes great pleasure in speaking vulgarly and irresponsibly as well as finding joy in tasting the various delicacies, foods, and wines, etc; body takes great pleasure in feeling various sensations of warmth, coolness, softness, velvet clothing. Karmic offenses arise from these five consciousness come from their master, the Mind; the mind consciousness is solely responsible for all their actions. In the end, this will result in continual drowning in the three evil paths, enduring infinite pains and sufferings in hells, hungry ghosts, and animals. In the *Dharmapada*, the Buddha taught: “Guard one’s mind much like guarding a castle; protect the mind similar to protecting the eye ball. Mind is an enemy capable of destroying and eliminating all of the virtues and merits one has worked so hard to accumulate during one’s existence, or sometimes many lifetimes. To repent the mind-karma, sincere Buddhists should think that the three karmas of Greed, Hatred, and Ignorance of the mind are the roots and foundations of infinite karmic transgressions. The mind-karma is the web of ignorance which masks our wisdom and is the

affliction and worry that cover our true nature. It should be feared and needs be avoided. Sincere Buddhists should use their heart and mind to sincerely confess and repent, be remorseful, and vow never again to commit such offenses.

Talking about the attitude of acceptance or not acceptance of angry and displeased, according to the Middle Length Discourses, the Buddha taught: “Angry and displeased, brahmana Akkosaka-bharadvaja went to the Enlightened One, and there abused and reviled the Enlightened One in harsh and rude words. Being thus spoken the Enlightened One said to the brahmana: “What do you think Brahmana? Do your friends and acquaintances, do your blood relatives and guests pay a visit to you?” Akkosaka replied: “Yes, sometimes, friends and acquaintances, blood relatives and guests pay me a visit.” The Buddha said: “What do you think, o brahmana? Do you offer them food to chew, to eat and to taste?” Akkosaka replied: “Sometimes, I offer them food to chew, to eat and to taste.” The Buddha continued to ask: “O brahmana, if they do not accept them, to whom these foods come back? Brahmana replied: “If they do not accept them, these foods come back to us.” The Buddha continued to say: “In the same way, o brahmana! You have abused us who do not abuse. You have reviled us who do not revile. You have scolded us who do not scold. We do not accept them from you, so they are all for you. O brahmana, they are all for you. O brahmana, he who abuses back when abused at, who reviles back when reviled, who scolds back when scolded, o brahmana, this is called eating them together and sharing them together. We do not eat them with you. We do not share them with you. So they are all for you, o brahmana! They are all for you, o brahmana! Thus the Buddha always reminded his disciples: “Hatreds do not cease hatred; by love alone do they cease.” The Buddha continued to remind: “The more evil that comes to me, the more good will radiate from me, for I always return good for evil.” Some people believe that it’s not practical to return good for evil and they believe that “return swords for swords.” Yes, it’s easy to think and to do about “return sword for sword,” but in doing that we might get caught in the quagmire of troubles. It’s extremely difficult by returning good for evil. It’s extremely difficult to smile with the person who just raised his hand to beat us, but we are the Buddha’s disciples, we must listen to his teaching, we must return good for evil at all times, in all places and circumstances. The Buddha taught: “Bandits who steal merits are of no comparison to hatred and anger. Because when hatred and anger arise, inevitable innumerable karma will be created. Immediately thereafter, hundreds and thousands of obstructions will appear, masking the proper teachings of enlightenment, burying and dimming the Buddha Nature. Therefore, a thought of hatred and anger had just barely risen, ten thousands of karmic doors will open immediately. It is to say with

just one thought of hatred, one must endure all such obstructions and obstacles.” In the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: “He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me.” Hatred will never leave those who dwell on such thoughts (3). “He abused me, he hit me, he defeated me, he robbed me.” Hatred will leave those who do not harbor such thoughts (4). In this world, hatred never destroys (eliminates) hatred, only love does. This is an eternal law (5). One should give up anger; one should abandon pride. One should overcome all fetters. No suffering befall him who calls nothing his own (Dharmapada 221). He who controls his anger which arises as a rolling chariot. He is a true charioteer. Other people are only holding the rein (Dharmapada 222). Conquer anger by love; conquer evil by good; conquer stingy by giving; conquer the liar by truth (Dharmapada 223). One should speak the truth. One should not be angry. One should give when asked to. These are three good deeds that help carry men the realm of heaven (224). One should guard against the bodily anger, or physical action, and should control the body. One should give up evil conduct of the body. One should be of good bodily conduct (Dharmapada 231). One should guard against the anger of the tongue; one should control the tongue. One should give up evil conduct in speech. One should be of good conduct in speech (Dharmapada 232). One should guard against the anger of the mind; one should control the mind. One should give up evil conduct of the mind. One should practice virtue with the mind (Dharmapada 233).

The Third Robber of Afflictions Is “Ignorance”: In Buddhism, Avidya is noncognizance of the four noble truths, the three precious ones (triratna), and the law of karma, etc. Avidya is the first link of conditionality (pratityasampada), which leads to entanglement of the world of samsara and the root of all unwholesome in the world. This is the primary factor that enmeshes (làm vướng víu) beings in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. In a Buddhist sense, it refers to lack of understanding of the four noble truths (Arya-satya), the effects of actions (karma), dependent arising (pratitya-samutpada), and other key Buddhist doctrines. In Madhyamaka, “Avidya” refers to the determination of the mind through ideas and concepts that permit beings to construct an ideal world that confers upon the everyday world its forms and manifold quality, and that thus block vision of reality. “Avidya” is thus the nonrecognition of the true nature of the world, which is empty (shunyata), and the mistaken understanding of the nature of phenomena. Thus “avidya” has a double function: ignorance veils the true nature and also constructs the illusory appearance. “Avidya” characterizes the conventional reality. For the Sautrantikas and Vaibhashikas, “Avidya” means seeing the world as unitary and enduring, whereas in reality it is manifold and impermanent. “Avidya” confers substantiality on the world and its

appearances. In the Yogachara's view, "avidya" means seeing the object as a unit independent of consciousness, when in reality it is identical with it. Ignorance means Unenlightened, the first or last of the twelve nidanas. Ignorance is Illusion or darkness without illumination, the ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance of the way of escape from sufferings, one of the three affluences that feed the stream of mortality or transmigration. Sometimes ignorance means "Maya" or "Illusion." It means complete darkness without illumination. The ignorance which mistakes seeming for being, or illusory phenomena for realities. Ignorance is the main cause of our non-enlightenment. Ignorance is only a false mark, so it is subject to production, extinction, increase, decrease, defilement, purity, and so on. Ignorance is the main cause of our birth, old age, worry, grief, misery, and sickness, and death. Ignorance is one of the three fires which must be allowed to die out before Nirvana is attained. The erroneous state of mind which arises from belief in self. It is due to ignorance, people do not see things as they really are, and cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They become blind under the delusion of self, clinging to things which are impermanent, changeable, and perishable.

III. To Subdue Three Robbers of Afflictions of Lust, Anger and Ignorance According to The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and Practice:

The karma of greed, anger and delusion manifest themselves in many forms, which are impossible to describe fully. To refrain from greed, anger, jealousy, and other evil thoughts to which people are subject, we need strength of mind, strenuous effort and vigilance. When we are free from the city life, from nagging preoccupation with daily life, we are not tempted to lose control; but when we enter in the real society, it becomes an effort to check these troubles. Meditation will contribute an immense help to enable us to face all this with calm. According to Most Venerable Thích Thiện Tâm in *The Pure Land Buddhism in Theory and Practice*, there are four basic ways to subdue them. Depending on the circumstances, the practitioner can use either one of these four methods to counteract the karma of greed, anger and delusion. ***The First Method Is "Suppressing Afflictions with the Mind":*** There are only two points of divergence between the deluded and the enlightened, i.e., Buddhas and Bodhisattvas: purity is Buddhahood, defilement is the state of sentient beings. Because the Buddhas are in accord with the Pure Mind, they are enlightened, fully endowed with spiritual powers and wisdom. Because sentient beings are attached to worldly Dusts, they are deluded and revolve in the cycle of Birth and Death. To practice Pure Land is

to go deep into the Buddha Recitation Samadhi, awakening to the Original Mind and attaining Buddhahood. Therefore, if any deluded, agitated thought develops during Buddha Recitation, it should be severed immediately, allowing us to return to the state of the Pure Mind. This is the method of counteracting afflictions with the mind. ***The Second Method Is “Suppressing Afflictions with Noumenon”***: When deluded thoughts arise which cannot be suppressed with the mind, we should move to the second stage and “visualize principles.” For example, whenever the affliction of greed develops, we should visualize the principles of impurity, suffering, impermanence, and no-self. Whenever the affliction of anger arises, we should visualize the principles of compassion, forgiveness and emptiness of all dharmas. ***The Third Method Is “Suppressing Afflictions with Phenomena”***: People with heavy karma who cannot suppress their afflictions by visualizing principles alone, we should use “phenomena,” that is external forms. For example, individuals who are prone to anger and delusion and are aware of their shortcomings, should, when they are on the verge of bursting into a quarrel, immediately leave the scene and slowly sip a glass of cold water. Those heavily afflicted with the karma of lust-attachment who cannot suppress their afflictions through “visualization of principle,” should arrange to be near virtuous Elders and concentrate on Buddhist activities or distant travel, to overcome lust and memories gradually as mentioned in the saying “out of sight, out of mind.” This is because sentient beings’ minds closely parallel their surroundings and environment. If the surroundings disappear, the mind loses its anchor, and gradually, all memories fade away. ***The Fourth Method Is “Suppressing Afflictions with Repentance and Recitation”***: In addition to the above three methods, which range from the subtle to the gross, there is also a fourth: repentance and the recitation of sutras, mantras and the Buddha’s name. If performed regularly, repentance and recitation eradicate bad karma and generate merit and wisdom. For this reason, many cultivators in times past, before receiving the precepts or embarking upon some great Dharma work such as building a temple or translating a sutra, would vow to recite the Great Compassion Mantra tens of thousands of times, or to recite the entire Larger Prajna Paramita Sutra, the longest sutra in the Buddha canon. In the past, during lay retreats, if a practitioner had heavy karmic obstructions and could not recite the Buddha’s name with a pure mind or clearly visualize Amitabha Buddha, the presiding Dharma Master would usually advise him to follow the practice of “bowing repentance with incense.” This method consists of lighting a long incense stick and respectfully bowing in repentance while uttering the Buddha’s name, until the stick is burnt out. There are cases of individuals with heavy karma who would spend the entire seven or twenty-one-day retreat doing nothing but “bowing with incense.”

Chapter Forty-Four

Other Methods Used to Subdue the Robbers of Afflictions in Buddhist Cultivation

According to Buddhist teachings, demonic obstructions can be demonic afflictions. These demons represent the afflictions of greed, anger, resentment, delusion, contempt, doubt and wrong views. They also include the demons of the Five Skandas, the Six Entrances, the Twelve Sense Fields, and the Eighteen Elements. These demons are also called “internal” as they created by topsy-turvy, delusive states of mind. Therefore, they must be overcome by the bright, enlightened mind. The human mind is easily moved, developing afflictions not only because of personal karma but also because of the common karma of living in an environment filled, for the most part, with evil beings. Some persons cannot resist the attractions of the five Dusts and thus fall into evil ways. Others, encountering adverse conditions, grow sad and mournful and lose their determination to progress. Such developments depending on their severity, render the cultivator despondent, indignant and ill, or worse still, cause him to abandon the Buddhist Order or even to commit suicide out of despair. More harmful still, they can lead to loss of respect and good will toward other cultivators, sometimes even hatred and avoidance of clergy and lay people alike. Loss of faith in cause and effect, bad karma and finally, descent upon the three Evil Paths are the end result. To counteract these demons, the practitioner should reflect that all afflictions are illusory, upsetting, suffocating, binding, evil and conducive only to suffering for both himself and others. To eliminate afflictions is to return to the True Mind, free and liberated, fresh and tranquil, bright and clear, happy and at peace, transcendental and wondrous. The cultivator should also meditate in the same way on all attachments, from the Five Skandas to the Eighteen Elements. Besides, afflictions also include worldly cares, sensual desire, passions, unfortunate longings, suffering, pain that arise out of a deluded view of the world. In the four great vows, an adherent of Zen vows to eliminate these passions which obstruct the path to the attainment of enlightenment.

Affliction also means suffering (pain), sorrow, distress, or calamity. Affliction includes delusion, moral faults, passions, and wrong belief. The way of temptation or passion which produces bad karma (life's distress and delusion), cause one to wander in the samsara and hinder one from reaching enlightenment. In order to attain enlightenment, the number one priority is to eliminate these defilements by cultivating on a regular basis. The main goal of Buddhist practitioners is of course to attain the ultimate enlightenment and emancipation; however, the immediate goal we must achieve is the attaining of happiness in the midst of the world which is full of sufferings and afflictions. In order to achieve this immediate goal, practitioners' every moment in life must be moment of living and cultivating in the spirit of reducing afflictions without any exception. In Buddhist cultivation, in order to achieve the ends of peace, mindfulness, happiness, and eventual emancipation, practitioners should always try to subdue these ten robbers that cause afflictions. Beside sense restraint in daily activities mentioned above, there are still many other methods of subduing them, below are some other typical methods that practitioners should consider.

First, To Subdue These Robbers of Afflictions Through the Cultivation of Doing no Evil, Doing Only Good, and Purifying the Mind: In order to reduce demonic obstructions as well as to terminate the suffering and affliction in life, The Buddha advises his fourfold disciple: "Do no evil, to do only good, to purify the mind." In the Agama Sutra, the Buddha taught: "Do not commit wrongs, devoutly practice all kinds of good, purify the mind, that's Buddhism", or "To do no evil, to do only good, to purify the will, is the doctrine of all Buddhas." These four sentences are said to include all the Buddha-teaching. The Buddha's teachings in the Dharmapada Sutra: "A wise man should abandon the way of woeful states and follows the bright way. He should go from his home to the homeless state and live in accordance with the rules for Sramanas (Dharmapada 87). A wise man should purge himself from all the impurities of the mind, give up sensual pleasures, and seek great delight in Nirvana (Dharmapada 88). Those whose minds are well-trained and well-perfected in the seven factors of enlightenment, who give up of grasping, abandon defiled minds, and eradicate all afflictions. They are shining ones and have completely liberated and attained Nirvana even in this world

(Dharmapada 89).” However, the Buddha’s teachings are usually easy to speak but very difficult to put in practice. Yes! “Not to commit any sin, to do good, to purify one’s mind.” Buddha’s teaching is so easy to speak about, but very difficult to put into practice. The Buddha’s teaching is so easy that a child of three knows how to speak, but it is so difficult that even an old man of eighty finds it difficult to practice. According to the Forty-Two Sections Sutra, Chapter 18, the Buddha said: “My Dharma is the mindfulness that is both mindfulness and non-mindfulness. It is the practice that is both practice and non-practice. It is words that are words and non-words. It is cultivation that is cultivation and non-cultivation. Those who understand are near to it; those who are confused are far from it indeed. The path of words and language is cut off; it cannot be categorized as a thing. If you are off (removed) by a hair’s breadth, you lose it in an instant.”

Second, To Subdue These Robbers of Afflictions Through Overcoming Greed, Anger, and Jealousy: To refrain from greed, anger, jealousy, and other evil thoughts to which people are subject, we need strength of mind, strenuous effort and vigilance. When we are free from the city life, from nagging preoccupation with daily life, we are not tempted to lose control; but when we enter in the real society, it becomes an effort to check these troubles. Meditation will contribute an immense help to enable us to face all this with calm. There are only two points of divergence between the deluded and the enlightened, i.e., Buddhas and Bodhisattvas: purity is Buddhahood, defilement is the state of sentient beings. Because the Buddhas are in accord with the Pure Mind, they are enlightened, fully endowed with spiritual powers and wisdom. Because sentient beings are attached to worldly Dusts, they are deluded and revolve in the cycle of Birth and Death. To practice Pure Land is to go deep into the Buddha Recitation Samadhi, awakening to the Original Mind and attaining Buddhahood. Therefore, if any deluded, agitated thought develops during Buddha Recitation, it should be severed immediately, allowing us to return to the state of the Pure Mind. This is the method of counteracting afflictions with the meditating mind.

Third, To Subdue These Robbers of Afflictions With Repentance on the Three Karmas: From infinite eons, because we have been drowning deeply in the concept of “Self,” ignorance has ruled and

governed us. Thus, our body, speech, and mind have created infinite karmas and even great transgressions, such as being ungrateful and disloyal to our fathers, mothers, the Triple Jewels, etc, were not spared. Now that we are awakened, it is necessary to feel ashamed and be remorseful by using the same three karmas of body, speech, and mind to repent sincerely. Maitreya Bodhisattva, even as a “One-Birth Maha-Bodhisattva,” six times daily he still performs the repentance ceremony praying to eliminate binding ignorance quickly. As a Maha-Bodhisattva, his ‘binding ignorance’ is infinitesimal, yet He still repents to eliminate them. Sincere Buddhists should develop vow to feel ashamed and be remorseful by using the same three karmas of body, speech, and mind to repent sincerely, to make the Triple Jewels glorious, help and rescue sentient beings, in order to compensate and atone for past transgressions and repay the four-gratefals including the Triple Jewels, parents, teachers of both life and religion, and all sentient beings. *The first repentance is the repentance of the body karma:* Body karma openly confess all transgressions, vow not to kill or prohibiting taking of life, not to steal or prohibiting stealing, not to commit adultery or prohibiting committing adultery, and pray for them to disappear, and then use that body to practice wholesome actions, such as alms givings, offerings, etc. The Buddha taught: “The body is the origin of all sufferings, is the root of all tortures, punishments and karmic retributions in the three domains.” Because of ignorance and stupidity, sentient beings are only concerned with our bodies and have not the slightest care of other people’s bodies. We are only aware of our own sufferings, but completely oblivious of others’ pains and sufferings. We only know of our hopes for peace and happiness but unaware that others, too, have hope for peace and happiness. Moreover, because of ignorance and stupidity, we give rise to the mind of self and other, which gives rise to the perception of friends and strangers. Gradually over time, this perception sometimes develops into feuds and hatred among people, who become enemies for countless aeons (life after life, one reincarnation after reincarnation). There are three kinds of body karma: killing, stealing, and sexual misconducts. To repent the body karma, we should bow and prostrate our body to the Triple Jewels, and realize that our body is inherently impermanent, filled with sicknesses, constantly changing, and

transforming. Thus, in the end, we cannot control and command it. We should never be so obsessed and overly concerned with our body and let it causes so many evil deeds. *The second repentance is the repentance of the speech karma:* Speech karma openly confess all transgressions, vow not to lie, not to exaggerate, not to abuse (curse), not to have ambiguous talk, not to insult, not to exaggerate, not to speak with a double-tongue, and pray for them to disappear, and then use that speech to practice Buddha Recitation, chant sutras, speak wholesomely, etc. The Buddha taught: “The mouth is the gate and door to all hateful retaliations.” The karmic retribution for speech-karma is the greatest. Speech-karma gives rise to four great karmic offenses: lying, insulting, gossiping, and speaking with a double tongue maner. Because of these four unwholesome speeches, sentient beings accumulate infinite and endless offenses ranging from speaking artificially, sweetly, manipulatively to speaking untruthfully, words and actions contradicting one another, etc. Once the mind of hatred arises, not mention strangers, even one’s parents, religious masters, etc., there is not an insult one will not speak. No malicious words will be spared, whether saying hateful words with intention of causing separation between two people, saying something happened when it didn’t or when it didn’t happen saying it did; thus, speaking irresponsibly and chaotically without the slightest consideration of what is being said. Sincere Buddhists should always repent the body-karma by using the “mouth of transgressions” of the past to change it into praises and glorification of the virtuous practices of the Buddhas. Use that speech often to speak of kindness, encouraging others to cultivate the Way and change for the better, i.e. sitting meditation, Buddha-Recitation, or chanting sutras, etc. Thereafter, for the remainder of this life, vow not to use one mouth and tongue to speak vulgarly, disrespectfully, and before the Triple Jewels, sincerely confess and willingly admit to all offenses without concealment. Thus, use the same mouth and tongue which has created countless offenses in the past to give birth to infinite merits, virtues, and wholesome karma at the present. *The third repentance is the repentance of the mind-karma:* Mind Karma must be genuine, remorseful, vow not to be covetous, not to be malicious, not to be unbelief, not to be greedy, not to be hatred, not to be ignorant, vowing not to revert back to the old ways. Sincere Buddhists should

always remember that the mind consciousness is the reason to give rise to infinite offenses of the other five consciousnesses, from Sight, Hearing, Scent, Taste, and Touch Consciousnesses. The mind consciousness is similar to an order passed down from the King to his magistrates and chancellors. Eyes take great pleasure in looking and observing unwholesome things, ears take great pleasure in listening to melodious sounds, nose takes great pleasure in smelling aromas and fragrance, tongue takes great pleasure in speaking vulgarly and irresponsibly as well as finding joy in tasting the various delicacies, foods, and wines, etc; body takes great pleasure in feeling various sensations of warmth, coolness, softness, velvet clothing. Karmic offenses arise from these five consciousness, come from their master, the Mind; the mind consciousness is solely responsible for all their actions. In the end, this will result in continual drowning in the three evil paths, enduring infinite pains and sufferings in hells, hungry ghosts, and animals. In the Dharmapada, the Buddha taught: “Guard one’s mind much like guarding a castle; protect the mind similar to protecting the eye ball. Mind is an enemy capable of destroying and eliminating all of the virtues and merits one has worked so hard to accumulate during one’s existence, or sometimes many lifetimes.” Also in the Dharmapada Sutra, the Buddha taught: Like a well-trained horse, touch by the whip, even so be strenuous and zealous. By faith, by virtue, by effort, by concentration, by investigation of the Truth, by being endowed with knowledge and conduct, and being mindful, get rid of this great suffering (144). To repent the mind-karma, sincere Buddhists should think that the three karmas of Greed, Hatred, and Ignorance of the mind are the roots and foundations of infinite karmic transgressions. The mind-karma is the web of ignorance which masks our wisdom and is the affliction and worry that cover our true nature. It should be feared and needs be avoided. Sincere Buddhists should use their heart and mind to sincerely confess and repent, be remorseful, and vow never again to commit such offenses.

Tài Liệu Tham Khảo

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