



# TRAINING THE TRAINERS



PART 2



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PART 2

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Z-TECH FOOTWEAR (THAILAND) Co.,LTD.

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**PRINTER**

PRINTED 10,000 COPIES IN 2017 AT RUNGSILP PRINTING (1977) Co. LTD, BANGKOK

ISBN 978-616-305-607-8

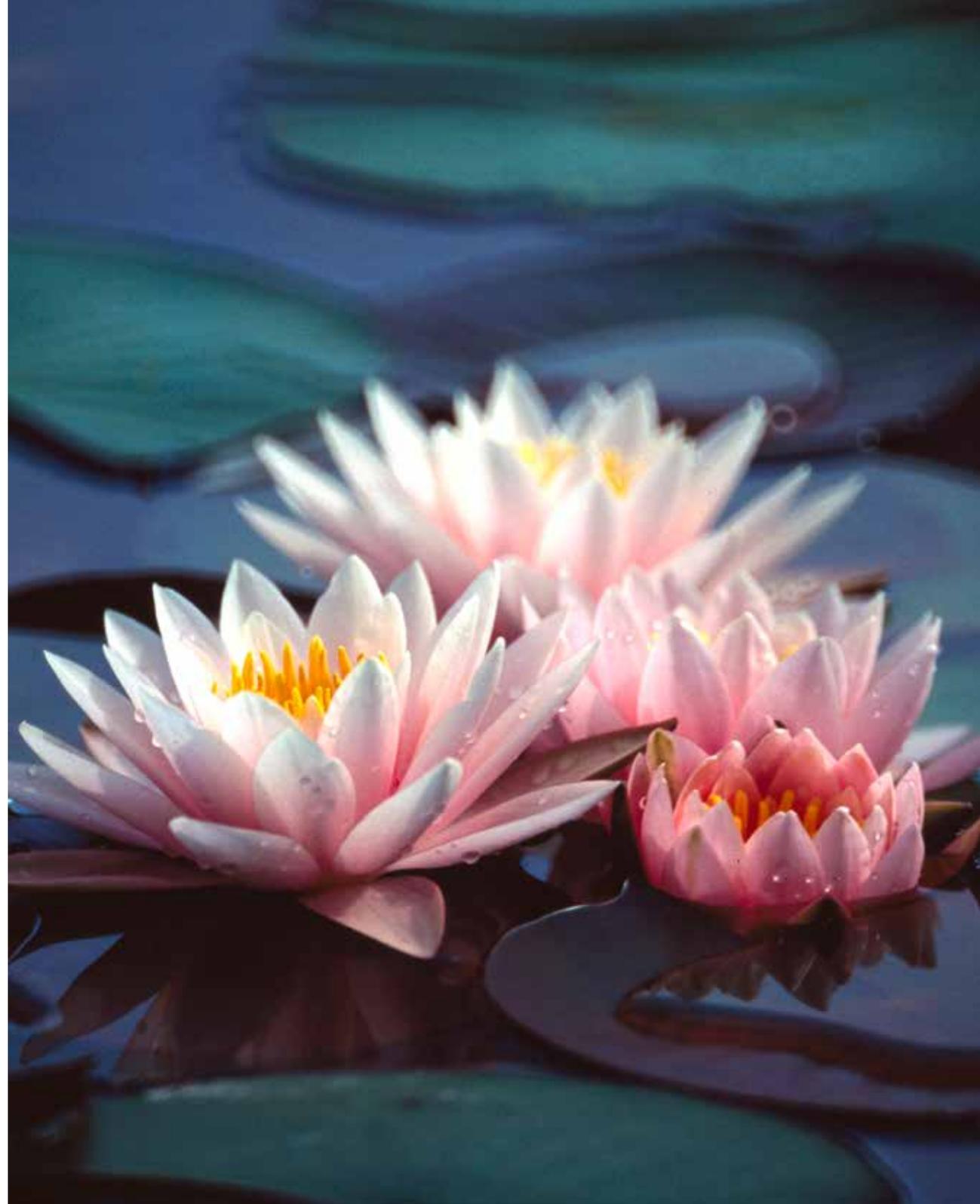
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## FOREWORD

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This book is the second in the series of ‘Training the Trainers’ that is a translation into English based on lectures given by a Most Venerable Thai Monk in his native tongue. In order to convey the content accurately and understandably to an international readership, some of the cultural references unique to the life and ways of Thai people have been adjusted so that they may be more easily comprehended by those of other nationalities, faiths and beliefs.

Luang Por (Venerable Father) Dattajeevo is a man of immense moral and academic stature to all those who are fortunate enough to receive his guidance personally. Through a lifetime of dedicating his thoughts, studies, words and actions to bring the truths hidden within the Dhamma (the true nature of all things both physical and spiritual) to all people, he has not only accumulated great wisdom and brilliance of his own ‘Inner Light’, but he has developed a manner that commands deep respect while engaging with his pupils in an approachable down-to-earth way. He exudes warmth and a fatherly concern that cannot be portrayed by words alone. He claims to be an ordinary person who has simply studied and practiced in accordance with his ordination vows and precepts to the best of his ability. If this is so, it should be said that to all who know him he is ordinary in a most remarkable and respectfully admirable way.

Luang Por’s charismatic approach to engaging his pupils is undoubtedly a gift inherent in his personality and Kamma (moral causation), for many diligently strive to attain his level of knowledge and ability to pass on that knowledge without ever matching his degree of success. It is hoped that this translation will enable a deeper understanding of the process of absorbing information and passing it on to others. What makes this a different study compared to a purely academic approach is that with Luang Por the ethical and consequential results of the learning and teaching process are of paramount importance to us not only in this lifetime but also into the next.

In an attempt to provide an insight into the charismatic approach and character of Luan Por, when confronted or challenged by a question, even a question that may appear to dispute the content of his guidance and one that he has undoubtedly been asked many hundreds of times before, he transfixes the questioner's attention to concentrate on the answer that is given by characteristically and quizzically tilting his head to one side, warmly smiling with an almost mischievous glint of delight at being asked the question, whilst simultaneously engaging a reassuringly assertive direct eye to eye contact before proceeding to answer with a generosity of spirit, to which even those most resistant to overcoming their own biases and ignorance cannot fail to succumb. His logical and reasoned address is always not only relevant to the subject matter but also appropriate to his pupil's personal levels of understanding.

Luang Por's down-to-earth, matter-of-fact approach is revealed by the way he injects amusing or apposite anecdotes of his own life experiences when lecturing, to colour, illustrate and explain how he developed his own ethical foundations and teaching skills, plus the sources of inspiration that led to his ordination as a Buddhist monk and to his lifelong dedication to the purpose of his vows, which are to pass on the Dhamma to future generations. He recalls during one of his lectures on 'Training the Trainers', although not included in the main body of this book, that during his schooldays he started training others when he was in elementary class; he always wanted to share with others what he had learned. He gave them knowledge so that they could research by themselves; later they came back and shared with him what they had learned - and so his knowledge increased even more. When he met the much respected Buddhist nun Khun Yai Ajahn he saw how the team of which she was an important integral part wanted to take all beings to Nirvana. He was greatly attracted by this so he joined the team and became ordained.

In the beginning Luang Por was neither sure nor confident of whether he would be able to teach others the profound truth and wisdom of what he was learning, so he went to Khun Yai Ajahn to ask what he should teach them. She told him to ask himself this question: "Ever since you met me, what habits have you already

corrected in yourself? When you find the answer to this, teach it to others". She told him not to be a person who taught things out of a text book, but to be a living example that other people would observe and follow. This implied he could only teach properly that which he had learned and fully understood himself. Understanding what he had learned and applying it in his own life would give him the capacity, ability and confidence to impart it to others.

Luang Por realised that the problems of the world are the same now as they were thousands of years ago and would continue to be the same however far into the future we may go. The problems stay the same; the world has greed, anger and delusion - even in the next million years the problems will remain the same. Nothing will change, except that the degree of greed, anger and delusion, plus the tools used in the name of greed, anger and delusion will be different. Whatever we can teach that reduces greed, anger and delusion in the minds of people should be taught; when we teach how to decrease these, people will become happier and more peaceful.

In answer to his question to Khun Yai Ajahn of "how should we teach?", Luang Por learned that whichever teacher you have and consider to be effective you can copy or combine that teacher's style with others and incorporate it into your own style and that this is a self-improvement process that should be applied throughout life.

The simple yet morally strengthening discipline and habit-forming strictness exerted by his father on the way he was brought up is shared by Luang Por's account of when he was a young boy and started attending school. His family at that time resided on a fruit plantation and his father, being of a very kind and generous disposition, told him he could invite his friends to pick up fruits that had fallen from the trees. Luan Por duly invited his firm friends, but from afar his father was closely observing them and told him that the next time he invited his friends he should only invite those who were polite and not greedy, because these were people who it was good to be friends with. Luang Por understood and respected his father's good advice by being more selective in the nature of the friends he invited on future occasions, choosing his friends more wisely.

One day in first grade, Luang Por brought his best friend to his house. His father asked him what his friend's family name was and after his friend had left, forbade him to associate or play with that person in future. Luang Por did not understand why his father had given him this stern instruction, but nevertheless, he dutifully abided by his father's instruction. Sometime later, Luang Por asked his father the reason for this instruction. His father asked Luang Por to trust him as he knew the friend's father to be a dishonest thief. Luang Por was later to discover that the friend was also not an honest and good person with whom to associate and that his father's advice, although not fully understood or appreciated at the time, was of great benefit to him in choosing the company he should keep.

From an early age, Luang Por's father trained him in the home to prepare refreshment for visiting guests and allowed him to listen to adult's conversation. Sometimes he would give him permission to ask questions. His father would tell his close and trusted friends that he was afraid that his son, being the youngest, would grow up to be spoiled and naughty, so please would they do him a favour and punish his son if ever they were to see him misbehave. He even told this to Luang Por's teachers at school.

In Luang Por's mind, his father created a model of what kind of person he wanted his son to be around. However, in the beginning he didn't realise how lucky he was until he went to university and discovered he was trusted and looked up to by his peers. They always elected him to be class president; he saw that this was because of his mother and father's good example, training and discipline. This is also why Khun Yai Ajahn in her astute wisdom saw the virtuous nature of his upbringing and selected him as suitable and well prepared to be ordained for further training.

Another story that helps us to see the influence that a good upbringing has on a child is Luang Por's recollection of sometimes fighting with his sister when his father was away. When his father returned the neighbours would report that the children were fighting. The first thing his father would say, regardless of who was right or wrong was, "as the youngest you are not respecting your older sister according to seniority" and he would be spanked. Then, after the spanking, his

father would ask about who was right or wrong. If he was the wrong one he would be spanked again. Regardless of whether he was right or wrong, if he fought with his sister he would get spanked anyway. So he had to find a better way. He learned to wait until both he and his sister had calmed down, so that they may discuss their problem in a reasoned and amicable manner. He learned not to fight with his sister. Nor give in to his anger as it would make his situation worse.

"Because I wanted you to be a good person, I have had to be very strict with you", Luang Por's father told him on the day of his graduation. "If I had been easy going you would not have come this far". This explains why we should think of what our parents sacrificed to train us and how we should choose the correct approach and sense of responsibility to be considered as a good and virtuous trainer ourselves.

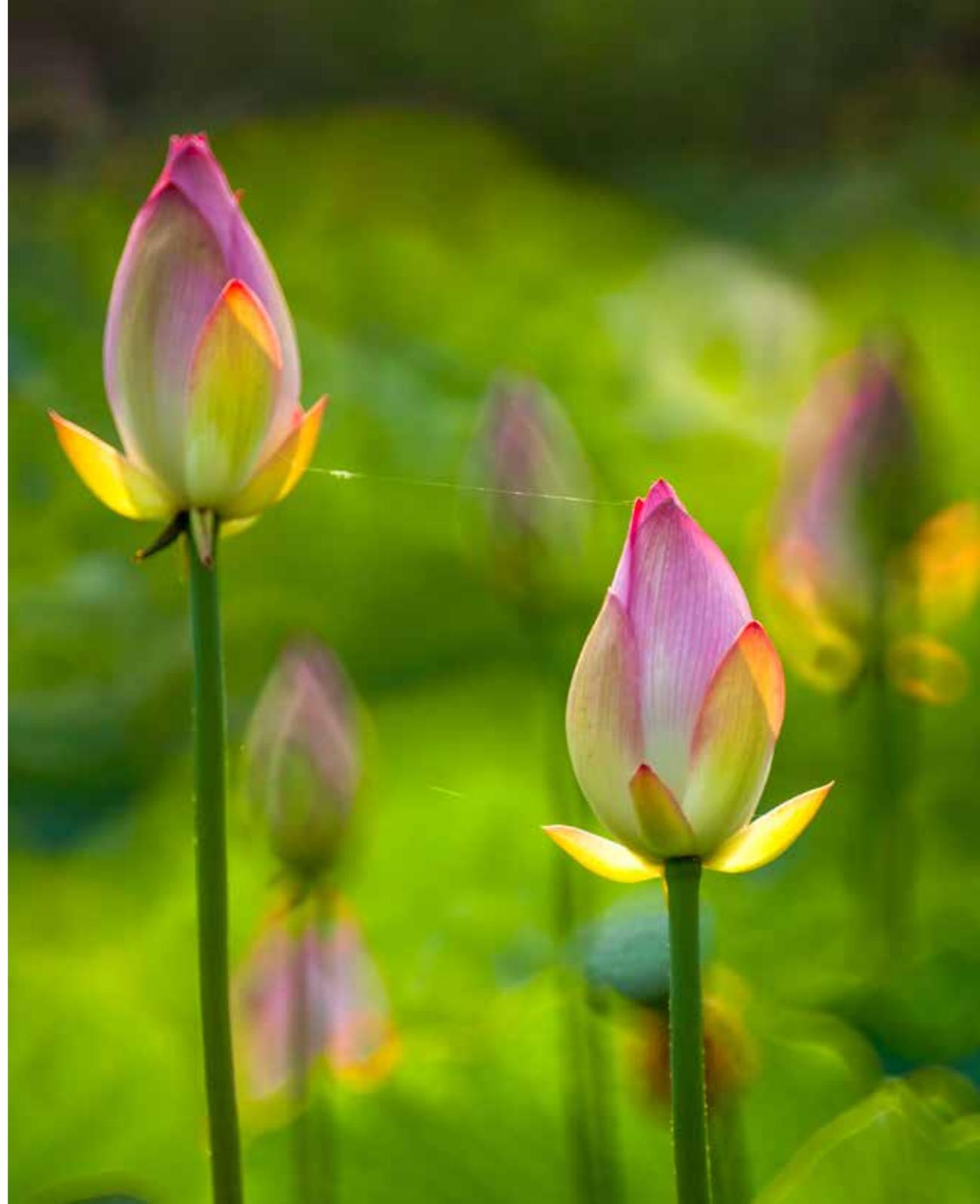
Luang Por's father had been a soldier awarded with a scholarship to study. Due to his diligence and academic abilities he always received first place throughout his studies. At the end of World War 1 his father's unit was disbanded and he was discharged from the military due to the country's economic constraints, so he returned home to be a farmer and work on the land. Despite no longer being in military service, whenever the military units had problems, people carrying huge volumes of documents would come to seek out his father to ask for his advice. This was because of the respect and high esteem his father had won among his peers as an example of his knowledge and reliable counsel. Closeness with nature combined with an awareness of the human condition caused his father to be curious about his past life, about the results of 'Good' and 'Bad', of heaven and hell. As his father spent all of his time on his duties as a parent and farmer, in order to answer his curiosities of a celestial nature he asked Luang Por to find the answers for him, which led Luang Por to Khun Yai Ajahn.

Luang Por's upbringing included the discipline of waking early, no matter the time he went to bed, keeping self and environment clean and tidy, choosing to associate with good people, plus respecting and valuing knowledge. He learned the necessity of training himself from a young age and was eager to learn. When

later in life he met Khun Yai Ajahn he learned of the three levels of life's goals and become further motivated by the realisation that all human beings are prisoners on 'Death Row', this knowledge inspired him to find a way to destroy the prison and commute forever the sentence being served by the inmates. He realised that by himself he could not destroy this prison as it is so enormous and has been built for such a long time. However, by sharing with others the knowledge he had acquired from the hard work and training given by Khun Yai Ajahn and Luang Por Dhammajayo (the Abbot of the temple into which he was ordained), his lone candle of enlightened knowledge would in turn light other candles, making the escape path from eternal sufferings infinitely brighter, safer and easier to follow.

Today Luang Por is responsible for many people and the operation of a large temple complex. These examples of what led him to this position in life are indicative of what makes Luan Por a trusted and reliable source of knowledge, gifted with the abilities and qualities of a model teacher, worthy of respectful consideration by all who chose to teach or are concerned by how they think, what they say and what they do, plus the effect they may have not only on themselves but also on their subordinates and other people around them, intentionally or unintentionally, by their influence.

Although the Dhamma is a Buddhist doctrine, it is a reflection of the reality of all things and not a product of, or possession unique to, Buddhism. You do not have to be a Buddhist to seek knowledge of the way things are, what is true and what is not true. Any thought or action will have an effect; this is a factual truth that can be proven, not a religious concept. It is hoped that this book, the second in the 'Training the Trainers' series, will be viewed in a way that readers do not blindly accept its contents but instead look within themselves to evaluate the virtue of the guidance herein and how they may suitably apply it in their lives, faiths, or beliefs and circumstances.





## INTRODUCTION

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Since man first walked upright and became aware of his own self existence, he started questioning his environment and the world around him. His thirst for knowledge and understanding was the foundation stone of what made this unique animal a human and quite distinct from all other species. His self awareness brought about the realization of mortality and what made him happy or unhappy. Life itself had value and the quality would be measured in terms of happiness, unhappiness and fulfilment. To this day, almost all humans seek the same knowledge that will educate them in order to understand and ultimately enlighten them as how to live in a way that will lead them to true happiness and fulfilment in their own lives.

This unquenchable human thirst to know and understand more has been the driving force for research and development of education and training continuously over many generations, focusing on both the manufactured and natural environments in an ever prevalent endeavour to elevate the human mind state and material progress. The rapid development of civilisation in more recent times has enabled life changing advances and developments in the fields of transportation and communications technology. We enjoy greater conveniences, comforts and increased expectations that directly or indirectly affect all aspects of our daily lives. Psychologically, as humans we believe that as education and comprehension has expanded, this will also have contributed to humans achieving an improved and happier mind condition. Physically, our level of conveniences and comforts should have also contributed to a more contented and happier state of mind.

The search for complete knowledge in the past was arduous and only assessable to a privileged few, but with the emergence of a new era of advanced technology with the miracle of instant communication and transference of information and knowledge via the internet, the human world is now equipped with a vast

exponential source of information and knowledge at their fingertips. However, the human world is still embroiled in local and worldwide conflicts, inequalities and biases that irrefutably dispel any logic that with increased knowledge, automatically so will our levels of fulfilment, happiness, peace of mind and peaceful coexistence also increase. To the contrary, human technological advancement and knowledge has increased the indiscriminate destructive capability of warfare armory, displacement of communities and vast swathes of the world population, plus required heightened levels of security and protection globally. So where are humans going wrong and what are the mistakes that have caused such catastrophic misuse of our knowledge and understanding?

The seemingly insurmountable problems humans face across the globe today as a result of their own defilements and failings emanate from three basic, but essential, educational and training inadequacies and oversights from the past.

1. Teaching curriculum knowledge and theories without teaching good practice, habits and application leads to inappropriate behaviour and application of the acquired knowledge. This may result with unintentional or intentional detriment to oneself, others and the immediate and extended natural environment.

However, Teaching combined with good practice, habits and application leads to the application of the acquired knowledge with disciplined virtuous intent leading to increased benefit, harmony and peace within society while respecting and valuing the environment.

2. To overlook the condition of inherent human sufferings when teaching is a great oversight as they influence our thoughts, words and deeds. An educational system strives to be efficient and progressive in imparting knowledge in its basic factual or theoretical form but not how to use this knowledge to solve our human sufferings; left unaddressed these sufferings will constantly arise to block our path to peace and happiness.

#### **Human sufferings in daily life arise from:**

1. Difficulties of physical illnesses

2. Difficulties of human coexistence
3. Difficulties of earning a livelihood
4. Difficulties of mental conditions

When humans lack the knowledge to alleviate their human sufferings, they are unable to tolerate these difficulties and turn to inappropriate and misguided solutions that adversely affect themselves, those around them, society and the natural environment.

3. New technology and emerging knowledge is not driven to eliminate the core human sufferings on a daily basis. The advancement of human knowledge is not linked to our understanding or eradication of our inherent human sufferings and quest for true peace and happiness. A great deal of human advancement is actually driven by the very human sufferings and difficulties we would desire to eradicate. It is therefore essential to be trained to contemplate and evaluate what is a necessity and what is superfluous to achieving the most desirable state of mind and body.

The primary fallibility of humanity reflects that society and peacefulness do not develop equally in line with material and technological advancement. More opportunity for gaining knowledge, more opportunity to create personal wealth, more opportunity to travel and gain first hand experiences, more entertainment and relaxation options. There seems to be almost more of everything that is supposed to make us happier but still human suffering psychologically and through conflict and disasters fills our world. Countries have advanced their technology and capabilities, reaching the moon, transplanting human organs and creating amazing communication options that are available to their citizens, but none to date has created an education program that enables its people to end the suffering in their daily lives and lead them along the path to blissfulness or ultimate happiness.

From these observations we can conclude that mainstream education is incomplete and flawed. Progress is measured statistically while that which cannot be quantified statistically is ignored to the detriment of reaching the end goal of

achieving a peaceful, happy and harmonious environment where suffering may be increasingly diminished until eliminated.

Human nature and suffering has changed little over the ages, however, the era of the Buddha may be considered the most harmonious of all time. Somehow in that era, the existence of the Lord Buddha, after enlightenment, provided the catalyst and wisdom to encourage and provide the means for ordinary human beings to follow in his footsteps. The Dhamma was revealed to teach mortals how to escape human sufferings by identifying and attending to the four difficulties that accompany their mortal existence in this and other lifetimes. With the four sufferings under control, a peaceful and clear mind follows that is suitable for spiritual practices leading to the Noble Eight Fold Path to Nirvana - the true source of ultimate happiness.

The Dhamma may be considered as the universal truth of all things containing the wisdom and knowledge to purge all human sufferings and defilements. It was revealed to the Lord Buddha when He attained enlightenment, a complete knowledge that consists of many extraordinary values because it is perfect and pure without any hidden perils. It is a universal knowledge that can truly end sufferings, whether they are physical or mental, of all people regardless of their race, religion or creed. Although contemporary, the Dhamma is eternal and never gets out of date, it is the immortal and timeless truth, because all human sufferings are universally the same regardless of past, present or future. This knowledge has proved to be profoundly genuine in goodness, righteous, beneficial and if fully embraced, indisputably diminishes or leads to the elimination of all human sufferings.

The Lord Buddha's enlightenment was the truth of all things for all people, empowering them with a source of complete knowledge with extraordinary quality and means to lessen or eradicate conflict issues. The teaching of the Dhamma by the Buddha to the people of his time, consisted of theory and practical knowledge that yielded instant results of peaceful coexistence, shared loving kindness and the self-pursuit to rid all sufferings. Under the Buddha's teaching and guidance the wisdom within the Dhamma was utilised appropriately and the

beneficial results were recorded in the Tripitaka, lasting evidence that the study and practice of Buddhist principles can really provide the means to solve the problems of human coexistence.

Therefore, regardless of what era we are born into, including the Buddha's time, we face the same issues and if we fail to attain a complete education and utilize complete knowledge accordingly, we are inescapably bound to encounter unrest and destructive influences and situations. By learning the complete knowledge that Prince Siddhartha discovered over 2,500 years ago, we will surely take a big step towards bringing peace, happiness, orderliness and discipline to the troubles and difficulties faced by the people of our increasingly shrinking and crowded world. Communication, travel and greater global population require the wisdom and tools embodied within the Dhamma teachings to ensure our peaceful coexistence.

Human beings generally tend to live together in communities comprising of family, neighbours, friends, colleagues and providers of services and commodities, these in turn become parts of a region and ultimately a country or nation. Nations trade and share borders with other nations, that with the advent of globalisation requires sophisticated and sometimes fragile coexistence rules and etiquette to ensure harmonious bilateral cooperation that will be mutually beneficial to all concerned. Each nation is affected by the external behaviour of the other nations, as are other nations affected by the behaviour of an individual's nation. Harmony, peace, prosperity or failure depends on adhering to a mutually beneficial conduct or moral and physical principled code of behaviour.

Given we are born human, we should firstly study and consider what is the form and nature of a human being, because this is our immediate and personal environment. In the first publication, 'Training The Trainers, PART 1', human factors were reasonably explained. So in this second issue, 'Training The Trainers PART 2', I would like to begin by briefly recapping on the qualities of an individual human being's body and mind. Knowledge based in Buddhist study notes explains that the human body is comprised of 4 elements: earth, water, wind and fire. Science study called these elements – repairing cells. Normally, millions of our body's



cells are dying every minute and we are burning our energy reserves to move and maintain our body temperature, so we need to eat and drink nourishment and fluid to replace dying cells and to prevent our cells from deteriorating or depleting too quickly. All humans are born with this built-in degradation of our cells throughout our lives and while we remain healthy this process is considered as our normal condition. However, when the body suffers weakness or illness, this inherent imperfection that causes cell deterioration will have negative implications on our health and even survival.

Thereby, we may assume that the physiology of the human body is fatally flawed since birth but the flaw does not show up because the body is still healthy. Once it is weak for whatever reasons the symptoms and consequences resulting from this flaw will appear.

Another component of the human being is the very refined element of the mind and the invisible wisdom and character to which we accredit it with. To see the mind we must draw not on technology to reveal its true character but to our 'Inner Eye', an innate but deeply hidden ability to visualise and connect with subconscious knowledge and truths within our own being.

For a human to access or know how to use their 'Inner Eye' they must have such a refined quality of mind that is equal to the quality and refinement of their own 'Inner Eye', only then will they see and know their own mind. A mind which has been refined equally to its 'Inner Eye' exists as a result of correct meditation practice. This knowledge was well-known and documented by our ancestors, appearing in all religions and faiths where there is a belief in mindful contemplation and practice to reveal the hidden truths within our mind and existence.

Some might say that to the detriment of humanity, modern educational systems aim only at scientifically accredited methods to access knowledge and understanding and tend to deride practices that refer to refining the mind and the 'Inner Eye' as a conduit to gain knowledge that would otherwise prove to be inaccessible by modern technology.

To meditate in order to connect with the 'Inner Eye', developing a clear mind is

the basic foundation. The more the mind is clear the better the meditation will progress. Therefore, the issue of whether a mind is clouded or clear is a crucial aspect in attaining knowledge that is true and complete.

As I came to realise the importance of developing a clear state of mind, I focused on searching for the best method to achieve and maintain this. The next focus was to develop the training that would enable those who possess a clouded mind to have the means that would bring clarity to the distortions their previously clouded mind had caused. The means needed to be a medium range practice achievable by all people, a method of practice accessible to everyone that would not be contrary to their native beliefs, cultures or environmental influences. I called this the practice of 'Universal Goodness'.

'Universal Goodness' as a practice for achieving a clear mind can only be described as 'Universal' if it can be followed using the shared abilities and characteristics that define us as a human being and are completely independent of our racial, social or cultural circumstances. Clearing one's mind produces instant results for the practitioner and those around them. With a clear or clearer mind there develops a sense of responsibility based on 'Universal Goodness' and shared humanity. When one becomes more responsible for oneself, others or society, the practical results are that sufferings can be seen to be tangibly reduced.

Therefore, The fact that we all have a common denominator of humanity, as a human being, regardless of race, languages or beliefs etc., by merely assuming a sense of responsibility for oneself we are creating the basis for goodness, not only in ourselves but within our communities and the world around us. By practicing 'Universal Goodness' we create universal ripples that are far reaching and easily perceivable by those who have a clear mind wherever they may be and under whatever circumstances. The human population is inextricably bonded by their humanity but divided by their clouded minds. This is why it is so very important to teach others to practice 'Universal Goodness' so they may be able to clear their minds in order to differentiate that which unites us from that which divides, which springs from the source of human sufferings.

I believe the practice of 'Universal Goodness' can be performed by anyone

without conflicting with their beliefs and understandings. My beliefs stem from my studies of the Dhamma, both theoretical and practical, including meditation. At the time of this lecture, I have been a Buddhist Monk for over 40-years with daily self-practice and training others in accordance with the Vinaya (monastic code of conduct). My commitment and dedication revealed to me that there is a kind of knowledge separate to that which is acquired by formal learning, an innate knowledge which exists inside naturally untainted by impurities and sufferings. However this pure source of knowledge is obscured to a greater or lesser degree by our clouded state of mind. When the mind becomes clear, this pure knowledge is revealed bringing forth relief and escape from all human sufferings and happiness will ensue. Prince Siddhartha discovered this concealed knowledge that resides within each human being and provided guidance on how to access and utilise this knowledge for the benefit of mankind and the environment. This knowledge holds the key to solving all the problems and dilemmas of this world.

Throughout most of my monastic life I have spent a great deal of time contemplating this complete knowledge and how to set out the principles and course of self-practice in a way that all people may absorb and understand this concept of an 'Inner Knowledge', plus how to access and implement it. My conclusions comprise of 5 practices which the people of the world can perform without conflict or interfering with their beliefs.

As previously explained, 'Universal Goodness' practices generate instant results in individuals and societies by developing a sense of responsibility; furthermore, these practices can transform a clouded mind into a clearer or clear one. Also, for the mind that is already clear, it will become clearer and more refined until it is suitable for spiritual practice that will enable unfettered access to the complete knowledge inside.

With regard to the procedures of the 5 practices established from studying Dhamma and Vinaya, many people wonder how it could be that when the Dhamma teachings of Lord Buddha are so various and so profound that these teachings should be combined with the Vinaya. However, these doubts will be

lessened when we understand the meaning of Dhamma and Vinaya. With this understanding, we come to realise that the complete knowledge Lord Buddha had discovered is the basic natural knowledge that leads to the procedure of the 5 practices of 'Universal Goodness'. Therefore, the 'Universal Goodness' also has different levels of profoundness similar to the Dhamma Lord Buddha discovered. And when practicing these 5 'Universal Goodness' procedures one will find the way to the ultimate happiness. One does this by starting from understanding the meaning of Dhamma and Vinaya as follows:

### **DHAMMA HAS 3 MEANINGS**

**The first meaning** refers to Nirvana as a pure natural state that really exists inside the human body, both male and female. This exists only during a human's lifetime and is specific to each individual, unable to be shared or taken away by someone else.

- Dhamma possesses a profound nature that has its own brightness, so bright than it may only be seen from a dimension of a spiritual eye; it can be seen with the Dhamma eye only. That's how difficult it is to grasp.

- Dhamma possesses a peaceful nature; delicate unlike anything we can compare it to in this world, thus it is unimaginable to use logic to explain what it may be similar to.

- Dhamma possesses a refined nature that can defend us from our defilements. Those who immerse themselves in sensual desire, anger and ignorance cannot see, but the wise who practice the Noble Eightfold Path immaculately will achieve protection from and eradication of their defilements.

- Dhamma possesses a bright nature, clean and pure which can eradicate darkness inside the mind. It can enable the enlightened one to see their own mind and its state and nature clearly, resulting in:

1. Ability to recall their past lives
2. Ability to recall others' past lives
3. Ability to eradicate defilements which are the original cause of ignorance and all sufferings, plus purify the mind until ultimate wisdom and true happiness arise.

The Lord Buddha was the first person in the world to have discovered this Dhamma, on the night of Visakha Day, 45 years before the birth of the Buddhist era. Humankind calls His discovery, 'Enlightenment'.

**The second meaning** refers to the words the Lord Buddha had given in practicing the mind to become pure until accomplishing the first meaning of Dhamma and the true nature of all things; both for worldly truth that can be seen with our physical eyes and the spiritual truth that can only be seen with the Dhamma eye in order to eradicate all sufferings for those following in His path.

This second meaning of Dhamma is commonly known as 'Buddhist doctrine' which was revealed by the Most Venerable Anantha and Arahants. It is apparent in the Suttantapitaka (The Basket of Discourses) and the Abhidhammapitaka (The Basket of Higher Doctrine) that this knowledge is pure as defined by 6 characteristics. There are:

1. Righteous
2. Only see by oneself
3. Can be attained regardless of era or time condition
4. Welcome observation
5. Can be practiced
6. Only know by oneself

**The third meaning** refers to the outcome of the good conduct followed by those who adhere to the teachings of the Lord Buddha in a responsible manner. The more responsible and diligent in adhering to the teachings a person becomes, the brighter and more spotless development of their mind state will become. Good conduct will be graded and aligned in accordance with the brightness of the mind as follows:

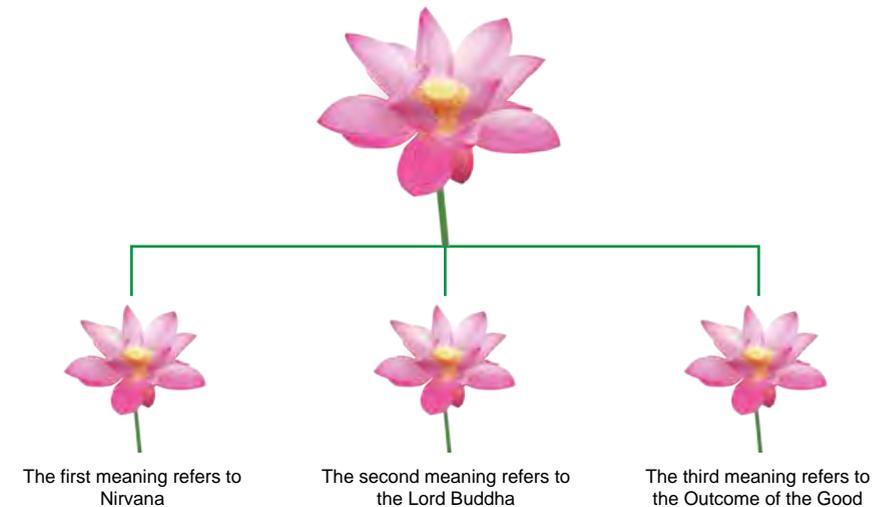
- A clear mind on the level of good habits that are the love of cleanliness, orderliness and politeness.

- A clear mind on the level of standard virtue such as endurance, sincerity, mindfulness and respect.

- A clear mind on the level of moral standards which are cleanliness, shame of sins, sense of right or wrong, preserving the 5 precepts (moral conducts) and finally practice the Noble Eightfold Path substantially. This will lead to a clear mind which can accomplish Dhamma meaning at the first stage by oneself.

No individual can practice these procedures for others or have others practice on their behalf; a lack of self-practice by an individual will lead them nowhere. This explanation is just a theory which is understandable but not yet a practical process.

### DHAMMA HAS 3 MEANINGS



When we understand the natures and characteristics of the Dhamma and that they are so profoundly refined and delicate in their realm of cleanliness, brightness and calmness, we can also understand that they may only be completely revealed to a clear and pure mind.

Therefore, it is imperative to practice in order to purify and clear the mind until it is as pure and refined as the Dhamma if we are to access our 'Inner Knowledge' and wisdom. With persistent practice, orderliness and advancement in absorbing the nature of the Dhamma is bound to follow. The primary benefit is that the mind becomes clear and bright by virtue of the orderliness that is known as the Vinaya.

Vinaya is the practice and procedures in the pursuit of self-perfection. In order for body, speech and mind to be governed by orderliness that is favourable to purifying the body that in turn leads to a cleaner and more refined state of mind in an ongoing process until finally attaining Dhamma.

Hence, Vinaya is the teachings of the Lord Buddha engaged with practice and procedure for supervising physical and verbal actions to maintain its cleanliness. When accustomed to the practice, the mind will be cleansed of its impure dullness and acknowledge that dirtiness is the source of all vices. Likewise, one will notice



the benefit of cleanliness as being the source of all goodness and desire the benefits to be gained by implanting the love of cleanliness to one's thinking, speaking and acting even more. For this reason, the Vinaya (monastic code of conducts) has up to 227 rules in order to align practice with Dhamma for those who choose to enter the Buddhist monastic order or those who wish to follow to a lesser degree as a lay person.

**The consequences of practicing Vinaya are:**

1. Possess 'Right Views' and purity according to the Dhamma Teachings
2. Practice earnest supervision of oneself to speak and act in accordance with the rules in the Basket of Vinaya in order to purify the mind further until finally attaining Dhamma and freedom from all sufferings.

The knowledge of cleanliness and orderliness that naturally occurs within is different to other kinds of knowledge that is commonly understood. However, the principles of this naturally occurring knowledge are integrated into the delicate natures of the Dhamma.

Similar to the Dhamma teachings of the Lord Buddha, once practitioners train themselves using the 5 practices of 'Universal Goodness' they will certainly achieve the desired results. Primarily, they will gain a physically comfortable and unclouded cheerful mind. A greater happiness beyond the ordinary will arise and accompanied with the support of meditation practice, the means to accomplish the aims of following the Noble Eightfold Path will be achieved without difficulty.

Before we study the principles and procedures of the 5 practices of 'Universal Goodness', we should look into how humans interact with their worldly environment in order to understand the influence this interaction exerts on the condition and happiness of the human mind and body. When we can understand these influences, we can apply appropriate procedures that will enhance the quality of life that will bring into being a blissful state of mind.



## CHAPTER 1 NATURAL EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

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Why should a human seek to have a pure heart? The reason is that to attain happiness and peace within ourselves and our environment, we need to nurture a pure heart and clear state of mind in order to access the complete knowledge that is required to eliminate the sufferings of our worldly existence. As aforementioned in the introduction of this book, the complete education is the unique ‘Inner Knowledge’ that is required to create peace and bliss within ourselves and the environment.

We have learned of the limitations and consequences of common education in that when people applied the knowledge gained, it failed to diminish or address the problems of human sufferings, instead compounding and exacerbating the very issues humans desire to overcome. It follows therefore that without connecting with our complete ‘Inner Knowledge’ a blissful state of mind and existence will remain beyond our reach.

When a person reaches a comfortable state of happiness, they will firstly come to the realisation that life is governed by two distinct laws. These are the laws that can be scientifically demonstrated and substantiated and the laws on which we base our understanding from a belief or faith formed by theoretical or mental perception. It is the second of the laws which involves the mind into which the Law of Karma falls, a law that governs the fruits bestowed in the cycle of rebirth.

Combined these two laws form a seemingly impenetrable confinement within our human condition. One is not aware that he or she is incarcerated in a prison of existence awaiting execution. Moreover, the worst is that one does not know that the happiness and sufferings of all life as we know it are under the influence and control of these two laws.

For this reason, humans constantly search for complete education that will lead them to true happiness. Humans do not want to have a life filled with sufferings of body and mind, thus they are constantly seeking sources of happiness in various forms and in all areas and aspects of their lives and environment. For many, their personal materialistic evolution is perceived as their path to happiness but to a certain degree they sense that this is not fulfilling the expectation or quality of happiness they are looking for. Therefore, many people resort to searching for other platforms for their personal evolution to progress in the pursuit of the happiness they desire, until inevitably they discover that true happiness only arises within a peaceful and clear mind, while suffering rises from the confines of a cloudy troubled mind. These two states of mind are governed by two Laws that may be defined as the Physical Law and the Mental Law.

What are the characteristics of the Physical Law and the Mental Law? Physical laws underpin the workings and understanding of the natural conditions imperative to maintaining the existence and functioning of our environment; we call these the laws of nature. These laws are fixed, cannot be changed yet nonetheless we have never thoroughly considered them in their entirety. As a consequence we develop misunderstanding of the world and nature, misunderstandings that cause many sufferings to follow. The physical world may be governed by unchangeable laws, but the mind is of a non-physical realm, governed by Mental Laws and the changeable aspect of our future Karma. If we do not understand these two Laws we will never find practical methods and means of lifestyle, livelihood and behaviour that leads to the happiness our human entity innately longs for.

Without understanding these two laws, no matter how highly educated one becomes, it is not possible to utilize what we have learned in a beneficially complete manner.

**1st Law - Physical Law:** This law has coexisted with the world for a long time and can be categorized as follows:

1.1 An eternal law that exists naturally. Although these laws are considered to be unchangeable, gradual alterations may sometimes unexpectedly arise

without forewarning, as to how the influence these laws may have on our lives may change unexpectedly, only those who possess good powers of observation and pay attention will notice. For example if we observe the following:

**Fire:** Its character is heat. When used appropriately, fire provides warmth and light but when misused it may burn, destroy or kill.

**Water:** Its character is to provide the essential medium for the existence of life as we know it, it can be used to wash and clean, to drink and provides the precipitation that powers the earth's climate and vegetation, but it can also destroy life by drowning or the power of its flow.

**Wind:** Its character is to constantly refresh the atmosphere that we breathe and distribute water in a constant cycle around the Earth. It can bring pleasant cooling breezes to a hot day or devastating and deadly hurricanes or tornadoes to our shores and communities.

**Earth:** Its character is a roughly spherical mass which is durable for carrying and sustaining all things in the world including the human entity. However, although our life and existence depends on its existence, the forces within its spherical mass and atmosphere may manifest in the form of deadly earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and climatic catastrophes.

Among these laws that naturally exist are the laws of nature that govern light, sound and electrical phenomena, those who observe, study and understand the laws governing such things may utilise the knowledge within these laws to prevent harm such as electrocution.

Therefore, if there is one thing a human should not be without to succeed, it is a good ability to observe. However, good observation must have a clear mind so that the ability to observe and understand will produce precise results and knowledge. One is then capable of utilizing what has been learned beneficially, although not yet able to control the nature.

In recent times, man has made huge advances in unravelling the intricate balances between the laws of nature and how the laws themselves govern the exponential

causes and effects that shape our world and universe. However, man has barely scratched the surface of the complexities and possibilities that await discovery. We are able to quantify the speed of light and utilise it to measure the distance between us and far off galaxies, distances almost beyond our comprehension, but yet we still have much to discover that is so close and embedded within our own human body.

However, even though today modern science has discovered many of these natural laws that have enabled humans to develop an intellectually and technologically advanced level of civilization, there still remain countless new discoveries to be made. Whatever humans manage to discover, it will still only be a miniscule fraction of the mysteries of nature waiting to be discovered. If and when we are able to access these laws with complete knowledge we will have the ability to exploit our potential to escape all sufferings.

1.2 The laws humans created in order to coexist in society. Generally speaking, the laws implemented within society such as civil laws, moral laws and cultural laws are promulgated to bring order to the daily routine of the people of a particular group or society. Civil and moral laws exist for the benefit and orderliness of human coexist within a country in order to prevent conflict and misconduct. Hence, moral laws and civil laws have formed for the advancement of peace within society and for the benefit of the family unit, educational institutions, religious institutions, economic institutions and political institutions. Each institution comprises of people, some with clear and others with clouded minds. However all are governed by the natural laws and man-made laws.

**2nd Law – Mental Law:** This law connects with a clear or clouded mind but as to how it may be visualised we do not know as it remains invisible and unseen, nevertheless, it is known to be powerful in terms of memory that can be quantified, thinking that may be evaluated and many more attributes that we may as thinking human beings be familiar with. Despite endless research the law of Karma remains elusive in terms of proving or understanding its eternal nature, but just as with Mental Law its influences are compellingly believable.

Humans have partially accomplished the discovery of the physical laws that govern our environment and physiological makeup and in the process have consumed vast amounts of time and wherewithal. To discover the mental laws that govern our being and state of mind, the only tool required is free, for it is our own mind.

The human mind is very powerful. When the Buddha was still a prince, he already knew the truth of this power. He knew that the human has a body and mind which surpasses all other living things. Realising that humans did not yet know how to utilize the power of the mind to its full potential, which would lead to the truth that makes a human mind pure and enabled to attain a state that is free of all sufferings, He made a renunciation to ordain in order to search for a complete education and the most powerful mind-practice method that would produce the desired results in the search to know and understand the truths that are embedded within the Mental Law.

The complete education in conjunction with the power of a pure mind leads humans to a magnificent discovery beyond the Law of Nature. This is the revelation of the Law of Karma and the Three Common Characteristics. It is the most difficult discovery of all but there was in ancient times a human born with the qualities that enabled Him to make this discovery. He was named Prince Siddhartha at birth and became known as the Lord Buddha after His attainment.

He discovered the law of reaction should a human wrongfully infringe upon the two Laws. Consequently, wrongful acts become imprinted in one's mind making it cloudy or less clear. Wrongful acts repeated become habitual and we are trapped within our self-made prison of human sufferings. Therefore, we should strive to have a clear understanding of these two laws and the consequences of any infringements we may commit.

**2.1 Law of Karma.** Prince Siddhartha observed that He was trapped in a prison. This world is our prison as explained in 'Training The Trainers, Part 1', which you may wish to refer to. Prince Siddhartha was born an ordinary human being like any other, in common with His peers He was also trapped in our worldly prison.

This was a trap of searching for education both in theory and of a practical nature, just as were all other people in that era. The knowledge He had was common until the day of His enlightenment when a new kind of knowledge was revealed for future generations that would follow. He meditated until His mind was clear, clean, and pure and attained the ultimate brightness within. Hence, He could recall His past lives, initially knowing that He had been reborn in many lifetimes, in high and low status families. During some life cycles He committed wrongful acts and this repeatedly occurred. Following that realisation, the Buddha contemplates in His meditation to see if others' life cycles were the same and discovered that all people were subject to the same cycle of rebirths. What influenced the circumstances, position and status that a person would be reborn into was governed by the laws invoked by an individual's human thoughts, words and actions in previous lifetimes, collectively these laws are known as the Law of Karma.

Some may be born in several life cycles into a good family and circumstances, while others into undesirable families and circumstances. However, the worst possible scenario was to be born into an 'underworld'. Because of His enlightenment, He understood the causes that would lead to a person being born into a particular set of circumstances are governed by the Law of Karma. This infinite Law of Karma which if ignored by ignorance, constantly drives behind the scenes trapping an individual within a perpetual prison of rebirths and deaths.

To categorize or precisely identify all of what is considered to be 'Good' and what is 'Bad' is not easy. Because each society and culture define the term of good and bad differently depending on a multitude of contributing factors that vary depending on ever changing perceptions and beliefs; man once held the belief that the world was flat and the centre of the universe based on their incomplete knowledge and observations of their external world.

To differentiate 'Good' from 'Bad', in fact, cannot be defined by using external observations and standards but by contemplating within oneself until self-awareness arises from our 'Inner Knowledge' of what is 'Good' and what is 'Bad', what is 'Right' and what is 'Wrong'. Because the results of 'Good' and 'Bad' yield gains and losses consecutively, however, individuals perceive results very differently.

For example, stealing may improve your bank account yet the ignorant will not be aware of the consequences of their depletion of 'Good' Karma and suffering caused to others.

Therefore, to decide what is 'Good' or 'Bad' derives from a clear, bright and pure mind so that one can identify both action and reaction of self-performance in both short and long term outcomes. A clear understanding of 'Good' – resulting in happiness and 'Bad' – resulting in increased sufferings will be easily comprehended as will the inescapable nature of the Law of Karma.

The Law of Karma gives reasons to the cause and effect of a human's actions. For example, whoever commits 'Good' or 'Bad' deeds, will definitely experience the results of their own actions, results that are not brought forth by any other person or divine intervention.

The Law of Karma or Law of Action is the law of cause and effect in conjunction with the law of nature despite being distinctly independent and separate in nature. This means that whatever causes exist in our mind one will act according to that cause. If 'Good' causes exist, one will commit 'Good' deeds but if 'Bad' causes exist one will commit 'Bad' deeds and our Karma will be debited or credited accordingly with each rebirth.

The Law of Karma is the consequential truth of the results of our actions. Everything we encounter comes about or is the effect of what preceded.

Our Karma is the manifestation of the actions of our body, speech and mind whether it be 'Good' or 'Bad', regardless of intention, small or big, from all walks of life, all has an indelible effect.

Some deeds cause an immediate effect while others emerge after life. The Law of Karma is merciless there is no exception for anyone regardless of the circumstances into which they are born. Whether one is born into a terrestrial or other imaginable or unimaginable worldly or unworldly existence, none can escape from the Law of Karma. Even our Lord Buddha when He was a Bodhisattava pursuing self-perfection, still had to bare the fruits of His own Karma. Karma follows us everywhere like a shadow on a sunny day, since we cannot escape from the

being that we are, likewise we cannot escape the Law of Karma because we are our Karma. The man-made Civil Laws or other rules can possibly be altered to suite conditions and circumstances, but the Law of Karma is eternal, inescapable and will never change.

### **BENEFITS OF STUDYING THE LAW OF KARMA**

Knowing the benefits, value and virtue of something will inspire us to act righteously in pursuit of such benefits. By knowing its pros and cons, we can then choose only the pros. In the case of studying the Law of Karma, we will certainly gain a great advantage as the clarity of our mind will be substantially enhanced.

The mind will be more focus on pursuing self-perfection and gain a basic understanding. As advanced practice and study of the effects of the Law of Karma are performed our mind will be clearer and practical results will improve. The ‘ordinary path’ of a characteristic will be altered to the ‘noble path’ that leads to the ending of suffering and attaining true happiness.

#### **The benefits of studying the Law of Karma are:**

1. Those who study would be enthusiastic to commit only ‘Good’ deeds because of their realisation that the causation of good fortune in this life are the effects of ‘Good’ deeds committed in the past. Somehow, fruitfulness has its time thus we must commit ‘Good’ deeds further so that its fruitfulness, or in other words merit accumulated in Karma, is not interrupted, suspended or ceased. Likewise, those who were born into misfortune should not give up hope as one would understand how to address one’s actions to lessen and eradicate misfortune in the future, while building on the good fruitfulness of their actions.
2. The student would become mindful of the consequences of ‘Bad’ deeds and such actions would not be committed to the benefit of the individual, the community and environment.
3. Study would make an individual reluctant to remain ignorant on the subject of pursuing ‘Good’ Karma and understand that merely not committing any sin that would accumulate ‘Bad’ Karma will not increase ‘Good’ Karma or stem the

depletion of stored ‘Good’ Karma from past ‘Good’ deeds. It should be understood that the body condition due to its imperfections is subject to natural decline and without replenishing our ‘Good’ Karma, the time we have to remedy the depletion of stored ‘Good’ Karma is also diminishing. This is why conscious action to accumulate ‘Good’ Karma is so vital.

4. Study will illustrate how to manage bodily functions appropriately and to their maximum potential. Whether a person is considered to be healthy or disabled to some degree, there is no differentiation in this regard within the human entity and a person that studies the Law of Karma thoroughly to the best of their intellectual ability and chooses to do only ‘Good’ deeds will accumulate ‘Good’ Karma equal to their efforts and intentions regardless of their physical ability and condition.

5. The benefits of studying the Law of Karma include strengthening the faith and understanding of this law. Faith in general stands loosely in a human’s mind, thus one often commits ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ deeds without proper thought and consideration. It is necessary to study the Law of Karma thoroughly to imprint the knowledge in one’s mind in order that good behaviour becomes one’s second nature as an ingrained habit.

Having confidence in ones faith strengthens the conviction to act upon its principles to achieve in life and the sphere of one’s Karma a righteous existence based on performing ‘Good’ deeds, engaging in a righteous occupation and the accumulation of merit, which in tern prepares the way for further advancement and merit accumulation along with the respect of others as a good example in society.

6. We have the options to make change and choices that affect our destiny both in this world and the next. We can choose whether we want to progress towards an increasingly comfortable standard of living or degenerate towards an indigent standard of living and conditions. We often hear the saying that life is not an option, but in reality we do have the options that become available through studying the Law of Karma to be selective in a way that presents a choice of options that will directly affect our future circumstances.



7. Righteous goals of life can be set upon right understanding of the Law of Karma. It is understood that the root of all human sufferings stem from and are caused by human actions which arise from the necessities of living with regard to economical, social, physical and environmental factors. Karma is a dimension that is impossible to escape from and the implementation by a human of solutions to problems that arise in the physical world should be considered carefully with the Law of Karma in mind as to whether the solution is of merit, or should be corrected or changed before implementation. This reasoning is to emphasize the need to keep in mind that we are born to accumulate merit and pursue self-perfection.

**We can set the goals to do these things on 3 levels:**

A goal in life that leads to present benefit in our daily lives.

A goal in life that leads to entire lifetime benefits

A goal in the afterlife. In Buddhism we believe in reincarnation and that the merit we accumulate in each successive life is carried forward to bear fruit in the next.

2.2 The Three Common Characteristics or Trinity Rules are of profound complexities that require many examples and explanations to be studied with a clear and refined mind to be able to fully understand.

The Trinity Rules refer to the 'Three Marks of Existence' explained by their common characteristics of similarity or rules that exist in all living beings. It is knowledge the Lord Buddha discovered as follows:

What is impermanence? Impermanence is the rise and fall of these characteristics in perpetual motion where nothing remains unchanged. A baby looks very different in appearance to an old person, yet on a day to day basis the individual would not notice the changes in themselves or that their condition was in a state of continual impermanence. Everything, ranging from our body, accommodation, possessions or our loved ones, none of these things are permanent, including ourselves we all change in accordance with nature. Look at our body, it changes, the skin used to look radiant and fresh but as time goes by the skin becomes dry and

wrinkled with age. Eventually we all die and return to the original components of our substance. The process of changing, rebirth and decay applies to all known things of a material and physical nature.

Every human cell is conditioned to suffering changes and deterioration. We all know the conditions of physical discomfort or uneasiness and hardship which we consider as our sufferings, but suffering in the terms of the Trinity Rules does not refer to that kind of unpleasant suffering, but instead to the inability of all things even at a molecular level to maintain a state of equilibrium where no changes will occur. In conclusion, all things in this world cannot stay in the same condition and must remain in a constant state of change.

The 'Non-self' means a formless condition. The World's humans possess a high regard of what they term as their self entity and believe that things belong to them, for example money, land and possessions. Nonetheless, all those things are composed of many substances, as is our body or what we call self and the state of existence, all these things are impermanent and beyond our control to make permanent. When these substances are divided and back to their original form there is no longer a self that exists. Likewise, those possession we regard as our belongings, they are also none-existence because they are out of our power to control. If something really exists and belongs to us it must be under our control, behaving as we require. Nevertheless, everything in this world at a physical level, including our own body is beyond our control.

By understanding the workings of the Law of Karma and the Trinity Rules mankind is trying to find a way to escape from the control of these two rules. The Lord Buddha discovered a way to escape from these controls and many people have followed in order that they may also break away. To disengage oneself from the control of these two rules we may only start the process from the basis of attaining a clear mind. In order to make the mind clear, the mind must be cleansed by using the purity of the Dhamma within, our 'Inner Knowledge'. This cleansing starts with practical methods for external cleansing of routine and interaction with the environment, which is our way of life, this in turn leads to relaxation of the body and mind that brings forth the clarity of mind we desire to progress.

Physical and Mental Laws are part and parcel of what it takes to be a human. Humans use the laws of Physics that apply to us all to ease the burden of life and lessen physical suffering; while on the other hand, Mental Law partly involves the non physical aspects of Karma that is pertinent to a single individual in the causation of their birth. These factors dominate human existence as if we are prisoners to its power that controls us to do many things that cause daily and long-term suffering. Therefore, humans must learn the truth of life validity.

1. Human life depends on 4 requisites. The need for these requisites is because of the daily sufferings that they encounter which are in a simplified form to illustrate the kind of sufferings:

- Suffering Coldness: Deficiency of the fire element makes the body chilly thus we require warm clothing and shelter to maintain the fire element and healthy body temperature.

- Suffering Heat: Deficiency of the wind element makes body hot thus we require shade, light clothing and cooling air currents.

- Suffering Hunger: Deficiency of the earth element makes the body crave sustenance so we need to find food to satisfy and sustain our body.

- Suffering Thirst: Deficiency of the water element due to insufficient fluid intake, thus we need to find water to quench our thirst and maintain the body's hydration.

As humans suffer from bodily deficiencies on a daily basis which make our elements fluctuate, we need to find remedies that bring relief to the sufferings that result from all deficiencies and bring improved stability and order to our elements.

2. Human life is short: A human's lifetime is very limited and from the moment of conception one starts to age and the countdown to the final breath has begun. No matter how short or long we may live, when considering the big picture, we have no time to waste if we are to make progress towards the ultimate goal. Therefore, it is important that as soon as we are able to, we should start to eagerly practice consciousness and meditation in order to eliminate the cloudiness in our mind that will ultimately shorten our lives and inhibit our progress.

3. Humans often go astray in misguided pursuit of excessive wealth or possessions, far above that which is needed to sustain life and greed becomes the master of their actions.

4. Humans in general have a predisposition to engage in bad behaviour due to the enormous embedded range of Karma defilements that cause them to often forget to do 'Good' deeds or endeavour to achieve self perfection. A clouded mind obscures from their knowing of their propensity for wrongdoing.

Knowing the limitations of life, our duty is to find the procedure to eliminate those limitations and seek a method to make the mind clear at all times. The principle and practical process must initiate a physical comfort which is different in nature to other regular comforts. Because it emanates from a peaceful mind which dispels the cloudiness, this leads to enabling self-control of one's anger and aggressive responses. The mind will be calm, still and contented respectively. These fundamental processes derived from the Lord Buddha's teachings range from easy to understand to profoundly difficult; the more profound the greater the benefit that can be achieved.

Consequently, I have compiled practical 'Universal Goodness' methods that are suitable for all people regardless of circumstances and beliefs.

**'Universal Goodness'** is a preliminary practical method for body, speech and mind. Those who practice appropriately will indeed experience an increased level of happiness regardless of age, gender, race, religion or creed. This is because practitioners of 'Universal Goodness' come to possess a cheerful mind, able to see their own true happiness and that of other's with ease. Consistent practice will become customary with the morality and responsibility of an individual emerging that can be categorized into 5 specific fields as follows:

1. Responsibility for cleanliness
2. Responsibility for orderliness
3. Responsibility for politeness
4. Responsibility for punctuality
5. Responsibility for meditation

In general, terrain, climate and natural environment influence a human's behaviour and emotions, also determining repeated behaviour until it becomes a way of life. Thus these behaviours are passed on from generation to generation as traditions, culture and beliefs. How these traditions, cultural traits and beliefs come to alter and differ depends on terrain, weather and environment, which may also change over time or due to particular incidents both natural and manmade. Although humans are differentiated according to their indigenous beliefs and way of life, all humans have in common the necessities of the 4 requisites for sustaining their own lives. Regardless of any livelihood, all encounter daily routines in 5 places that are the bedroom, bathroom, dining room, dressing room and work place. Although we are referring to these places as rooms, this is a generalisation that refers to the places where we sleep, cleanse and maintain the body in its physical functions, eat, prepare ourselves with clothing to face the outside world and finally where we earn our livelihood. One who is smart enough to suitably and appropriately comply with the principles of 'Universal Goodness' in these 5 rooms, will primarily gain physical comfort plus attain the initial stage of mind comfort; as a consequence the mind will be become clearer.

The first 'Universal Goodness' is Responsibility for Cleanliness. Cleanliness is vital from the moment a baby emerges from their mother's womb, the reason being that the body is composed of the aforementioned 4 elements which are not stable, or clean of impurities, causing the cells of our body to deteriorate, die and regenerate in a constant cycle, each regeneration less perfect than the previous one until a particular regeneration is incapable of sustaining life and beneficial regeneration ceases. We consume food that passes through our digestive system that extracts and utilises the nourishment while expelling the waste products when we urinate or defecate. Mismanagement of the cleanliness of what we consume and how we manage our waste will not only have a detrimental physical impact, but also affect the state of our mind.

Nonetheless, the majority of people are unaware of the fact that we are born with unclean elements that prevail throughout life. The upbringing from childhood affects one's character and the development of mature beneficial behaviour.

Those fortunate enough to receive an appropriate education with regard to cleanliness acknowledge that which is dirty and soils our lives and develop a predisposition to strive to eliminate and avoid that which is unclean. They develop sensibility and easily conform to the rules and regulations which lead to orderly habits and conducts. Orderliness and discipline are methods to eliminate the dirtiness that blights human lives.

For example, a baby experiencing a dirty environment such as being left in a dirty diaper, unchanged after having defecated or urinated, thus develops a habit of familiarity into adulthood of being accustomed to living in their own squalor. Having become accustomed to living in a dirty environment, the mind is bound to decline and become unaware in acceptance of its own rough and disgraceful habits. People who possess this state of mind do not recognise their unclean state as dirty or nauseating, so they never try to evade or eliminate the dirt that is the source of their problems. Even some animals know to evade their own dirt such as a cat will cover their excrement or a bird will remove its hatchlings droppings from the nest etc.

Some people acknowledge the dirtiness of their habits and behaviours but try to escape or deny their self responsibility for the consequences that arise. They will seek ways to escape their personal responsibility by hiring or using their wealth and power to have someone else take responsibility to eradicate the dirtiness on their behalf. This may create work for others and effectively remove the physical ugliness their dirtiness has created, but it can never remedy or remove the cause and source of the dirt in the first place. No amount of power or money, no matter how beautiful the results, if the cleansing is performed by others, the individual will still be as dirty and the source of the dirt in their own life will remain unchanged, even if covered and hidden from others. Deluding oneself with a pride that comes by having others cover up the dirtiness that exists in one's own life could not take a person further from the truth of life and how to achieve its ultimate goals.

The first of the two examples above of those that are accustomed to dirtiness, is accustomed to live with their dirtiness in a way that renders them unable to

differentiate between ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ or recognise that which clouds their understanding of the principles expounded within the Dhamma which are based on pure cleanliness not dirtiness. In the second example, the person acknowledged dirtiness but covers it up, this leads to a dull, non-beneficially progressive and indecisive mind. If this person were to commit sin, it would easily be done and they would resort to hiring others to do the cleaning or cover up for them. One who is accustomed to dirtiness cannot verify what is ‘Good’, often seeing and seeking benefit for themselves as being paramount to that of others. Moreover, this kind of person is driven by their delusions and ‘Wrong View’ that cause them to be incapable of perceiving the ultimate benefit which is Nirvana.

Therefore, the first aspect of ‘Universal Goodness’ is responsibility for cleanliness of body, behaviour and natural environment that one uses in daily life which may be categorised as follows:

1. Cleanliness in general and its outcome in regard to physical comfort.

Cleanliness applied with responsibility based on ‘Universal Goodness’ leads to happiness through orderliness of cleansing procedures followed in one’s daily routine.

2. Responsibility for Orderliness in general and the way things around us are organised and the outcome they have with regard to calm, logical and measured thinking and reasoning.

For example, lack of organised storage of kitchen equipment and supplies leads to not knowing where things are and a muddled way of accessing and using what you are looking for. This leads to confusion, missing things out and inefficiency of application. A kitchen with everything in an appropriate place allows one to see clearly what is there and what is missing. Cleaning in an organised environment may progress systematically and efficiently, whereas cleaning in a muddled environment will be hit and miss plus require far more effort but result in less than satisfactory results.

As being disorganised actually creates more work and requires greater effort while reducing results, everyone should mindfully strive to keep their workplace organised and neat.

3. Responsibility for Politeness in general and its outcome.

For example be polite and humble in accordance with the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’ in every gesture whether it be sitting, sleeping, walking or standing; control all 4 postures with regards to being appropriately well-dressed, observing correct etiquette and polite humble behaviour.

4. Responsibility for Punctuality in general and its outcome.

Well managed time contributes to the development of punctual ‘Universal Goodness’ habits.

5. Responsibility for Meditation in general and its outcome.

Meditation leads to a clear mind creating the conditions to separate falsehoods from truths, improve understanding and knowledge absorption plus increase work efficiency. One’s wisdom from our ‘Inner Knowledge’ is greatly enhanced and by taking responsibility to meditate we create beneficial circumstances to progress towards the ultimate goal of life.

Let us consider in a little more detail our practice and procedures of responsibility based on the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’ in the context of the environment where they take place and how we utilize the 4 Requisites. We can then learn to manage the 4 Requisites appropriately in our daily lives so that we may achieve our maximum potential. To recap, the five places humans utilise the 4 Requisites are in their bedroom, wash room, dining room, dressing room and work place. The ‘Universal Goodness’ principles for the 5 rooms are:

### **BEDROOM**

#### **There are 4 activities in the bedroom**

1. Sleeping. It would seem that there is not a lot to mention here, just how to settle down close one’s eyes and wake up refreshed. But the bedroom provides the best domestic environment to incorporate the habit of mindful practice before we sleep, in fact we often say before making an important decision the we should ‘sleep on it’, meaning give something careful consideration so that we may become more clear on the subject. Therefore, careful consideration

by way of meditation, chanting, prayer or other means of appropriate study of parables considering or identifying with the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’ are ideally performed in this room. This habit is best and more easily formed from early childhood as a discipline and part of our house rules and practices. During a child’s formative years, this is the place with least distractions to provide them with appropriate advice as to the kind of habits and behaviour that will accumulate merit and contribute to good and improving circumstances in their lives, while warning them of the detrimental and undesirable fruits of committing sins.

2. Bedroom’s basic aesthetics. The bedroom must provide a clean pleasant and safe environment free from cobweb, ants, mosquitoes, bedbugs, gnats or fleas etc. Thus leftover food or unclean items should not be left in the room.

3. Bedroom’s equipment. The bedding, fixtures, fittings and belongings must be kept to a minimum to meet requirements and neatly organised in a clean and well maintained condition. Disorganisation creates unnecessary effort that will be detrimental to the potential benefit of the room and occupant. By maintaining the bedroom, one develops the habit of endurance, observation, analytical delicacy, orderliness and the love and appreciation of cleanliness. These are ‘Universal Goodness’ habits that are respected and admired by others.

4. A bedroom that requires a coexisting duty. Whoever shares a bedroom with another or others cannot avoid the 2 coexisting duties of politeness and maintaining punctuality. For example, the time that one person comes back from school or their workplace may differ from that of others that they share a bedroom with. Consideration for one’s roommates is an essential if people are to avoid conflicts and difficulties. Should one roommate be asleep after a tiring day and another return only to disturb the sleeping one by playing music, or behaving without due politeness and consideration in some way, the result will be disharmony that will have negative impacts for all concerned.

The results of impoliteness and inconsiderate acts that occur by not putting oneself in other people’s shoes make convivial coexistence impossible. Politeness and punctuality are courteous admirable traits that one should

maintain. No matter how close one is to one’s parents, siblings, husband and wife or partner, one should maintain politeness that is a mark of respect which is deeply entrenched within principles of ‘Universal Goodness’.

### **PROCEDURES OF ‘UNIVERSAL GOODNESS’**

**Cleanliness:** Commences by thoroughly cleaning the body, the Buddha altar or any spiritual focuses within the room and the fabric surfaces plus fixtures and fittings of the bedroom. One should also endeavour to maintain fresh air and where possible attend to the environment outside any windows or doors to create the best circumstances to maintain desirable ventilation and avoid undesirable intrusions entering the room. For example, a bedroom that opens onto an overgrown garden will be more likely to have a problem with unwanted pests or a bedroom in a city condominium that does not have double glazed windows may suffer from disturbing noise pollution.

**Orderliness:** Arrange utensils by category with the most frequently used being more conveniently stored. Organize Buddha altar in accordance with Buddhist ritual for an auspicious life and likewise with any other spiritual focus areas. Choose appropriate bedding that is compatible with the climate and neatly complies with one’s requirements and allows a comfortable sleeping position without distractions.

**Politeness:** Act with grace when sitting, sleeping, standing or walking. Keep in mind not to disturb others who may be meditating, asleep or resting by inconsiderate actions such as turning on bright lights or playing music or indulging in unnecessary, clumsy or selfish activities. Ensure that bedroom attire is appropriate and respectful.

**Punctuality:** Chant, meditate and spread loving-kindness daily, do it until embedded as a habit. Be punctual and develop the habit of regular sleeping and waking up patterns.

A clear mind emerges when relaxed and able to let go of everything, allowing one to sleep well and wake up with Samadhi (consciousness).



The benefit of developing this habit will lead to the stillness of the mind and love of accumulating ‘Good’ deeds while developing disdain of committing ‘Bad’ deeds.

## WASHROOM

### These are our activities in the washroom

1. Health maintenance, appearance and contemplation: In the course of our daily ablutions, when taking a shower, bath, cleaning our teeth or simply washing our face and hands, one should also contemplate one’s declining body and carefully look after it. As we are generally alone during our ablutions it is also a time to be mindful of the state of our contentment with regard to the workings and activities in which we engage during our daily lives.
2. The bathroom may require specialised fixtures and fittings that are designed for a wet environment, but the cleanliness and orderliness is nonetheless just as important as in the bedroom. However, because of the greater potential for unseen bacterial contamination the aspect of clinical hygiene should also be more closely observed.
3. The management of utensils and equipment in the washroom should be constantly and systematically addressed to ensure that surfaces, soaps and shampoos, rubbish and other receptacles plus towels and tissues etc., are in appropriate condition and fully prepared ready for use.
4. Personnel management when using the bathroom is a matter of consideration for oneself and others that will next use the facility. There is a saying that ‘one should leave this kind of facility as one would wish to find it’. Ensure that any mess or unpleasantness that you have caused, or even come across when using the facility is put right before leaving the facility.

### CLEANLINESS PROCEDURES BASED ON ‘UNIVERSAL GOODNESS’

**Cleanliness:** Wash one’s body thoroughly and clean all washing utensils and equipment well. Dry washroom walls, surfaces and floor regularly and ensure good ventilation and lighting, both for daytime with natural light and hours of darkness use. The habit of maintaining this routine behaviour contributes to the accumulation of merit.

**Orderliness:** Keep well-equipped with utensils fit for the right purpose that are arranged and conveniently stored and placed by category in order of use and frequency. Carry out routine works in accordance with good sanitation practices.

**Politeness:** Use this facility and the equipment with consideration to others so as not cause any disturbance to those outside of the room or leave any inconvenience or unpleasantness for the next user to encounter.

**Punctuality:** Maintain punctuality every day to establish good habits.

A clear mind starts with body contemplation so that self-attachment is diluted by awareness of dirtiness and body deterioration. The beneficial habit gained is the love of body contemplation.

## DINING ROOM

These are activities in a dining room

### Eating

1. Knowledge of nutrition must be learned in order to cook food that is appropriate to a family’s needs. For example, knowing what foods are good or bad for us, suitable for a baby or adult, adequate for an active lifestyle or a sedentary lifestyle, what is not only good but appetising or what is unpleasant or potentially harmful. Food and liquids are usually sourced from plant or animal origins and provide the essential nutrients, such as carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals required to sustain energy, growth and maintain life. Since we all need to take food on a regular basis and often at the same time with others, eating is also frequently a socially bonding activity both in its preparation and consumption.
2. Three elements come into play with the consumption of food; they are presentation, smell and taste. Firstly if skill and attention is paid to the presentation and garnishes of the food, it will be attractive to the eye and look appetising. Secondly if skilful preparation and combining of ingredients, herbs and seasonings are achieved the food will smell and taste delicious. Thirdly, if skilful attention to the environment where the food is to be consumed, such as the table setting

and layout is pleasing and appropriate, the eating and social experience will be greatly enhanced.

3. Politeness and consideration when consuming food come under the term of ‘dining table etiquette’. This covers serving and the manner in which we handle and eat the food, plus the way we interact with our dining companions. Slovenly table manners cause offence to others and may put others off eating their own food or sharing a table with us. Polite gracious table manners reflect on ones respect for the food and those with whom we share the experience of consuming it with. Good table manners are compatible with ‘Universal Goodness’ and the accumulation of merit.

4. Chewing thoroughly or correctly masticating our food is the first step to efficient digestion. This occurs by softening and increasing the surface area of the food to allow a more efficient breakdown of the carbohydrates in our food by combining it with the enzymes in our saliva before being swallowed and entering our stomach where the next stage of digestion occurs.

5. Water intake is important since two thirds of the human body composes of this element. It must be remembered that all fluids and most foods contain water to a greater or lesser degree. The amount of water intake needed to maintain a healthy body depends on climate, exertion, age and other personal health factors. A reasonable indicator of too much water intake is that one’s urine becomes colourless, while not enough water intake is indicated by the colour of the urine being too dark or other symptoms of dehydration such as tiredness, headaches and lack of elasticity of the skin. The intake of water by whatever means, liquid or combined in solids, should be regular and compatible with an individual’s requirements. Over consumption of water may lead to dilutional hyponatraemia, also referred to as water intoxication caused by low salt levels in the blood, this effectively drowns cells causing them to swell and leads to all sorts of problems especially concerning the brain.

### **THE WORK ON SPEECH**

Human communication is at its best when engaged during social gatherings and

shared convivial activities such as dining together. Therefore, especially within the family environment, it’s the best time to complement, support, encourage, constructively criticize, give warnings and offer appropriate advice or guidance. Don’t ignore this good opportunity but be mindful that it should be done wisely or not at all. Take care not to become overzealous in your encouragement, criticisms or advice and endeavour to be a good example of the implementation of ‘Universal Goodness’ in your own behaviour and offer fitting comments on how others should be mindful to implement ‘Universal Goodness’ in their daily lives.

### **GREETING**

Greeting is a gesture that expresses the tone of interaction when meeting others. It creates a starting point or first impression of the level of good or bad feelings between two persons or groups. For example a welcoming greeting creates a good and positive starting point, whereas a hostile greeting creates a bad and negative starting point. One who creates a good and positive first impression will create the circumstances that will lead to them in the first instance being well thought of by those whom they greet.

### **ROOM MANAGEMENT**

Kitchens, dining rooms and living rooms are showcases with regard to the character of our homes. It is unlikely to have a visitor asks to go and view a bedroom or bedrooms when invited into a home. The word ‘showcase’ implies that these rooms reflect the character and preferences of the owners of the house. How clean and tidy these rooms are can be easily observed as an indication of the cleanliness, orderliness and how practical, prudent or extravagant the occupants of the house are. These rooms will also reflect personal tastes and interests plus the artistic and aesthetic skills of the occupants.

### **EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT**

Kitchen equipment may include such items as gas/electric stove/range, oven, microwave, refrigerator, rice cooker, steamer, pan, blender, toaster, chopping board, sink and dish drainer etc. Dinner equipment consists of bowls, crockery, cutlery, ladle, etc. New home owners would buy this type of equipment in

accordance with their aspirations and means. However no matter how affluent their means and top of the range the equipment they buy and install, if the organisation and daily cleaning and maintenance of the equipment is poor, the room will soon become the most dirty and messy in the house. The hygiene of the kitchen environment and monitoring of perishable goods would be seriously compromised leading to many problems, inefficiencies and wastages.

Dining room equipments consist of such items as tables, chairs plus display and storage furnishings. Often there is one set of fine quality table dressings, cutlery and crockery for special occasions or when entertaining guests and another set of less quality for everyday use. It may be the case that to have some items that are used to create a sense of occasion will have some uplifting influence for a special occasion, however, it is not prudent to avoid using quality items that are available if the less quality items reduce the enjoyment and pleasing environment and aesthetics of everyday dining. The dining table should bring the diners together in an environment and ambience that encourages mutual bonding in a desirable setting and atmosphere. Taking the effort to ensure the dining room is clean, well organised, visually attractive and inviting will make the dining experience more positive and beneficial for all. Families with this kind of dining room look forward to enjoying meals together at home rather than under other circumstances elsewhere.

Equipment in the living room mostly consists of an entertainment centre such as television, comfy soft furnishings, occasional tables plus interior design decoration and artistic embellishments that showcase the taste and lifestyle of the occupants. The various styles may vary from minimalistic to complex, traditional to innovative and additional specific uses may be incorporated into various zones within the room, such as a study or computer corner. It is becoming more fashionable and common for modern houses and condominiums to combine the kitchen and living rooms into a single open plan space so that a host may cook and entertain their guests or family simultaneously rather than having to isolate themselves from family and friends while performing their kitchen duties. This makes the management of cleanliness, cooking smells, sufficient ventilation and ambient

temperature control of even greater importance if the multifunctional design of this space is to serve its purpose adequately. The decoration does not need to be extravagant or expensive to be comfortable and provide a space and environment in which to be relaxed, if it complies with the criteria as explained based on maintaining the principles of 'Universal Goodness', all members of the family and visitors will be happy with the environment and surroundings the room provides. If the room does not comply with these criteria, no one will want to stay in the room any longer than they have to.

### **COOKING**

The secret behind being a good cook lies within the choice and quality of the produce and ingredients, the technique used for storage, preparation and culinary skills in combining different tastes and textures in a way that pleases the palate, plus the presentation and finesse of how and where the food is served.

A good cook must possess two kinds of skills, the kind that must be learned and kind that can only be acquired by practice. It is important to learn about what foods are considered to be good or bad for us and why. For example a normally considered healthy agricultural produce may be rendered harmful if exposed to the misuse of fertilisers, insecticides or herbicides. The meat of livestock may be rendered harmful by the use of steroids and antibiotics to enhance growth. Produce may be additionally rendered harmful by processes to make them visually more attractive or have a longer shelf life. Therefore, it is important to know where our food comes from and the processes it has encountered along the way. This knowledge and obtaining our food and anything that we consume from a reliable source is the foundation of a healthy diet. Generally the fresher and more natural the source of our food the healthier, however, it must be emphasised that there are many agricultural and livestock practices that are of great benefit to society and enhance the safety and quality of our food while making the products economically viable and affordable. There are many foods that do not require cooking but require knowledgeable preparation to ensure they are safe and appealing to eat. For example, many foods may require peeling, such as oranges, while others may have a surface residue designed to stop

pests or funguses which have to be carefully and appropriately soaked and washed away before cooking or consumption, such as cabbages or apples. These are skills and knowledge that have to be learned and may not be acquired merely by practice, trial or error.

The skills that come with practice and trial and error are to be able to recognise quality produce, the choice of seasonings and flavourings to compliment the food, plus the dexterity to combine ingredients, cook and present the various dishes with flair and accomplishment. There are also the acquired skills that are required to create a balanced diet with good variations and range necessary to provide a broad spectrum of healthy nourishment and desirable variety.

### **PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

In the family environment, kitchen, dining and living room duties should be shared where practical and appropriate; this will benefit the education for the younger members for their future family roles and lessen the burden for the more senior members. Duties such as shopping, storing, preparing, laying the table, clearing, cleaning and disposing are also life skills which need to be experienced and practiced to be learned. With regular practice these become our habits.

#### **‘Universal Goodness’ procedures for dining room duties and routines**

These duties can be categorized in 2 parts as follows:

##### **1. Daily routine: preparing/cooking food**

Beneficial habit gained from this is competence in providing a healthy nutritional and enjoyable diet for all family members.

Orderliness, cleanliness and good hygiene practices in all aspects of the kitchen duties and food management and preparation are paramount to support a healthy diet that promotes wellbeing.

Being polite and considerate to others in one’s actions by picking up or putting down equipment gently and carefully in a graceful, active and efficient manner, plus observing punctuality until these actions develop into one’s habit sets a

good example and accumulates merit and respect.

Having a clear mind starts from applying the Dhamma teachings in all aspects of our daily lives, even when cooking food, on the Basis for Success being our personal effort, dedication and self-examination.

##### **2. Daily routine of eating**

The beneficial habit gained during the process of eating is competence in beneficial table manners, behaviour and etiquette.

The cleanliness and maintenance of the dining room facility and all equipment and furnishings provides the environment for the promotion of wellbeing, good health and the accumulation of merit in our daily lives and activities.

Orderliness promotes the implementation of right procedures of cleaning, usage and re preparing immediately after use.

Polite table etiquette should be considered by speaking only of good things based on the truth and sincere intentions to create an agreeable atmosphere and good feelings around the table that will compliment the enjoyment and appreciation of the food.

**Punctuality:** Eating regularly at the same time contributes to developing good eating habits.

**Clear mind:** Following the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’ in our eating habits leads to maintaining a clear mind.

Beneficial habits gained in this respect enable us to become competent in our production and consumption of a healthy diet while socially bonding with positive influences that lead to a clear mind for all concerned.

### **DRESSING ROOM**

#### **Activity**

Dressing oneself must be appropriate for both body and mind. If one dresses for body alone it would be like ‘dressing a soulless shop mannequin’. Apart from



certain situations such as where a school uniform is required, or a particular kind of attire in the workplace, people tend to dress in a way that reflects their character and choice of fashion, to either fit in with others or stand out from them. This is a superficial image we want the world to see and associate us with. This superficial image is driven by vanity in one form or other and may be intended to make us look more beautiful, wealthy, powerful, creative or even pious than we actually are. The Lord Buddha gave a perspective which our ancestors passed down on the principle of dressing with regard to both body and mind that is appropriate to the reality of the human condition.

#### **Human beauty can be categorized into the following groups:**

**Beauty from our garments:** When we dress ourselves in the morning, our clothes are clean and nicely pressed but as the day progresses they become soiled and creased by the actions of our bodily functions and their exposure to the elements and grime from the environment. Whether luxurious and expensive, or practical and economical our garments are subject to the same influences that cause deterioration regardless of their worth.

**Beauty from jewellery and wearable adornments:** The more valuable and expensive these items are the greater the concern for the wearer that they may be lost or stolen, the result may be a perceived, 'true or false', greater outer beauty but with that 'truly' comes greater problems for the mind.

**Beauty from the physical appearance of skin, hair, teeth, fingernails and facial features etc:** The success and lucrative industry of the world's cosmetic products and procedures are a testimony to the vanity of humans and their quest to enhance their appearance with shinier hair or a particular hairstyle or colour, smoother blemish free skin, having the shape of their eyes or other facial feature altered, fake tan, fake fingernails, fake eyelashes, tattoos, the list is endless. However, although the expenditure on these products and services may temporarily conceal greying hair or wrinkling skin, no amount of money spent will actually change or halt the deterioration of the body and the true nature of our existence and mortality. Changes to enhance the appearance of the outside

of the body may give a person more confidence but to truly change the person the changes must take place within the mind. Therefore a lifetime of expenditure on external beautification does not benefit the person or accumulate merit from this life to the next.

**Beauty from original features:** A result of merit accumulated from past lives induces one to be born beautiful with a naturally good complexion and pleasant features. However, until one has accumulated sufficient merit to escape from our prison of rebirths and sufferings, the defilements and imperfections we are born with will cause the body to deteriorate in accordance with our ageing process. No earthly human being can escape this truth.

**Beauty from etiquette:** Unlike physical beauty, the beauty of etiquette based on the principles of 'Universal Goodness' does not diminish with age. Our physical posture may change with the ravages of the ageing process, but the polite and pleasant manner will shine through in our effort and intention employed in our actions and interactions. This is because the practice of good etiquette comes from within.

#### **BEAUTY OF VIRTUE AND MORALITY: MEANING OF “KHANTI” AND “SORACCA”.**

**“Khanti”** is a Pali word that refers to 'patience', 'forbearance' and 'forgiveness', meanings that we can collectively regard as 'perseverance'. Apart from enduring the climatic and environmental elements such as hot, cold, wind and rain etc., we are subjected to tolerance of and with all those around us; we must bear inevitable conflicts that arise with others and be steady. Thus, one would be adored by celestial and human beings regardless of how we look or our physical appearance as they admire one's perseverance. Such a person, on reaching maturity could be of refuge to their subordinates. Moreover, over and above having an ability to endure people, one needs to endure other sensual defilements such as fame and position. Possessing such sensual defilements often places a person at risk from the jealousy and envy of others who may wish to take or steal one's fame or position by any means. Having fame, position or power may subject a person to commit sin because of corrupt influences. For example, by

way of bribes, some may have resolve to resist a bribe if the amount is small, but succumb to the temptation, disregarding their principles based on 'Universal Goodness', should the sum be large. Those that succumb cannot resist their own defilement with perseverance that is worthy of merit.

On the other hand "Soracca" means to speak or act in a mindful, mild and kindly way which we may refer to as 'gentleness'. One who possesses the virtue of gentleness in this sense will be respected regardless of their wealth, poverty, position or power and be a character of delight regardless of good fortune or hardship.

Whoever may possess this character and have a partner or companion in life possessing this character will never abandon or be abandoned when peril arises and they will enjoy happier lives as a consequence.

### PROCEDURES OF UNIVERSAL GOODNESS

Activity in a dressing room can be categorized into two groups as follows:

#### 1. Activity: Choosing what to buy

Beneficial habit gained: Competence in making decisions

**Cleanliness:** Starting with pure intention, for example knowing one's needs when buying things and not just following trends or fashions, the persuasion of an advertisement or the temptation of getting a bargain. Not knowing one's needs leads to excessive accumulation of unnecessary clothing and accessories. Moderation in one's choice should be considered with regard to the truth that our wardrobe contents are just one of the four necessities of life to protect us from the elements and immodest exposure of the body.

**Orderliness:** Starts by choosing wisely, for example choosing clothing made up of fabric that is appropriate for the climate and conditions, is sufficiently neutral in colour, design and practicality to be worn on many different occasions and under different circumstances. The design should be comfortable and compliment the wearer's physical shape and personality in a way that gives a good impression as to the self respect a person has and the respect they have for others.

**Politeness:** Using pleasant and respectful words when interacting with the vendor.

**Punctuality:** Buying at the right time for the right reasons and seasons, when sold at an economically fair price or as older garments become no longer serviceable or of appropriate appearance.

**Clear mind:** A clear mind allows one to be sensible and prudent in our purchases and not swayed in our judgments as a result of our defilements.

#### 2. Activity: Bedding management

**Beneficial habit gained:** Economically careful to avoid excesses or inappropriateness of our choices - behaviour that is worthy of merit.

**Cleanliness:** Equipment is cleaned and maintained, such as wardrobe, dressing table, walls and floor. Clothes are fresh and clean, free of bad odour or stain. Pure intention in dressing oneself leads to a modest respectful, meritorious lifestyle that is not boastful or offensive to others.

**Orderliness:** Practice right procedures of washing, hanging, drying, pressing, arranging and storing clothes to prolong the use of one's garments. Hang and store clothes for ease of access in accordance with season of the year and frequency of use. Keep footwear, accessories and decorative adornments in appropriately designated places. Use them appropriately with regard to social culture, for example right colour and design of attire and accessory in accordance with the situation such as the workplace, sports field, royal ritual, funeral, auspicious event or observing religious precepts at the temple, etc.

**Politeness:** Do not dress to seduce, boast or offend. One should dress with a sense of decorum and dignity, mindful of the sensitivities of others. For example one should dress with heightened modesty when entering a temple, or sacred and revered places, avoiding any unnecessary exposure of one's body or wearing flashy attention seeking colours, clothing or adornments. Immodesty in respect of one's dress may result in unwanted consequences, such as sexual harassment or assault, robbery or rejection and ridicule. Immodest behaviour stems from

the defilements of the mind. Dressing appropriately must be combined by the action and effort of wearing our clothes neatly and politely. Smart clothes may look scruffy if worn in a dishevelled manner with untidy hair, shirttail hanging out, open buttons, upturned collars and cuffs, etc. Merit is created by intent and effort in all aspects of the way we dress ourselves. Each item of clothing or accessory should purposefully complement the others free from ostentatious embellishments.

**Punctuality:** One should utilize and maintain clothes appropriately, by the habit of removing soil and grime in a timely manner so that the clothes and accessories are readily available and in a well maintained and good condition for reuse.

**Clear mind:** A sense of contentment, pride in appearance, confidence and pleasure occur when one is in the habit of being sensible and responsible in the care of their belongings.

**Beneficial habit gained:** This is the development of the ability to wisely choose and be decisive and economical in a way that boosts self-confidence while promoting the accumulation of merit.

## WORK PLACE

**Activity procedures in the workplace are:**

**1. Job/duty:** One's job relates to an individual's occupation in earning a livelihood and the duties refer the diligence, eagerness to learn new skills, endure the tasks, competence in dealing with colleagues and the public, plus the level and application of knowledge in their field of work.

**2. Workplace management:** Peoples workplaces vary enormously depending on location and type of work. However, whether the work is conducted in a building or outside, the area of work must provide an environment that is fit and healthily clean for the type labour conducted in it. In some instances for example, in an office in a tropical country cleanliness combined with cooling ventilation may be a necessity, while in an agricultural or dusty industrial environment, the unclean or undesirable elements may require the use of protective clothing or breathing

apparatus. In other words the workplace and environment must be clean and appropriately managed.

**3. Equipment management:** All equipment must be appropriate for the occupation. Suitability, cleanliness, condition, durability, safety and convenience of use with regard to equipment, tools and protective clothing, will promote efficiency and productivity.

**4. Personnel management:** Everyone involved in one's career, whether they are oneself, employer, employee, colleague, customer or supplier, will encounter direct and indirect contact and exchanges with each other.

In order to maintain good relationship in terms of occupational professionalism, adhering to ethical and professional standards of polite etiquette are essential for each individual if they are to achieve their full potential of accumulating merit in the process of earning a livelihood.

## PROCEDURES OF 'UNIVERSAL GOODNESS'

**Cleanliness:** The workplace and all equipment must be kept clean with the intention to achieve the optimum environment for maximum efficiency and quality of the product of one's labours. For example, accept responsibility to complete all assignments to the best of one's ability, strictly adhering to ethical and good practice procedures. Working with righteousness in accordance with the principles of 'Universal Goodness' yields righteous results.

Be observant of one's own and the actions of others exercising mindful intent to be an asset to the collective operation, as a diligent example of how to be an exemplary promoter and protector of a safe, efficient, productive and ethical means of livelihood. Beware of one's defilements that may lead to procrastination or slovenly effort.

We should also be mindful that the workplace for earning one's livelihood is not our only workplace; the places where we attend to our daily chores are also subject to the same factors that contribute to being safe, efficient, productive and ethical.

In all that we consider to be work, we should strive to be smart in identifying and solving problems or identifying greater efficiencies. How smart we can become depends on our intellectual capabilities and the knowledge we acquire through personal experience, deliberation, training, education and not to forget, meditation. How much knowledge we acquire will be proportionate to the effort we make to learn. An individual with excellent intellectual capabilities but who lacks the will and effort to concentrate and study in class, will finish their education with poor grades, grades lower than they are capable of, whereas others that may have lower intellectual capabilities but apply their effort to study diligently will attain good grades compatible with, or closer to their full potential. Right effort is linked to results and the accumulation of merit regardless of an individual's intellectual capabilities. Teaching children to be literate opens channels for self acquisition of knowledge, but without moral and ethical guidance of how to apply the acquired knowledge and skills acquired in class or independently, will undoubtedly lead to a potential for miss use of an individual's knowledge and skills later in life and in the way they earn their livelihood. This is why teaching children the knowledge and skills need in life combined with encouraging them to develop a clean and clear mind is so important or the direction of their efforts may lead to detrimental results. Success in life and earning one's livelihood depends on the sequence of causes and effects that occur, many as a direct result of our efforts and intentions. True success in life or the workplace is only achieved if combined with the accumulation of merit.

**Orderliness:** Organize possessions in accordance with their frequency of use and category, comply with civil law, culture, traditions, standards and procedures while adhering to the ethical and moral principles of 'Universal Goodness'.

**Politeness:** Work with mindful attitude of body and speech to prevent conflict and misunderstanding.

**Punctuality:** Mindfully and consistently perform one's duties carefully and reliably to the best of one's ability. Maintain good timekeeping and progress of work.

**Clear mind:** One must cultivate a clear mind in order to work without succumbing to any of the 4 Prejudices, which are prejudice caused by love or desire, prejudice caused by hatred or enmity, prejudice caused by dilution or stupidity and prejudice caused by fear. This is to prevent one person viciously taking advantage of another i.e. to preserve justice, lessen competition and avoid gaining advantage or loosing benefit.

**Beneficial habit gained:** Be ambitious to do one's best for success by right livelihood means that are worthy of merit.





## CHAPTER 2 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

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There are many people in our world that may be observed to display very ‘Bad’ thoughts, words and deeds, there are also many people that display very ‘Good’ thoughts, words and deeds, while in between these two extremes there is the full spectrum of human intent and behaviour from ‘Bad’ to ‘Good’. Those who are ‘Bad’ and sin will have minds clouded by their own defilements and not be able to recognise the extent of ‘Good’ or ‘Bad’ in others, thus foolishly forming associations with others of a like mind. On the other hand, those that are the closest to the ‘Good’ end of the spectrum will have clearer minds and easily see the ‘Good’ or ‘Bad’ in others and choose the people they associate with wisely.

The Human being is composed of body and mind. Generally, the mind is outward looking, this is because unless looking in a mirror we only think about what we can see around us. When observing or interacting with others we absorb their habits without realising that we are because we are not aware of our own minds. If we have a cloudy mind, we will not see the difference between the ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ in others and absorb the defilements of others into our own mind unintentionally. Watching and interacting with other people without carefully observing our own mind is careless and lacks appropriate mindfulness in our daily lives. This aspect of mindfulness easily develops into a habit that leads to idle talk, gossip and criticism of others without recognising our own faults and defilements. We cannot see our mind with our eyes, but we can come to know it through meditation.

Human behaviour is deeply affected by our mental awareness and processes. Hence, understanding the mind and its refinements are an essential facet of all Buddhist studies.

This study is already mentioned in ‘Training The Trainers Part 1’ which can be summarized as follows:

1. Wandering from one thought to another is a natural state of the mind.
2. The mind is mainly involved in the constant process of conscious and subconscious thinking and responding to our senses. Consciously thinking at all times will cause the mind to become fatigued, dull and less efficient. It is therefore desirable to endeavour in some way to bring the mind back to its original pure and bright state. If the mind is left to wander and become dull, it will easily stray from the path of 'Universal Goodness'.
3. Once your mind is back to its original pure and bright state, which may be visualised as being the centre of your body, a great clarity of mind will emerge. Your mind will cease to think on the physical plain and its brightness will illuminate your true 'Inner Knowledge'. This inner wisdom lies within each and every human being without their conscious awareness of it. Only a clear, bright and still mind, free from defilements may access the full potential of its 'Inner Knowledge' and wisdom.

There are two states of mind, a clear mind and a clouded mind. A clear mind will possess the 'Right View' and believe that 'Good' deeds make valuable contributions to oneself and society as a whole. This is unlike a clouded mind that could not draw a distinction between 'Good' and 'Bad' but only thinks of one's advantage or superficial pleasure.

**Here is a comparison between a clear and clouded mind:**

If we are navigating a boat in shallow rocky waters and the water is murky and clouded, we cannot see the rocks and perils that lurk below the surface that may cause damage or sink our vessel, threaten our safety or even prevent our passage towards our ultimate destination. The cloudier the water, the greater the danger of mishap becomes. However, if the water is crystal clear, we may proceed, albeit with mindful and consistent caution, able to see and identify the perils to avoid and choose the safest passage to follow in order that our progress will not be impeded or blocked. Likewise, a person with a clouded mind is unaware of the perils and defilements hidden from view within their mind. They are unable to identify the right way from the wrong way and become a danger to their own mental and physical wellbeing and that of others. Such a person

is unaware or does not care about how they may destroy the environment or create disharmony in society because they cannot see the perilous causes and resultant consequences of their thoughts, words and deeds because of their clouded minds.

To be able to avoid the perils hidden by a clouded mind, one must first learn how to convert a clouded mind into becoming a clear mind in order clearly see and progress along the path that leads to ending the sufferings of self and society.

Humanity is interconnected, each being an integral part of the whole, thus the clarity of the mind depends on the way we communicate with everyone surrounding us. For better understanding, we should acknowledge that society is a group or people involved in persistent social interaction. Social groups consist of institutions such as family, academic institutions and religious institutions etc. Within groups and institutions, the members are categorised according to status; this may be in order of age in the family, or school groups in order of academic qualifications and by experience in the groups of teachers, or rank in groups of soldiers or political figures. These are normal categorisations essential to maintain orderliness and efficient functioning of society. For optimum functioning of an ideal society, each individual, of whatever rank or status, should behave in a mindfully pleasant, suitable, respectful, considerate and acceptable way towards others of equal, higher, or lower status. Such behaviour causes no disharmony or damage to society or the individual to occur.

The Lord Buddha taught that from the perspective of an individual, they are surrounded by six distinct groups referred to as the '**Six Directions**' as follows:

The Front, which means one's parents or legal guardians.

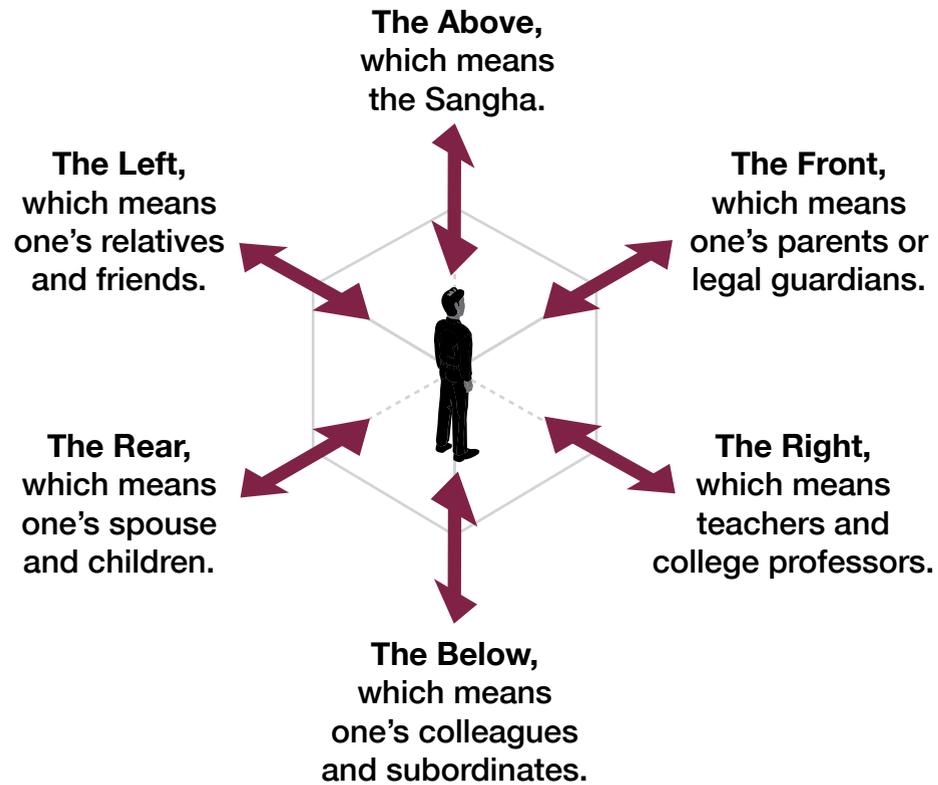
The Right, which means teachers and college professors.

The Rear, which means one's spouse and children.

The Left, which means one's relatives and friends.

The Below, which means one's colleagues and subordinates.

The Above, which means the Sangha.



1. Parent
2. Teacher
3. Spouse & Child
4. Friend
5. Subordinate
6. Buddhist monks or Spiritual Leader

The Lord Buddha divided those around us into the 'Six Directions', defining their duties and responsibilities of interactive relationships as follows:

### 1. PARENT

#### Duties and responsibilities for one's parent:

1. The parents have raised and nurtured the child since infancy. Now, it is the child's turn to take care of their parents.
2. Help the parents with their trade or business.
3. Carry on the family name.
4. Be worthy of an inheritance.
5. Make 'merit' and dedicate to the parents after they pass away.

#### Parents roles and responsibilities for their children:

1. Forbid the child from committing indecent deeds.
2. Teach and train the child how to be decent.
3. Provide for the child's education.
4. Find the child an appropriate spouse.
5. Provide the child with an inheritance at the appropriate time.

### 2. TEACHER

#### Duties and responsibilities that the students owe to their teachers:

1. Stand up to greet them.
2. Line up to welcome them.
3. Be obedient.
4. Serve them.
5. Attentively learning the arts and sciences.

#### Duties and responsibilities that teachers owe to their students:

1. Give valuable advice.
2. Teach them well.

3. Teach them the arts and sciences.
4. Praise them.
5. Teach them the moral responsibility for their education.

### **3. SPOUSE & CHILD**

#### **Duties and responsibilities of a husband for their spouse:**

1. Honouring his wife.
2. Being courteous to his wife.
3. Being faithful to his wife.
4. Give her a leadership role.
5. Give her gifts of appreciation.

#### **Duties and responsibilities of a wife for their spouse:**

1. Manage the household.
2. Be considerate and generous to those close to her husband.
3. Be faithful to her husband.
4. Safeguard her husband's earnings.
5. Be hard-working.

### **4. FRIEND**

#### **Duty of showing true friendship to one's friends and colleagues:**

1. By sharing gifts.
2. By kindly speech.
3. By promoting their well-being.
4. By treating them as you would wish to be treated.
5. By being truthful and not misleading them.

### **The five duties that friends owe to each other:**

1. By protecting one's friend when they are careless.
2. By guarding their property when they are careless.
3. By being a refuge for them when they are in distress or danger.
4. By staying by their side when they are in trouble.
5. By showing respect to the members of their family.

### **5. COLLEAGUES AND SUBORDINATES**

#### **The boss's duties:**

1. Possesses the ability to assign the appropriate task to each subordinate.
2. Provide safe and appropriate working environment, food and salary.
3. Provide medical leave.
4. Give special rewards.
5. Give some time off.

#### **The Employee's duties:**

1. Start work before one's employer.
2. Quit work after one's employer.
3. Take only what is given.
4. Improve one's work performance.
5. Praise one's employer to others.

### **6. SPIRITUAL LEADER OR THE 'SANGHA'**

#### **Duties owed to individuals occupying one's 'Above Direction'**

1. Perform every duty with kindness.
2. Express everything with kind speech.

3. Think of the ‘Sangha’ with kind thoughts.
4. Wholeheartedly welcome the ‘Sangha’ into their home.
5. Support the ‘Sangha’ in regards to the ‘Four Necessities’.

**The duties of the ‘Sangha’ toward the lay individuals:**

1. Forbid them to commit deeds of wickedness.
2. Admonish them to maintain their decency.
3. Give of aid with a good, kind heart.
4. Teach them the ‘Dhamma’.
5. Explain the ‘Dhamma’ that they have already heard more clearly.
6. Guide them toward the ‘States of Happiness’.

We are surrounded by 6 groups of people. However some of those groups can act well in their friendship roles, but some may not. The friendly groups are more likely to feel more comfortable around each other because they have been spending enough time to learn each other’s characteristics and habits, human nature, emotions, behaviours, moods, and minds. If they have something in common they will get along easily and then the friendship will last longer than that of a group of ‘False Friends’; therefore it is essential for us to find the right friends. You must also be able to identify which ones are ‘True Friends’ and which ones are not, in order to lead you in a positive direction.

The term **‘True friend’** means **a person who has good intentions towards others and delivers on their good intentions by actions.** In other words, one who is not just a friend in words and intentions but also in support and actions that will be of benefit to the other.

Friends may act in your interest and for your benefit, helping when you are under difficult circumstances, but they may also act to your detriment with wrong advice, wrong encouragement or wrong support which may be intentional or unintentional.

Therefore, the Lord Buddha described and clarified that there are different characteristic between ‘False’ and ‘True Friends’ that we should be aware of to know if a person is a ‘True’ or ‘False Friend’ and thereby who we should choose to associate with or not associate with.

**1. ‘False Friends’** are foes in the guise of a friend, a person who is an enemy that pretends to be your friend.

1. ‘False Friends’ have ulterior motives.
2. ‘False Friends’ are only good talkers.
3. ‘False Friends’ are flatterers.
4. ‘False Friends’ lead us to ruin.

The Lord Buddha further defined the above 4 categories as follows:

1. A ‘False Friend’ who has ulterior motives is a person who is good at taking advantage of others.

- 1.1 They think only of their own gain and are selfish and careless with respect to the detrimental effects they cause to others by their actions.
- 1.2 They give very little but expect a lot in return, taking advantage of others for their personal material benefit or wealth.
- 1.3 They help their friends out only as a way to help themselves or if there is personal advantage or gain to be made.
- 1.4 They have friends in order that they can take advantage of them and further their own agenda or interests.

2. ‘False Friends’ are only good at talking and “blowing their own trumpet”, making false promises and misleading statements.

- 2.1 They ramble on about their past with embellishments to impress while ignoring their flaws and failing to endeavour to address them.
- 2.2 They ramble on about the future with aimless intent or conviction.

- 2.3 They give only what is of no value to them or useless.
- 2.4 They find excuses as to why they cannot help a friend in need.
- 3. A 'False Friend' is a flatterer who is insincere and two-faced.
  - 3.1 They encourage a friend to commit bad deeds.
  - 3.2 They go along with a friend about to conduct good deeds.
  - 3.3 They praise and speak well of their friend to their face.
  - 3.4 They gossip and speak badly about their friend behind their back.

For the first two, they **consent to their friend in doing wrong and consent to their friend doing right**. This type of friend is described as being unreliable and a friend of whom one must be extremely cautious.

For last two, this is **a person who sings your praises to your face but 'stabs you in the back'**. They are 'two-faced' and we can say that they are an enemy. In front of you they will say only good words, but when you are not there they will speak badly of you to others. The words they say to your face are meaningless and worse than insincere.

- 4. A 'False Friend' leads one down the roads to ruin and is destructive. This friend is called in Pali: **Apayasahaya**. This kind of friend will hide their true nature to your face and can be very influential in a bad way.
  - 4.1 They encourage their friend into taking alcohol or mind altering substances.
  - 4.2 They encourage their friend to frequent inappropriate nightlife venues.
  - 4.3 They encourage their friend to engaging in inappropriate entertainments and activities.
  - 4.4 They encourage their friend to gamble.

**A 'False Friend' will be your enthusiastic cohort should you indulge in boozing, drug taking, unseemly or lascivious behaviour or gamble, they will revel in your inappropriate and self destructive lifestyle and are extremely dangerous to you. A wise and mindful person will avoid forming friendships with a 'False Friend',**

**but strive to be a 'True Friend' themselves by encouraging a 'False Friend' to mend their ways, by resisting their 'False Friend's' bad influences and setting a good example.**

**2. 'True Friends'** we should seek and associate with.

2.1 A 'True Friend' lends their friend unconditional support.

- 1. They take care of their friend when they have been reckless.
- 2. They take care of their friend's material wealth when they have been careless.
- 3. They can be depended on in times of need.
- 4. They give more than what is asked of them.

2.2 A 'True Friend' is there through good and bad times.

- 1. They reveal their secrets to their friend.
- 2. They conceals conceal their friend's secrets.
- 3. They stay around in times of need without excuses.
- 4. They are willing to give their life for their friend.

2.3 A 'True Friend' gives useful advice.

- 1. They forbid their friend from committing sinful deeds.
- 2. They admonish their friend to side with decency.
- 3. They teach their friend new things.
- 4. They guide their friend toward the path of heaven.

2.4 A 'True Friend' is loving and considerate.

- 1. They show empathy when a friend is down.
- 2. They are happy for their friend's happiness and good fortune.
- 3. They come to their friend's defence when they are threatened or criticised.
- 4. They join in championing the praises others say of their friend.

A 'True Friend' should have these 3 qualities of goodness which are: pure body, pure speech, and pure mind.

1. Pure body consists of being well presented, disciplined and polite, while maintaining a lifestyle based on doing only 'Good' deeds, while refraining from the sins of killing, stealing or cheating.
2. Pure speech is achieved by not telling lies, not trivializing, not engaging in rude or inconsequential talk and by speaking clearly with purpose.
3. Pure mind is achieved by not holding any bias or grudge and by possessing the ability to identify that which is right or wrong, 'Good' or 'Bad' by means of clear thinking.

A 'False Friend' has three characteristics, namely dishonest act, dishonest speech and clouded mind.

1. Dishonest acts are wrongdoings that result from: dirtiness, disorderliness and impoliteness of body such as, taking another's life, stealing and committing sexual misconduct.
2. Dishonest speech by way of falsehoods, vulgarities and aggressive or threatening tone.
3. Clouded mind means one cannot differentiate wrong from right, 'Good' from 'Bad', merit from demerit and also being bias.

Comparisons between 'False Friends' and 'True Friends'

1. 'False Friends' have ulterior motives.
2. 'False Friends' are only good talkers.
3. 'False Friends' are flatterers.
4. 'False Friends' lead us to ruin.
1. 'True Friends' lend their friends support.
2. 'True Friends' are consistently there through good and bad times.

3. 'True Friends' give useful advice.
4. 'True Friends' are loving and considerate.

Whoever is surrounded with these six groups of people that may be classified as 'True Friends', will be more likely to succeed in life. However, a person must strongly be a 'True Friend' themselves, or their 'True Friends' in their Six Directions will not want to associate with them. If a person is not a 'True Friend' themselves, they will only have 'False Friends' to associate with and be bound within a vicious circle of 'False Friends' forever.

To conclude, Kalayanamitra is the 'True Friend' of the third quality: the friend who gives useful advice, one that can be of refuge of mind, be a counsellor and be the one we can ask for guidance.

### MEANING OF KALAYANAMITRA ('TRUE FRIEND')

**Kalayanamitra** is derived from the combination of two words having 'Kalayana' which means nice or good and 'Mitra' which means friend or acquaintance. So **Kalayanamitra** means 'True Friend', good friend, nice friend or acquaintance. Some translations may refer to the term 'Spiritual Friend', as Kalayanamitra doesn't mean good friend generally but refers to a person who has a virtuous quality, one who acts in accordance with Dharma and adheres to Buddhist doctrine and duties in order to seek self betterment and merit and also the same for others. It also means a person who encourages or guides one to follow a virtuous path.

A person who is said to be a Kalayanamitra is a person who possesses virtuous qualities both inside and outside. To succeed in becoming a Kalayanamitra, one must begin with oneself.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF KALAYANAMITRA

To find a true Kalayanamitra and associate with one we must know the essence and qualities of such a person. Simultaneously, it is important to know the character and behaviour of a person who is the opposite or we will have no basis upon which to make our judgments of who will be a 'True Friend' and who will not.

The Lord Buddha provided guidance on the characteristics of an undesirable friend and the desirable and wise friend as follows:

No.	Undesirable Friend Characteristics	Desirable Friend Characteristics
1)	1) Evil conduct in Actions 2) Evil conduct in Words 3) Evil conduct in Thoughts	1) Good conduct in Actions 2) Good conduct in Words 3) Good conduct in Thoughts
2)	1) Think bad 2) Speak bad 3) Act bad	1) Think good 2) Speak good 3) Act good
3)	1) Unable to see one's own mistakes 2) Realize one's mistake but offer no apology 3) No forgiveness for others who show remorse	1) Able to see one's own mistake 2) Realize one's mistake and apologize 3) Forgive others who show remorse
4)	1) Fault finding by wrong analysis making matters worse 2) Problem-solved incorrectly (Identify problem from something that is not a problem) 3) Not express gratitude to others when they solve a problem	1) Correct analysis making matters better by right thinking) 2) Problem-solved correctly (Not identify problem from something that is not a problem) 3) Express gratitude when others solve a problem
5)	1) Demeritorious Act 2) Demeritorious Speech 3) Demeritorious Mind	1) Meritorious Act 2) Meritorious Speech 3) Meritorious Mind
6)	1) Harmful Act 2) Harmful Speech 3) Harmful Mind	1) Harmless Act 2) Harmless Speech 3) Harmless Mind
7)	1) Unhelpful Act 2) Unhelpful Speech 3) Unhelpful Mind	1) Helpful Act 2) Helpful Speech 3) Helpful Mind

The Lord Buddha has given seven qualities of a good friend in the Dutiyasakha Sutta as follows:

1. Lovable
2. Respectable
3. Adorable
4. Being a counsellor
5. Being a patient listener
6. Being able to deliver deep discourses
7. Not leading or spurring on to a useless end

The Lord Buddha suggested that a person with these seven qualities is a true good friend.

The tabled descriptions of both 'Undesirable Friend' and 'Desirable Friend' above indicate the observation tools that can be applied so that the 'Desirable Friend' can easily be distinguished from the other when one considers who to associate with. Meanwhile one should constantly work on refining one's own 'Desirable Friend' characteristics and habits in order that we attract the right kind of friend to accept us.

To be a kalayanamitra to others and to have others as one's kalayanimitra would make life prosper spiritually and physically if the support is mutual. Because it's not practical to be the only good person or living alone in this world, it is necessary to interact with other people and whether it is as a kalayanamitra or not will have an impact on one's life. If we give friendship to others in terms of Kalayanamitra and vice versa, it is certain that one's life will be favourably influenced towards following a virtuous path. Life under such circumstances will be successful in both secular and spiritual aspects.

Once one has become a kalayanamitra to oneself, one should also be a kalayanamitra to others. Keep in mind that this invaluable duty is an honour that wise people and sages throughout all eras have taken on as their responsibility with pride to succeed.

To be a kalayanamitra to others, simply follow these guidelines:

**Give a friendly smile**, by affording everyone with cheerfulness and delightfulness.

**Give friendship**, by being friendly and have good wishes for all.

**Give good advice**, by guiding others to follow the right path in order to live with right livelihood and pursue self-perfection.

**Give noble wealth**, by inviting others to make merit in order to convert secular wealth to noble wealth for life after death.

**Give the path to the peacefulness**, by showing the path to true happiness through the practice of meditation to eliminate all defilements.

Being a kalayanamitra entails the giving of one's valuable time in this life to fulfil one's duty and positive advancement towards our ultimate goal. Merit is gained in this way by acting for the benefit of others, so that they may also progress in the circles of life and death in their quest to attain Nirvana.

### **BEING A 'TRUE FRIEND' TO OTHERS**

A 'True Friend' is a true giver. People may give physical objects with charitable intent, such as food, shelter, clothes or non-physical benefits such as knowledge that will enable better perception for practical benefit. But a 'True Friend' must exceed this basic practical level of day to day support and give what is needed to gain access to the 'Inner knowledge' through 'Right' livelihood, behaviour and meditation. This is knowledge regarding the truth of life and the path that leads to Heaven and Nirvana. 'True Friends' not only support happiness for each other in this lifetime but support the necessities and knowledge for happiness and positive progression in future lifetimes.

#### **Principles and Behaviours of a 'True Friend'**

1. Not to make or be the cause of trouble
2. Guide others towards right livelihood that will lead to happiness
3. Indicate the qualities of a happy life

4. Define the types of good deeds

5. Maintain a clear mind

### **CHARACTER OF A 'TRUE FRIEND'**

Appearance creates the first impression others will have of us, thus one must look after one's health, wellbeing and appearance at all times. Dress appropriately and politely, behave calmly and respectably, possess a cheerful countenance and maintain a thoughtful and considerate persona. Even when one is conversing with close friends and relatives, one must always bear in mind that one is not acting with inappropriate familiarity and be mindful of being a good representative of the Buddhist principles with regard to our thoughts, words and actions. Non-Buddhists will evaluate Buddhism by the good or bad impressions we give them.

In this lifetime, it is inevitable that we will encounter people in our Six Directions or groups that will have love and good intent for us but due to their personal defilements, will behave immorally or be ignorant of correct Buddhist practice in their own lives. These people will pursue happiness for themselves and families based on gaining power or material wealth at the expense of gaining virtuous merit and the resultant true happiness that such merit will bring. We must use the tools provided by the Lord Buddha's guidance to be mindful to extract that which is 'Good' and beneficial in the Six Directions and reject that which is 'Bad' and harmful.

**1. Parents:** Even when considering our own parents, if we discover that they lack the qualities required to be a Kalayanamitra, then we must be considered to be unlucky in this respect. However, this should not discourage us from striving to be a Kalayanamitra to our parents and siblings which will have a positive and beneficial effect on our and our family's situation.

**2. Teachers:** A true kalayanamitra who is also a teacher must embed morality in their pupils through teaching knowledge of this world and the spiritual realm based on 'Right View'. Teachers who only focus on being dominant in the secular world based on power and materialism but have no intention to educate their pupils to have the 'Right View', are not considered to be a Kalayanamitra.

When academic knowledge exists without the ‘Right View’ to enable a person to understand the consequences of misused knowledge, disaster is sooner or later bound to ensue.

**3. Spouses and children:** Husbands, wives and partners, ideally should be one another’s influential Kalayanamitra, including all other members of the family. However, if they are defective in their personal qualities in a way that prevents or reduces their ability to be a Kalayanamitra, then they will have a negative influence on the family unit and its ultimate level of success.

**4. Friends:** This refers to various groups of friends including neighbours, classmates, colleagues, co-workers, etc. Those who lack the qualities required to be a Kalayanamitra must be regarded as a danger to our positive prospects and progress in life towards our ultimate goal. If we associate with them, their destructive influences are bound create negative impacts on our progress and happiness in this lifetime and the circumstances into which we will be born in the next lifetime or even underworld if we commit sins that are beyond redemption.

**5. Colleagues and workers:** When these people possess true qualities that enable them to be a kalayanamitra, they will greatly support many aspects of our life in a way that encourages and enables us to enjoy enhanced levels of happiness, success and career advancement.

#### **MONKS OR SPIRITUAL LEADERS**

1. Monks or Spiritual Leaders: Only those who possess ‘Right View’ can develop kalayanamitra qualities in oneself. Key persons that play a vital part in embedding ‘Right View’ are Buddhist monks and spiritual leaders. Nonetheless, not every monk or spiritual leader possesses the qualities to be called a Kalayanamitra. Even if there is only a single quality missing that is required for a monk to be considered a kalayanamitra, then that monk must be considered to be sinful and not to be trusted as a pure source of guidance and knowledge.

This has been the case since the Buddha’s time, therefore it is important that lay people must carefully choose and search for monks who truly possess the qualities of a Kalayanamitra as their mentor and refuge.

To be a Kalayanamitra is important if a human is to live in accordance with a lifestyle that leads to happiness. Primarily, to have the knowledge of how to eliminate human suffering from hunger, thirst, hot and cold, that are the consequences of deficiencies in the four inescapable aspects of our daily lives, namely suffering from poor health, suffering from coexistence, suffering from earning a livelihood and suffering from mental ill health.

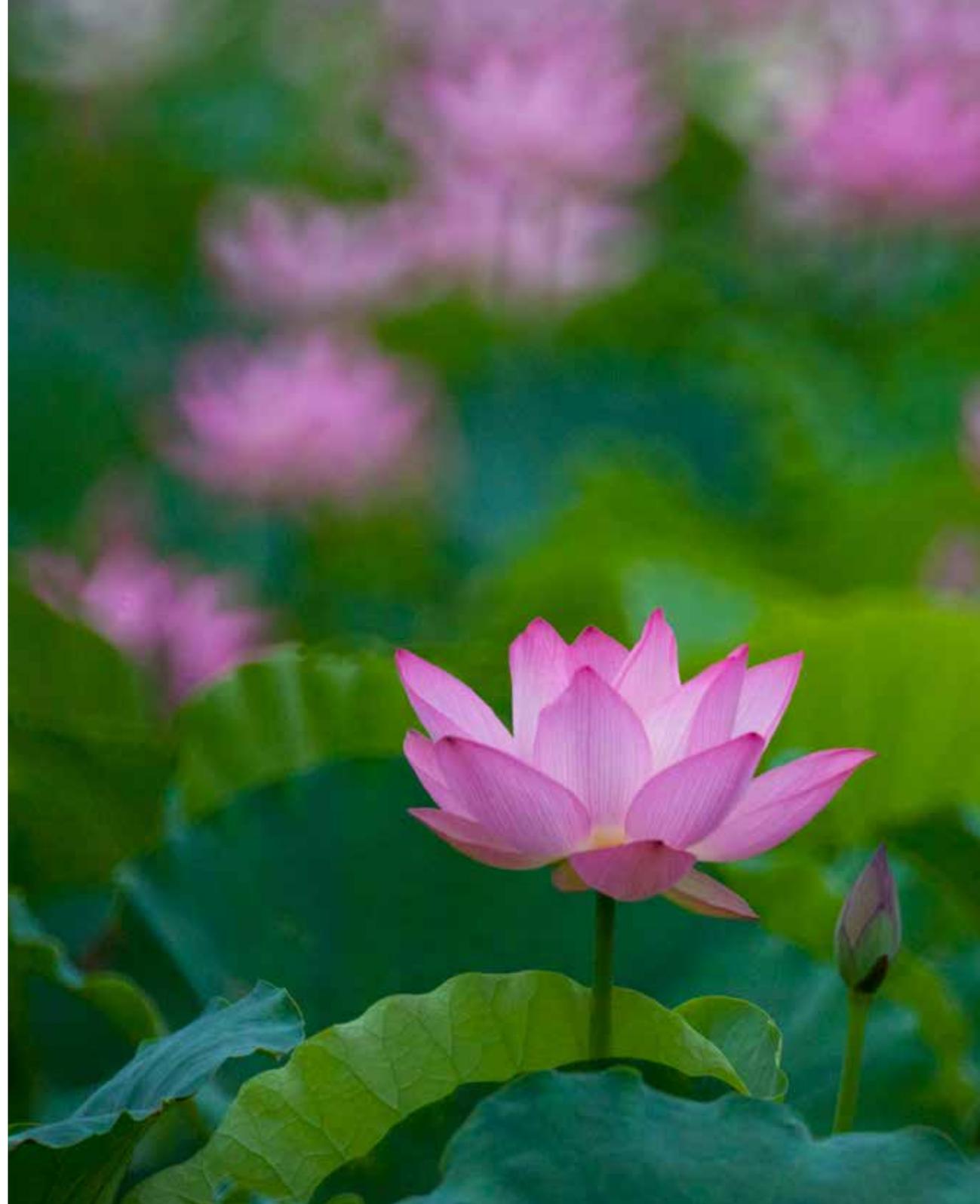
Practicing to develop the qualities required to be a kalayanamitra is very important because, as the saying goes, “God helps those who help themselves”. We must start by observing and applying the ‘Universal Goodness’ Practice Procedures in the 5 physical environments we find ourselves in during our daily lives.

Consistent and complete practice will lead to improved physical comfort, with only a minor discomfort remaining or possibly none at all. When our body is healthy and well managed, the mind is less distracted from mindful thought and application. Thought and cognitive processes will improve and become more efficient so that we may better interact with our environment and the people around us. Once we become a Kalayanamitra to ourselves, we then can be a Kalayanamitra to others. If all people followed the Lord Buddha’s teaching in this respect, human conflict would cease and peace and harmony would prevail. Humanity has far to go to reach this stage, but if one by one each individual takes responsibility for their own actions and contributions to achieving personal progress with regard to living according to the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’, their results and successes will be an example and encouragement for others to follow.

The human mind is constantly wandering and is easily swayed by temptations of what appear to be easy paths to happiness or pleasurable desires, material gain or superficial success. Without thought of morality or consequences, the lure of money, objects, power and unbridled pleasure are peddled by ‘False’ Friends, for their own disillusioned gains or benefits and the clouded mind easily falls prey to these temptations and the dangers they present. Clever marketing and propaganda infiltrates our daily lives until we lose perspective of what truly has value and what does not. This leads to the mind clinging to external objects and

activities regardless of their potential to do harm to our state of mind.

The results of a clouded mind that clings to external objects is the root of conflict, taking advantage, abuse, encroachment, violence, war, social and environmental problems. Therefore, our escape lies in the Lord Buddha's teachings regarding morality by abstaining from all wrong doings and cleansing the mind through meditation in order progress along the path that leads to true happiness, heaven and Nirvana.





### CHAPTER 3

## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

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Living an appropriate lifestyle in the present time will result in true happiness and shapes our future in this lifetime and also in the next life. We must mindfully endeavour to perform only good deeds and adhere to a virtuous life style. Anyone doing ‘Good’ deeds by thinking well, speaking well, and doing well will definitely achieve positively fruitful results. On the other hand, performing ‘Bad’ deeds leads to inevitable suffering.

Our mind has considerable potential for making wise choices and decisions. A ‘Good’ quality of mind will be achieved when our mind is bright and clear. A clear mind allows us to analyse our surroundings and situation with understanding and reasoning as to the detrimental or beneficial results the way we respond will have. Clear or ‘Right View’, allows us to know what is a right or wrong action and the consequences of our actions.

Each human from the Buddhist perspective comprises of the physical body that we can see and the mind that we cannot see but reveals its nature through the actions of our physical body. These two components are related and have influence on each other. Accordingly, anyone who keeps their mind bright and clear at all the times, will realize which factors cause their mind to become clouded and dirty. These factors can be commonly found in our daily lives no matter who we are or where we may be and are referred to as the 4 responsibilities to suffering in our daily lives.

When anyone acknowledges and understands these 4 daily life sufferings and tries to eliminate them to gain personal happiness, while bringing happiness to those around them, they must develop these 4 responsibilities accordingly by following and disseminating the Lord Buddha’s path to enlightenment. After the Lord Buddha attained enlightenment through following the middle path,

he taught his devotees to begin by principally considering for themselves, that which can bring a person to see the existence of the 4 human sufferings in daily life based on the following:

#### **THE 1ST SUFFERING DERIVED FROM PHYSICAL BODY OR HEALTH CONDITION**

The Lord Buddha said that to be free from all disease is an ultimate wealth of life. Our physical body and overall health condition is principally important for all activities and essentially deteriorates because this is the costs of living, no matter what we are physically engaged in, be it studying, working, or having families etc. As a result of Dhamma learning for 40 years, I'd like to conclude that the Lord Buddha indeed emphasized the importance of keeping his physical body as healthy as possible.

Our body is like everything in nature, constantly impermanent and changing with time. The sensations of cold, heat, hunger, and thirst including the need to urinate or defecate are indicators of deterioration of our body with time just like an automobile. It requires regular maintenance on the basis of either distance or duration; otherwise it will breakdown or cease to function sooner or later. Our physical body is also the same, requiring regular refuelling and care.

Observing physiological changes in our body can be considered as primary health care. The sensations of cold, heat, hunger and thirst, plus the need to urinate and defecate are the signals that our body needs to be cooled, warmed or sheltered, have its nutrients or hydration replenished, or that our body needs to evacuate the waste and redundant or toxic substances. These fundamental processes are a constant cycle throughout life if we are to maintain our health and essential aspects of not only body, but condition or state of mind.

For example, whenever we are dehydrated, we will feel fatigue, headache and also have irregular defecating. Accordingly, it is difficult for us to keep up a good mood and a clear state of mind when subjected to this bodily suffering. In addition, if we do not sleep sufficiently or at appropriate times and intervals, we may suffer irritability, lack of concentration and experience a bad mood or undesirable state of mind. Therefore, our daily appropriate physical care routine, or lack of

appropriate physical care routine, will directly influence the state and condition of our mind. The body is the home of the mind and a well maintained body provides the best home for the mind to become clear.

Apart from primary health care, our body also requires some additional care to maintain optimum efficiency and function. This additional care comes by means of suitable exercise plus range and quantities of food and hydrating fluids. One should be mindful of the saying: "Eat food as if it is a medicine but do not take medicine as if eating food". Poor diet, under or over consumption, not enough or too much exercise will cause weaknesses and stresses on the body leading to poor health and thereby poor state of mind. This can be remedied by correcting the diet and consumption levels plus engaging in appropriate exercise. However, there are circumstances where medical intervention or medicines are required even if one has followed good principles of primary health care. They may be in cases of injury, acquired infections and diseases, accidents or natural physical decline due to the ageing process.

Our body produces waste constantly in the form of solids, liquids, or gasses which we are conditioned to find unpleasant and repulsive. We are unable to escape the fact that our body is working 24-hours a day in the production of undesirable products that soil, pollute and dirty our environment and surroundings. The resultant unpleasantness is detrimental to our state of mind and is an annoyance and distraction we have to bear and learn to manage. This is the reality of the human condition and life that makes it difficult for us to maintain a clear and clean mind. For example, when we are surrounded by ugliness and unpleasantness, it is very difficult to concentrate and study because our mind is constantly drawn to the unpleasantness of our situation. It should be noted that the level of tidiness, cleanliness and pleasantness provided in the home environment such as the bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and work area, contribute to the external factors that accompany the internal factors that arise by our own bodily functions, to increase or decrease this kind of daily suffering.

Ending or diminishing our physical suffering in this respect reverts back to our attention to maintaining suitable living conditions based on the principles of

‘Universal Goodness’. That is our attention to our body, belongings and home. They must collectively be clean, tidy, and well time manage. When our body and surrounding are not fostered properly, not only will our health condition deteriorate and be compromised, but the physical suffering will be increased while our temperament and level of happiness will be proportionately adversely impacted both in this life and the next.

Our responsibility to ourselves is the effective way to eliminate our physical suffering from becoming a burden to others and society by not taking good care of ourselves. On the other hand, if we manage our physical body and health condition well, we show great responsibilities not only to ourselves but also to society since we do not become a burden and can contribute to building a good and clean environment for others.

#### **THE 2ND SUFFERING DERIVED FROM LIVING TOGETHER**

Human beings principally cannot live alone as we are social creatures that live in societies and incapable of surviving from birth without the support of another human being such as our mother or nanny. We all depend on and have to interact with others in one way or another in the Six Directions. Wherever there is an interaction, there are bound from time to time to be clashes or conflicts; even between tongue and teeth within our own mouth, conflicts arise. The human mood is also impermanent, constantly changing causing interaction between two people to be unstable making it almost unavoidable to avoid conflict of thoughts or actions. Without some means of regulating one’s behaviour, conflict would lead to greater conflict and anarchy would destroy all harmony in society. To avoid this happening, human groups and societies have evolved and flourished by developing cultural and social manners, customs, rules and laws to reduce and deal with conflicts when they arise.

When each individual has good self-responsibility that is sufficient to manage their physical suffering, conflict at all social levels from family to country can be diminished. The difference in cleanliness and orderliness criteria among people living together can be the cause of criticism, disdain and even racism in their

society without any exception even among biological siblings. This is only because the standard criteria in cleanliness of these people are different. For example, when we clean and maintain our body well, we do not want to sit next to the one who does not and has a bad smell.

Dirtiness, disorderliness and lack of self-responsibility regarding the body care of individuals, contributes to the manifestation of conflict within society. Accordingly, good practice regarding addressing our inescapable physical suffering, greatly contributes to a good physical and mental condition and an individual’s personal environment. Good self-responsibility in society leads to greater harmony and less conflict.

Moreover, our ancestors had composed a saying to teach descendant like us as follows:

“Those who stay alone should be aware of their thoughts

Those who stay with companions should be aware of their words”

This was written to remind us about our spoken words. Physical manner and responsibilities are not only what we have to beware of, as caution regarding the words we utter are also significant. We must know what we should say and not say. The main principle of what we are going to say is that it must be the fact. Moreover, it should be beneficial to the listeners and appropriate. Finally, it must be the right time. Accordingly, the mindful carefulness we apply to our physical manner and speech, form the basis upon which we are successful or not in our social responsibilities or managing our physical suffering in our coexistence with others.

Following the social discipline in both physical manner and verbal comportment can bring peace to society. Therefore, the starting point of peace in a society is derived from the orderliness and politeness of each individual in the society which is based on the foundations and environment of their society.

#### **THE 3RD SUFFERING DERIVED FROM EARNING A LIVING**

Throughout life, except when we are first born and young, are old and infirm, or

severely physically disabled, each individual has to earn a living. There is nothing freely given. Everything must be paid for. Even if we have rain coming from the sky, we have to buy water for drinking or general use. Even in our own homes there is a cost of living for our domestic utilities, such as electric, water and gas. Almost all modern conveniences require energy or a supply that must be purchased. Therefore, earning a living is an essential aspect of a healthy functioning society. Those that do not earn a living, apart from the aforementioned exceptions, become beggars or outcasts from society. To be part of society, people work for the 4 requisites referred to in Buddhism.

Working hard is important, but what is more important is how to efficiently work and develop ourselves in accordance with the principles of 'Universal Goodness' in the process of successfully earning a living in a way that does not cause negative impacts to others and society.

All of the work ethics mentioned above are derived from the fundamental behaviour of individuals toward cleanliness, orderliness, politeness, punctuality, and mediation or concentration. These 5 parameters are determinants for quality of life. The better an individual's fundamental behaviour, the more self-development that individual can achieve.

Not only is earning a living necessary, but prudence in spending and saving money and resources is also no less important. Most people know how to earn their money. However, they do not know how to manage, spend and save money efficiently. These inefficiencies come about from their fundamental inadequacies with regard to cleanliness and orderliness. Lack of prudence in these matters leads to depleted financial reserves and thereby the inability to deal with unexpected or unforeseen expenditures. For people who lack prudence, no matter how successful they are at earning a living, they never have sufficient money or wherewithal to cover their commitments or imprudent expenditure. Their situation causes them to become tempted to increase income and material wealth by immoral or inappropriate means, such as cheating, stealing or other precept-breaking actions. This kind of behaviour undermines the stability and harmonious functioning of society plus depletes or destroys the natural

environmental resources upon which society depends. The result is suffering for themselves and others. When we spend our money wisely and keep things neat and tidy, while taking care that our possessions are well looked after in order to maintain their usefulness for as long as possible, we become mindful to manage our expenses efficiently as a result. We avoid waste and extravagances that would reduce our ability to afford our necessities.

Importantly, time management with regard to punctuality or routine of commencing work or completing work must be managed efficiently, or the suffering of earning one's living may negatively encroach on the other duties one has with regard to the other sufferings of oneself and those with whom we coexist in society. A healthy balance of work time, family time and society time can only be achieved when one lives according to one's needs and means without indulging in excesses or misguided pursuits or activities. Without a healthy balance, suffering will increase and with it, the additional costs to oneself and society because of decreased physical and mental health, greater conflict, less cooperation and even the breakdown of a family unit, friendships or groups in society. Anyone who can allocate or organize their time well will be able to manage all their sufferings that arise in life and will be happier as a result.

There is a truth of life that we must be aware of and understand for it is something that we cannot change. This truth concerns the reality of time. It is a capital asset of life and all kinds of work. Whatever we will do, it takes time to complete. Another important fact about time is that an individual's time in this life is limited. Although each individual has exactly the same amount of hours in a day, the amount an individual can achieve in a day is dependent on the efficiency with which they manage their time. No one can wind the clock back and regain lost time or do things differently; the past is the past and cannot be changed. The past is a lost opportunity that remains lost forever. Thus, we must know how to spend time appropriately and efficiently, starting with proper time management and punctuality.



#### THE 4TH SUFFERING DERIVED FROM OBSESSIVE DEFILEMENTS OR MENTALITY

In Buddhism, human beings are defined as being composed inseparably of the physical body which is home to the mind and the mind which is the master or controls the actions of the physical body. The mind is the source of thought, speech, and action. ‘Good’, or right thinking leads to ‘Good’, or right speech and ‘Good’ or beneficial actions. To the contrary, ‘Bad’, or wrong thinking leads to ‘Bad’, or wrong speech and harmful actions. Therefore, body and mind must be concurrently developed.

Our mind is composed of very unclean elements called ‘Kilesa’ or defilements. These unclean elements can destroy the quality of our mind by releasing poisonous or corrupting and disruptive influences that we name as greed, anger, and delusion.

When we have a defiled mind due to these unclean elements, we misunderstand our world and due to greed have an overwhelming desire to have more than we actually need, or due to anger, have an overwhelming desire to be belligerent and finally, because of our ‘delusions’ indulge in false beliefs that lead to wrong actions. For example we may consider social alcoholic consumption beneficial, or even essential to cordial coexistence instead of considering its detrimental effects as a poisonous mind-altering substance that is harmful to mental and physical health, while diminishing an individual’s ability to think and behave appropriately so that they may cause chaotic disruption to society and even result in injury or death to others or themselves.

This state of clouded or unwell mind leads to ‘Bad’ thinking, ‘Bad’ speech, and ‘Bad’ actions because of the incapability of distinguishing between ‘Good’ or ‘Bad’, right or wrong and personal or common interests. When we can make our mind clean and clear, we will be able to make right decisions to do ‘Good’, virtuous and beneficial actions resulting in propitious consequence and circumstances in the future.

The real enemies of mankind are not people from different nations, different ethnic groups, or political persuasions, but are the defilements in each individual’s mind. They dominate human thinking and behaviour, regardless of their race,

religion, faith, creed or ethnicity, causing them to think, speak and perform badly as well as seek gain or advantage over one another.

Since ancient times and civilisations, each government or leader was appointed to implement order and procedures aimed at improving their people’s situation and reducing their suffering, but it is only the people’s problems related to health, society and economics that were and to this day, addressed. No government has derived any permanent solutions to these problems since they do not have enough comprehensive understanding of the human mind and its inherent defilements that are the root cause of the problems that arise in all aspects of society. After his enlightenment, the Lord Buddha discovered that if human beings are free from defilements in their minds, the world will be peaceful. Because of His profound realisation, the Lord Buddha taught people and propagated the way to create their own happiness, starting from looking inside their own mind. He expounded that they must take responsibility for eradicating their personal defilements. Then our society will be peaceful.

This lifetime is dominated by commercialism and human competition to hastily succeed in materialistic wealth and accumulation, succeed in power to dominate and control, plus to succeed in the pursuit of instant pleasures disguised as happiness. Yet with all this so called human progress, the importance and goal of true and sustainable happiness has been neglected or ignored. The world is less peaceful than in the time of the Lord Buddha, one might say that modern progress has brought us to an all time low. We have bigger bombs with longer ranges so that we can kill greater numbers of people without even seeing the fear in their eyes. We are destructive to ourselves and society without conscience because the defilements within our mind cloud our view and judgment so that we do not realise the gravity and consequences of our actions. We see only the now and what is outside of our mind, blundering through our daily lives with no idea why we have so many sufferings to bear despite our best efforts and hardest work. However, we do not have to live our lives in this way because the Lord Buddha provided the means to overcome our sufferings by simply connecting with our ‘Inner Knowledge’ through the practice of meditation.

If human beings do not take responsibility to understand their 4 daily life sufferings and take proper care of them, what will happen?

We need to nurture our 4 basic needs of clothes, food, shelter, and medicine, without which our physical body will not be able to survive. If a person does not know how to search for and select the 4 basic needs or how to maintain his or her health, they will suffer poor personal hygiene and health and be the cause of an unhealthy home and environment. They will become a burden on society and suffer physical and economic deterioration. The further they deteriorate the greater their need for their basic necessities will become in an increasingly rapid spiral of decline. Not realising or understanding the reason for their decline, the more they try to reduce their daily sufferings of living one's life, the more they increase them. They will become dissatisfied, disillusioned and unsatisfied, which will in turn lead them to engage in inappropriate antisocial behaviours resulting in negative consequences.

People who are unpleasant because of their dirty or unkempt appearance, or are abusive in their nature and character will be shunned by society in general, only to be befriended by people of a like and disruptive kind. Man is a social creature and cannot live alone, those around us in our Six Directions, will be drawn towards us or repelled by the way we look and behave in society. If we behave well we will attract people who also behave well and have good intentions towards us. However, if we look and behave in a way that is detrimental to harmonious coexistence, we will only attract others that have bad intentions towards us and the others around them.

Some of an individual's behaviours may seem innocuous from their own perspective, such as smoking, which due to their clouded mind, they are unable to appreciate the displeasure, discomfort and potential harm that their smoke is causing to those around them. A person who consumes alcohol believing it makes them happy does not consider that the change the alcohol makes to their behaviour will cause distress, offense, upset, harm and problems for the people around them plus hardship caused by their irresponsible squandering of family income.

The consumption of alcohol or other mind altering substances results in conflicts within society and the family. These substances can destroy the mutual respect within a family, whereby a parent or parents have no respect for their children, or the children for their parent or parents. Responsibilities and duties are ignored and the family unit falls apart.

Society is made up of individuals, no mind or body is shared with another and each individual is responsible for the direction of their thoughts, words and actions. When an individual bases their direction on the principles of 'Universal Goodness', progress towards the ultimate goal of peace and happiness is achieved and they will also influence others in their Six Directions in a positive way towards the ultimate goal. It therefore follows that to achieve peace and harmony in the family, society and the world, the influence and direction must start from the base of each individual. We each have this responsibility which stems from how we manage our 4 daily life sufferings and take proper care of them. Without this understanding we are inadvertently contributing to initiating chaos and the absence of peace.

Most members of society wake in the morning and go about their daily routine with no thought or concern for self-examination to ascertain if they are applying 'Right' thought, 'Right' speech and 'Right' actions in their life. Without self-examination they do not recognise the mistakes they are making or how to correct them. Their mind is so clouded that they do not even consider this fact. They work for money and gain without thought of the consequences of their labours, they eat and drink to satisfy their desires but disregard their needs and they waste time inappropriately in the pursuit of fleeting pleasure with total disregard for the consequences of their behaviour and lifestyle. Cheating, taking advantage and selfishness become so normal that they believe they live by acceptable morals and codes of conduct, oblivious to the harm they are committing to themselves and society. Their mind is sickly and unsatisfactory, but without this knowledge they cannot begin to address the sufferings and cravings of their body and mind. Each day becomes an endless effort to find or get happiness, but it is not true happiness as it is an illusion created by a clouded and defiled mind.

The Lord Buddha reminded his followers to look at themselves properly with mindfulness through the practice of meditation. With persistent meditation, the mind becomes clearer, revealing the defilements that cloud perception of the reality of all things. With clarity of mind our judgments and actions will lead to decreased human conflicts and sufferings.

When people do not look at themselves, their defilements will increase due to their 'Wrong View' and actions. Prejudices will be initiated, for example, with parents having unequal preference for their children or not showing affection to them equally, or a head of a workplace may be favourably biased towards a particular subordinate leading to disharmony among the workforce. Prejudices will appear and cause people to have 'Wrong View' without mindful meditation to warn us of the defilements that cloud our mind. Lack of meditation practice inevitably increases the 4 sufferings. As a result, we will be trapped in a cycle of existence in the jail of life and eternal rebirths

Through meditation we discover that the sufferings of living our lives emanate from ourselves. Every tissue and organ in our body is constantly deteriorating and regenerating from the moment we are born until we die, when deterioration continues but regeneration ceases. Our mind is clouded and unclean and without the persistent practice of meditation to cleanse the mind the cloudiness will increase. When our mind is cloudy we have 'Wrong View' and will commit wrong actions as a result.

As our mind becomes clearer, we develop 'Right View' and understand that by practicing self-training to have good habits, we become empowered to make our lives and the lives of others better by eliminating our human sufferings. Those who meditate diligently and live by the principles of 'Universal Goodness' are following the path to true happiness and Nirvana.

To improve the quality of our own life, we must undertake the responsibility to live by and apply the 5 principles of 'Universal Goodness' involving the physical environment in our daily lives. They are the practices for our body, speech and mind which cause our sufferings to be diminished or terminated. They are the

basic practices for all humans regardless of their gender, age, nationality, religion or belief. The real purposes of the 5 principles of 'Universal Goodness' practices are to make our mind clear and to realize our own including other's potential to attain true happiness by practicing regularly until it becomes our habit.

When the habits of the 6 groups of people corresponding to the 6 directions have been well developed by following the 5 'Universal Goodness' practices, comfort in both the physical body and the state of mind will arise. Also, the responsibilities in respect of the 4 sufferings will be assumed, eliminating them from our mind. Accordingly, our mind will become clear and relaxed. The fundamental state of happiness will appear, enabling us to progress in the way we lead our life, enhanced by our 'Inner Knowledge' and wisdom, to follow the Noble Eight Fold Path towards our ultimate goal. We become the master of our own mind, causes and effects and the laws governing the three signs of being, which are impermanence, unsatisfactoriness or suffering and non-self or absence of a personal and immortal soul.



## CHAPTER 4 MEDITATION

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Training the Trainers is a student's reference book to the lecture material that must be combined with self study, practice and habitual meditation to fully grasp and understand the Dhamma teachings so that the student may in turn pass on what they have learned to others.

Each student is an individual and with self practice of meditation will develop their own particular technique and style of practicing meditation. One must first understand that meditation is not something that is spiritual or a means to tap into some otherworldly source of knowledge or divine inspiration. Meditation is quite simply a very human action of thinking in a careful and calm manner with the purpose of stilling the mind from wandering and bringing its focus back to its home in the centre of the body. Without the practice of meditation, the mind is by its nature similar to an inquisitive monkey, never still, constantly jumping from one focus of attention to another. Meditation is also the catalyst for developing willpower, deriving inspiration and sustaining a life based on understanding the truths of this world. As explained in book 1, meditation when mastered also enables one to see one's own mind through connecting with the 'Inner Light'.

There are many different meditation methods we can employ to bring discipline to the playful, often wilful and easily distracted mind and one in particular that was rediscovered by the Great Master, Luang Pu Sodh Candasaro after being lost for 2000 years, lies at the heart of the Dhammakaya meditation practice of Buddhism and is the inspiration and source of Dhamma understanding as expounded in this book.

Although one can meditate anywhere, choosing a suitable environment and ambience will greatly improve the experience and benefits to be gained. Ideally one should choose a location that offers a calm quiet environment with minimal distractions, plus comfortable conditions that are not too hot, cold or subject to

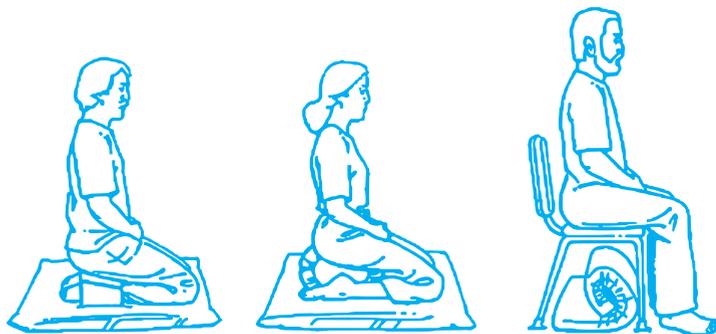
interruptions. We should then consider the best posture to assume so that we are not distracted by our own discomforts or so relaxed that we may fall asleep. You will most likely be familiar with the standard half-lotus posture, but of course this will not be suitable or practical for everyone and we must as an individual seek to find the best posture to enable our meditation to achieve the most benefit. The posture and state of mind in preparation should be consistent, respectful and be part of a ritual discipline that prepares one in the best possible way to bring the mind to a calm and still state. If we still the body, as if allowing sediment in a glass of stirred water to become still, the sediment will slowly settle and the water will become clearer. When the body is still, the mind will slow down and be well prepared to settle in its home at the centre of the body.



Full Lotus

Half Lotus

Burmese



On a Stool

Seiza

On a Chair

The early morning after a good night's sleep is a good time to make it your regular habit to meditate as the trials and tribulations of living one's daily life have not yet crowded your thoughts or clouded your mind. A clear mind is more easily achieved at this time. Normally, our mind after waking becomes progressively more and more consumed with thinking about the past and the future, rarely focusing on the now. The past is done and cannot be undone and as we are not in the future we cannot action anything in the future which can only be based on speculation. Meditation stills the mind and we become mindful of the present, our actions in the present and the causes, effects, and consequences of our actions. When meditating, we are able to live in the moment mindfully with 'Right View'. With 'Right View' we develop right thoughts, right speech and right actions. Starting each day with meditation will guide the way we conduct our lives in a positive direction. This is true of all human beings regardless of beliefs, religion or faith and is not an invention or possession of Buddhism.

Without practicing meditation, humans do not differentiate between happiness and pleasure, but with meditation comes realisation that pleasure is temporary whereas happiness is found in the contentment of the mind that lives in the moment, from moment to moment and is durable.

#### **So how to start; here is a very brief example:**

Select the calmest and least distracting location available or place you can feel most relaxed, sit or adopt a balanced comfortable posture and gently close your eyes.

Be aware of your body, your breathing and consciously relax progressively from head to toe. Breathe with unhurried gentleness until all tensions and efforts are reduced to a minimum to sustain equilibrium and balance while maintaining minimal awareness of your immediate surroundings and stability of your posture. Take your time for you and your world to slow down until you feel you are alone in the centre of your personal unlimited space, filled with still nothingness.

Breathe in deep, long and slow for a few breaths until you have released all tensions and stresses of the mind. With each inhalation, let the air flow to fill the

centre of your body, experiencing a comfortably spacious soft and light sensation; a comfortable place of peace inside your body waiting to be discovered. Place your awareness in this refuge of peace and contentment, then imagine a bright object, maybe the sun or bright crystal clear sphere residing in this personal sanctuary of inner peace. Observe the brightness, pureness and clarity of the sphere for as long as you can, regard it as a magnet that can powerfully draw your mind back from invasive thoughts that try to enter and distract your mind elsewhere. As stillness develops, so will the sense of inner peace and happiness and the 'being in the moment' will eventually prevail. The 'now' will become filled with peaceful contentment and the mind will become clearer with the brilliance of connecting with the 'Inner Light' that exists within the human mind without the need to do anything at all.

Reside in this state of stillness of the mind for as long as desired or as time permits.

Conclude your meditation by taking progressively deeper and longer breaths, feeling the air spread throughout every part of the body from head to toe with your mind still at the centre. Slowly acknowledge the awakening of your senses, gently opening your eyes, noting your refreshed calm awareness and clarity of thought that meditation has enabled.

Meditation is not hypnosis and you should not lose awareness of your surroundings completely or place yourself in any danger by ignoring intrusions during your meditation that require immediate response. With regular practice, your mind will effortlessly screen out the unnecessary and maintain a subconscious vigilance of the necessary without any conscious effort or thought.

Meditation in the beginning requires the willpower to practice regularly, but the action of meditation is very easy and simple as all we have to do is live in the moment by doing nothing, yet the benefits we receive affect everything that we think, say and do. Meditation is the most powerful means to unlock the truth of all things by taking control of and stilling our mind. Humans are conditioned to look out on the world; we see the goodness and badness around us while blind

to our own imperfections. By meditating our thoughts become orderly and not randomly scattered around, we can then with practice come to focus on and to see our own mind, our faults and imperfections and come to know how our true happiness and peace may be fulfilled. The resultant mindfulness will alert us to avoid kilesa and encourage us to pursue the accumulation of boon while empowering the practitioner to overcome disadvantages or difficulties, even sufferings.

We live in a modern world that moves very fast, technology connects and informs, promotes and entertains, filling our mind with more and more multiple options but no extra time in which to take them up. We are fed with thoughts constantly with little or no time for contemplation unless we deliberately commit to taking the time and making the effort. Ultimately meditation is the timeless and consistent GPS of the mind that guides and illuminates our path to Enlightenment and Peace.



Training the Trainers book 2 emphasizes the human characteristics of being a social creature and the way we respond to our environment and towards each other in society. The Lord Buddha offered us practical explanations and guidance that we could relate to as being relevant in our daily lives, because this guidance and explanations were based on 'Universal Truths', they are as true and meaningful today as they were in the time of the Lord Buddha. These truths do not belong to Buddhism or any other religion, faith or belief as they are universally true of all things and beings.

No one owns the law of gravity, we may not fully understand it, but nevertheless all things and beings on the planet we call earth are subject to its law without escape. We know that the gravity of a planet depends on its mass and that the further we distance ourselves from earth as we journey into space the less we feel the pull of gravity until the pull of gravity becomes so weak that we simply float in space and become weightless. Dhamma may be likened to gravity, the further we distance ourselves from its source the weaker its beneficial influences become until we are drifting in an eternal universe of endless suffering. When we distance ourselves from earth we start to feel lighter and have less and less control of our movements, a wrong push may send us in the opposite direction to that we intended to go. When we distance ourselves from the Dhamma, we lose control of our direction, destiny and mindfulness.

In this book we can examine some of the important considerations we must make in our daily lives in order to avoid drifting away from the Dhamma and our potential to make positive progress to become a better human being. No one wants to commit 'Bad' deeds if they have a clear mind because they know that the consequences of their 'Bad' deeds will not bring them happiness and will increase their suffering. A clouded mind may see only greed, hatred, anger or revenge and

believe its happiness lies in satisfying these feelings, oblivious to the consequences and increased violations or sins that will ensue. No person completes this life in a good place if they are a bad person.

Sometimes the Dhamma may seem overly complicated, as put in simplistic terms one could just say “do good things and you get good results”. However, the Lord Buddha realised that the reason that people do bad things is because their mind cannot see clearly the right path to take to be a good person. The mind is deluded and seduced by its impurities and defilements. It is for that reason the Lord Buddha practiced to bring clarity to his mind so that he could clearly see the truths of all things and realised that the sufferings of mankind are of their own making. On attaining enlightenment he began the dissemination of the Dhamma and taught that those who follow the Noble Eight Fold Path would understand the importance of illuminating that path for others to follow. As a trainer you are endeavouring to follow and educate others to follow the example of the Lord Buddha.

No matter what race, religion or creed, your faiths or beliefs, the truths and principles of ‘Universal Goodness’ apply and those who follow these laws will undoubtedly become better people. If you are also a Buddhist, you will know that the actions of this lifetime dictate the circumstances into which you are born in the next lifetime or celestial realm. By becoming a teacher, a Buddhist must accept their duty as expounded in the Six Directions with impeccable adherence to the principles of ‘Universal Goodness’. For a teacher who is also a monk, one’s duty and impeccable adherence by persistently and continuously maintaining the precepts not only in ones actions but also with one’s thoughts and intentions must be beyond reproach.

Those who study to teach others the wisdom of the Lord Buddha’s teachings will do well to remind themselves of the following:

**To teach is a privilege**

**To teach well is admirable**

**To teach well is rewarding**

**To learn from a good teacher is a blessing**

**Bless others with your good teaching skills and**

**your life will be overflowing with boon**

**FOOTNOTE**

For all those who have read my lectures in Training the Trainers, PART 1 and Training the Trainers, PART 2, I sincerely hope that this work will be of beneficial value and encouragement to them, plus it is my heartfelt wish that the blessings of their personal faith or beliefs will bring eternal fulfilment, happiness and lasting peace into their lives.

Dattajeevo Bhikkhu





*To teach is a privilege  
To teach well is admirable  
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Bless others with your good teaching skills and  
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*Dattajeevo Bhikkhu*