

Universal Goodness

The foundation of every type of creative work
and every level of goodness



What is Universal Goodness?

Universal Goodness is the basic guide for proper physical, verbal and mental conduct. Whoever practices it can expect to meet with happiness and prosperity regardless of his gender, age, race, or creed. The reason is that the practice of Universal Goodness keeps the mind of its practitioner bright and clear, the state of mind which is conducive to happiness.

To realize its full benefit, Universal Goodness must be earnestly and regularly practiced until it becomes a habit, a virtue and a moral code to live by. Universal Goodness comprises five aspects as follows:

1. Cleanliness
2. Orderliness
3. Politeness
4. Punctuality
5. Concentration

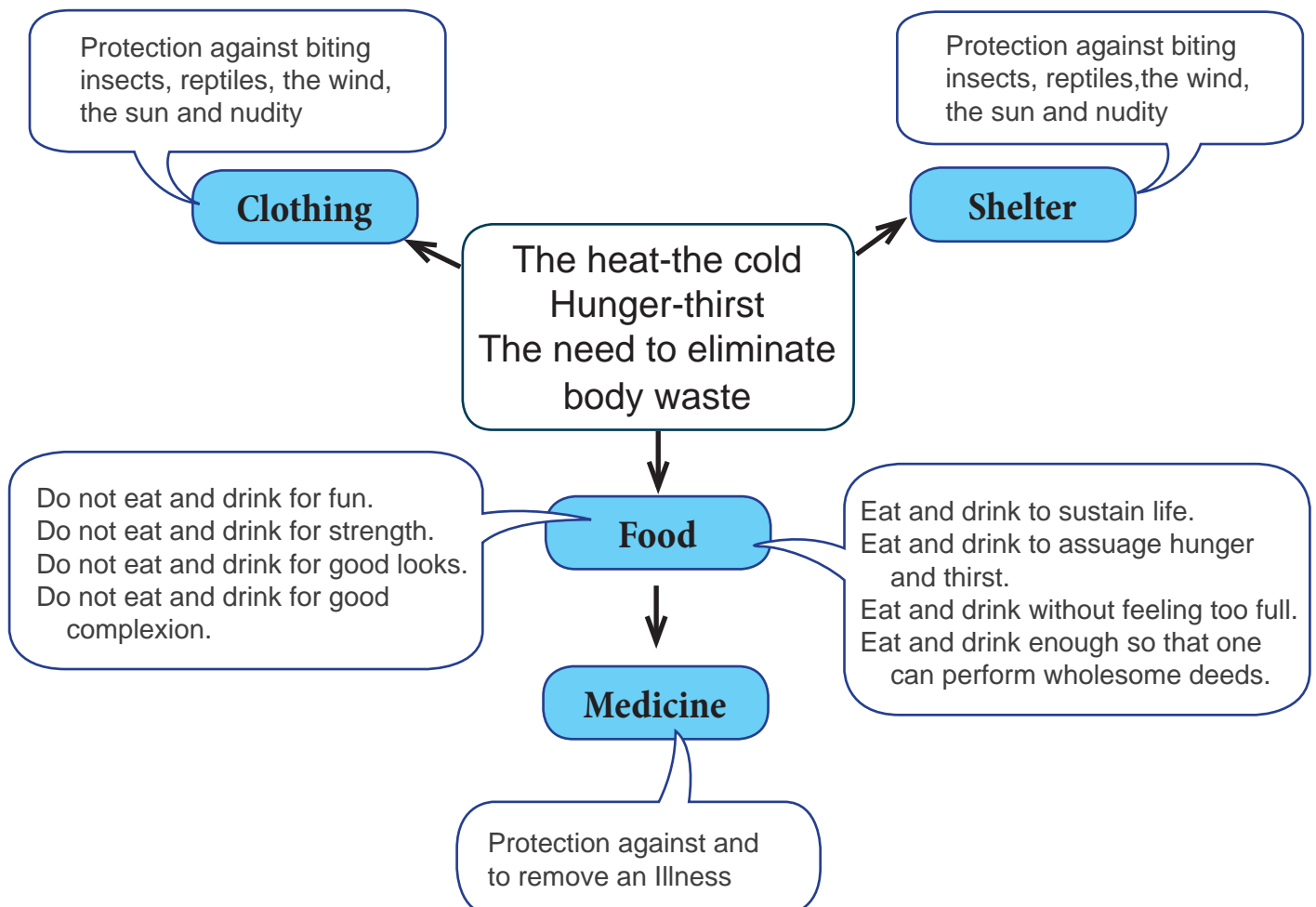


These five aspects of Universal Goodness or UG-5 should be conscientiously incorporated into one's daily routine. Universal Goodness is easy enough to practice, but it yields a tremendous benefit for its practitioners and everyone concerned. Earnest practitioners of Universal Goodness can expect to meet with happiness, prosperity, wish fulfillment, and ultimately, the attainment of the Path and Fruit of Nibbana. The reason is that the five aspects of Universal Goodness is the foundation of every type of creative work and every level of goodness.

Some Overlooked Facts

To survive, human beings require the four necessities of life, namely, clothing, food, shelter, and medicine. But these four necessities can also be the sources of desire. If one is not careful, one can end up wanting much more than what one needs. When that happens, one must struggle to work so hard to try to earn as much as money as possible in order to afford all the things that one wants. The final results may be ill health, financial problems, bad habits, wasted time and energy, social problems, and environmental problems.

The True Objectives of the Four Requisites



Today, most couples get married without knowing the true objective of marriage. It is no wonder that so much havoc has been wrought in the name of love.

If one is to look at one's self critically, chances are that one will see many flaws. One may lack discipline. One may be lazy. One may still be lacking in terms of cleanliness

4 Universal Goodness

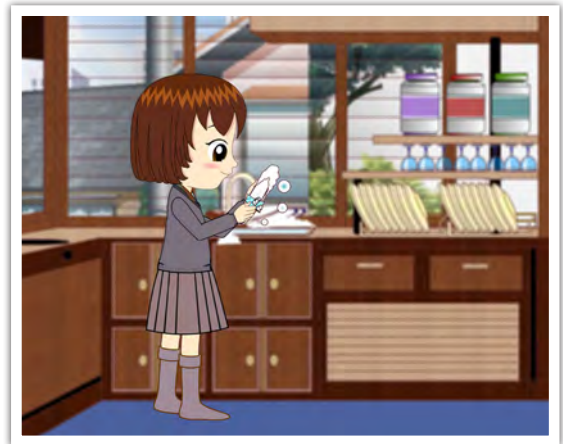
and orderliness. One may not like to make one's bed or do one's dishes. One may not be punctual. One may not help with the household chores. One may be easily irritated. One may have a tendency to find faults with others. One may like to smoke and drink. One may like to gossip behind other people's back. One may practice offensive speech. One may not be sincere. One may not be thrifty. One may not be humble. Etc.

Universal Goodness can be cultivated by anyone, and it consists of cleanliness, orderliness, politeness, punctuality, and concentration.

1. Cleanliness

Human beings are the sources of dirtiness on earth. Each one of us is like a walking garbage can, a walking corpse, a prisoner. The root cause of atrocities is dirtiness. When a person is dirty, his house will also be dirty.

- There are piles of dirty clothes on the floor.
- There are dirty dishes in the kitchen sink. The dining table and chairs are dirty. The kitchen floor is dirty. The room is in disarray.
- There are dirty shoes in front of the door. They are not properly cleaned and organized.
- The bedroom is in disarray.



- When things are not put in their proper places, the thought process goes awry.

When the office is dirty or not clean enough, it is impossible to expect the office workers to work efficiently and effectively.

2. Orderliness

Everything needs to be put in its proper place and order from large to small or small to large. In some cases, the “first in, first out” principle needs to be applied. It means doing everything necessary to keep each place, whether it is a room, an office, etc., orderly and neat.



3. Politeness

Politeness is shown in the way one sits, lies down, stands and walks. One cannot sit, lie down, stand or walk properly because...

- One's things are not organized in an orderly fashion.
- Without orderliness, one's thought process goes awry.
- The thought process goes awry because one's body is dirty from one's head to one's toes.

Speech is derived from one's thought process. Speech is used as a means of communication. It allows others to understand what one is thinking. Polite speech begins with the ability to organize one's words. For example,

- Words that are used to communicate with one's children cannot be used to communicate with one's father.
- Words that are used to communicate with one's friends cannot be used to communicate with one's boss.
- Words that are used to communicate with one's friends cannot be used to communicate with the Buddhist monks.
- The tender way spouses talk to each other cannot be used with other people.

The root cause of conflicts in the office and at home, divorce, broken home is self-indulgence. A self-indulgent person does not care about other people. He cares only about what he wants. He cares only about his own ease and comfort. He lacks motivation and commitment. Self-indulgent husband and wife lack motivation and commitment. Their children lack motivation and commitment. Everyone is into self-indulgence. One dresses any way one likes. One behaves any way one likes.



6 Universal Goodness

4. Punctuality

The lack of orderliness leads to unpunctuality. One feels nothing about keeping other people waiting. Sometimes, a VIP guest is hours late at a grand opening. The children that were scheduled to give a special performance at the grand opening arrived at the venue early, foregoing their meal and other personal needs in order to keep their makeup and costume in place, only to wait for hours to put on the performance just because the VIP guest could not be bothered to show up on time.



As a child, one is woken up to get ready for school by one's parents or older siblings. As a grown-up, one uses an alarm clock. But sometimes, even an alarm clock fails to wake one up in time for work or an important appointment.

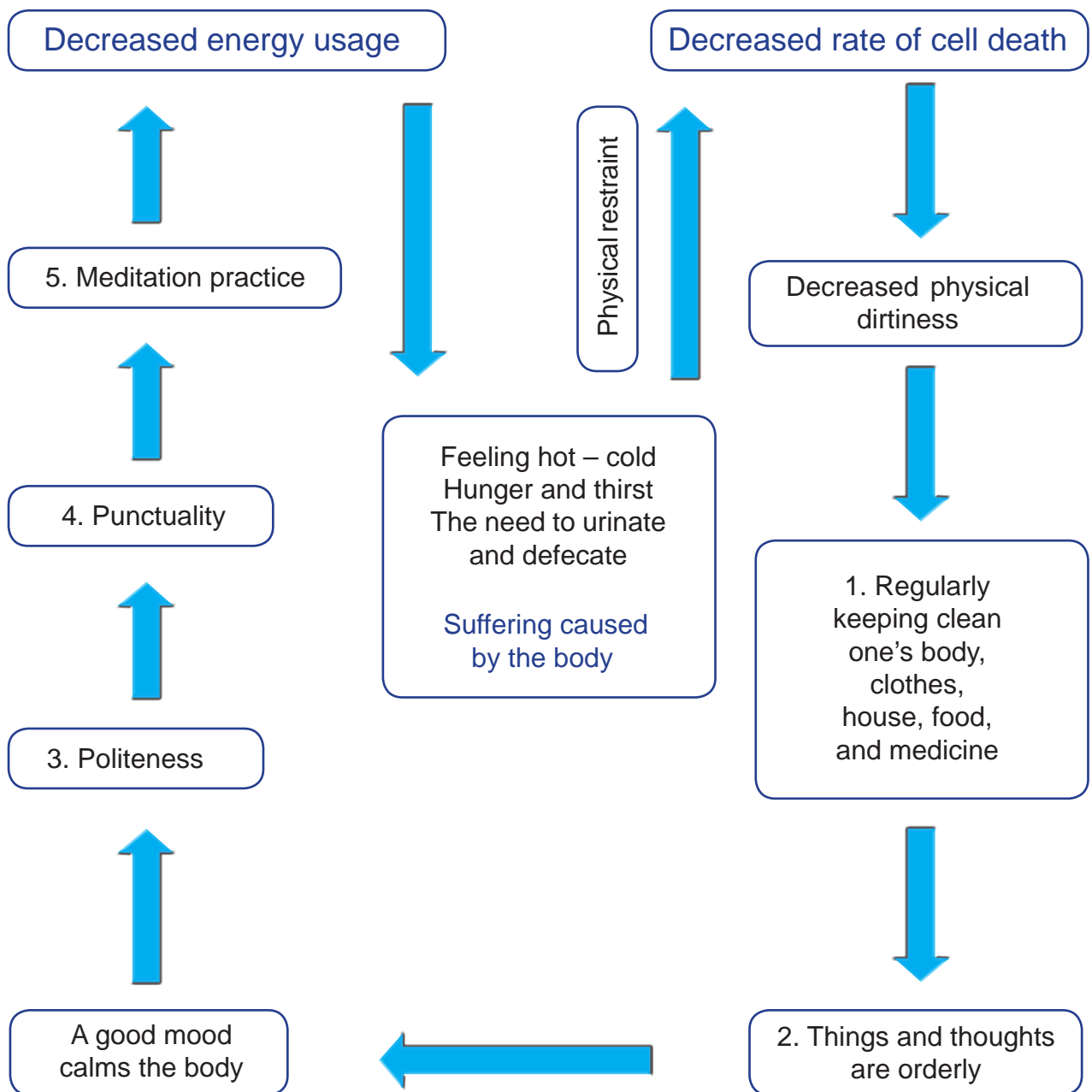
5. Concentration (Meditation)

Unpunctuality is caused by the lack of concentration which in turn is caused by the lack of cleanliness. Self-indulgence makes one feel that one can do anything one wants and one could not care less about other people. Self-indulgence causes personal damage, social damage and national damage. Every problem cited here must be solved by cleanliness. Our body is the source of dirtiness. All of our bodies together make our earth dirty. Feeling hot, cold, hungry, thirsty, having the need to urinate and defecate are the forms of suffering experienced by everyone. They are caused by the fact that the four primary elements which make up our cells are dirty. Therefore, they die at the rate of around 300 – 400 million per minute. The food we eat helps our body to generate new cells to replace the old ones.

Our home, our clothes, our food, our medicine and everything else that we come into contact with become dirty because our body is dirty. Dirtiness leads to the lack of orderliness. The lack of orderliness leads to absent-mindedness which causes impoliteness. Impoliteness is caused by self-indulgence, laziness, the lack of consideration for others. Impoliteness leads to unpunctuality and unpunctuality leads to the lack of concentration.



The Need for Universal Goodness



8 Universal Goodness

- Cleanliness: One is not self-indulgent, not quick to anger but is always in a good mood. Cleanliness prevents the presence of pests. There is no need for pesticides. There is no need for killing. One's mind is gentle, and one does not kill.
- Orderliness: One is not confused because everything is in its proper place. One exercises moderation in one's consumption. One is thrifty. One does not steal.
- Politeness: One is not exploitative. One is not trying to outdo others. One is sympathetic and empathic. One is considerate. One does not dress in an inappropriate manner. One practices honest and gentle speech. One is not sexually permissive. One does not commit sexual misconduct.
- Punctuality: One is constantly analyzing one's self. One has good self-knowledge. One has the ability to warn oneself. One undertakes self-improvement. One does not tell lies.
- Concentration: One abstains from every cause of ruin. One's mind is calm, happy and expansive. One earnestly accumulates good deeds. One does not consume alcohol.

The five aspects of Universal Goodness can be readily practiced by anyone. They are good for individuals as well as the community as a whole. They foster physical and spiritual development. They do not violate any religious beliefs, doctrines or moral codes. They do not violate the rule of law, government policies, and human rights. Universal Goodness must be practiced regularly and continuously for it to give innumerable and lasting benefits.

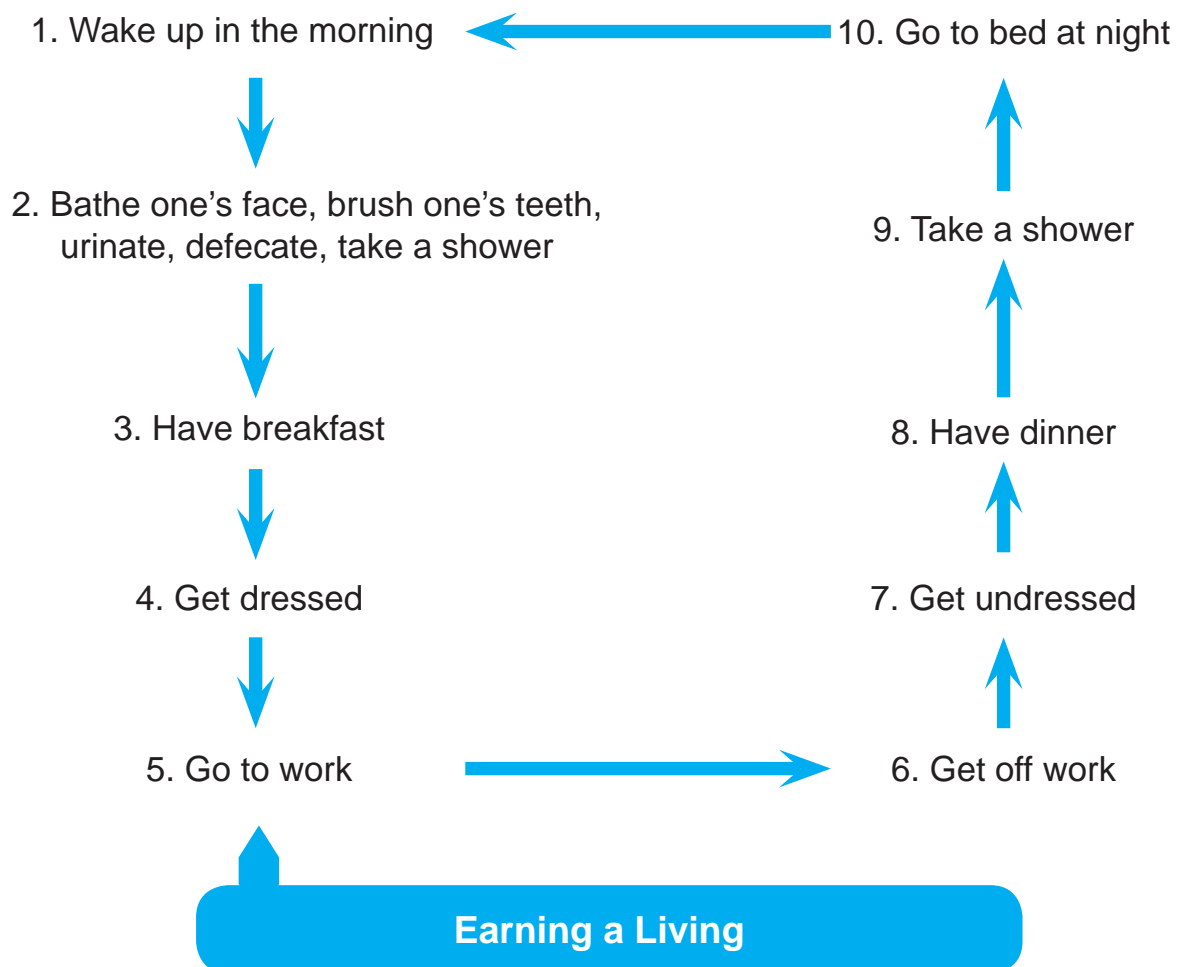


Where Does One Practice UG-5?

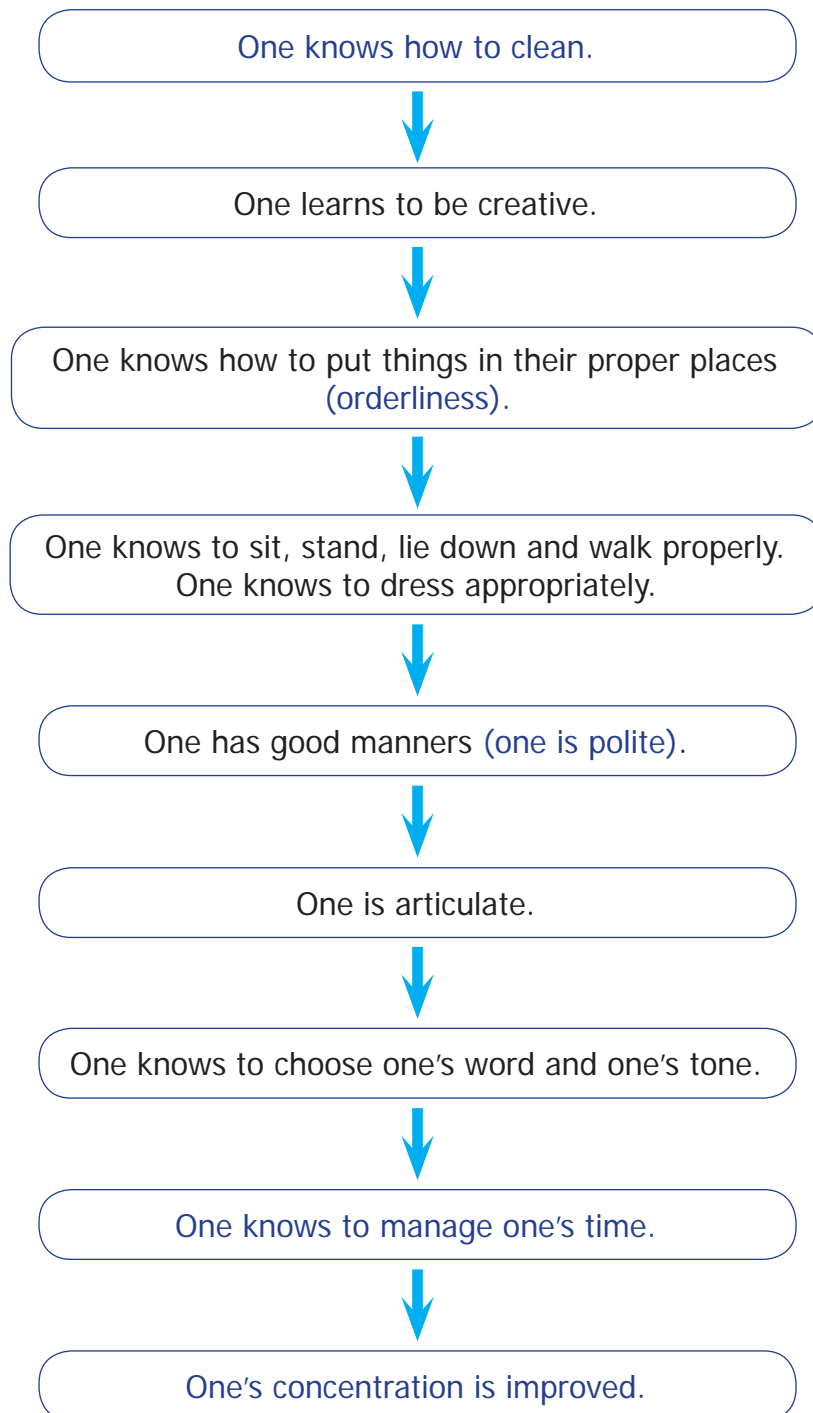
One practices UG-5 in the five rooms of one's life where the five main daily activities are performed.

Every day a person wakes up, gets out of bed and heads straight for the bathroom. And then he goes to the kitchen to have breakfast. Afterward, he gets dressed and goes to work. After work, he returns home, undresses and gets ready for dinner. After dinner, he goes to the bathroom and spends the rest of the evening reading, watching television, etc., until it is time to go to bed.

Daily Activities



The Benefits of Doing All the Cleaning Oneself



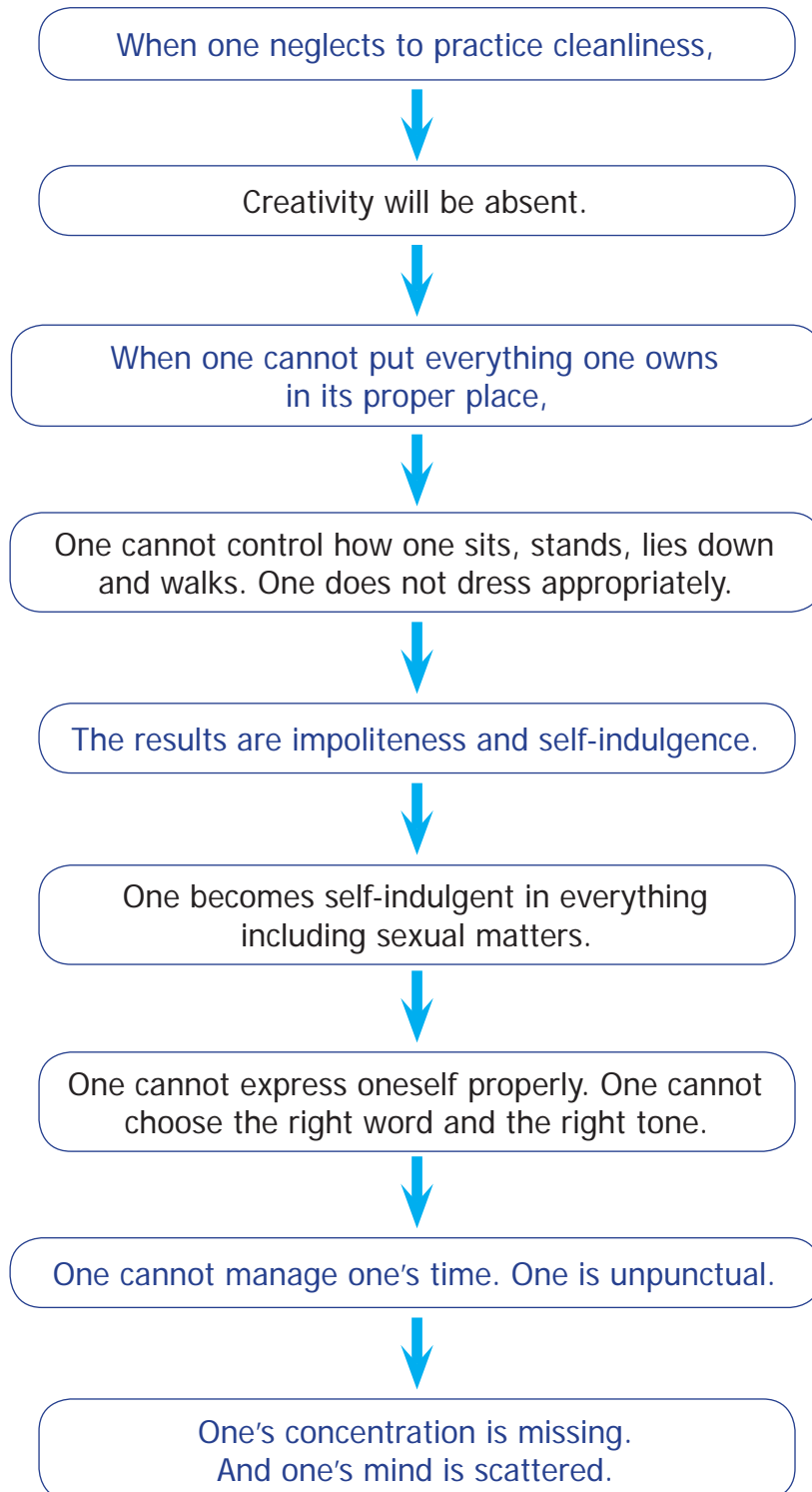


The Benefits of Cleanliness

Cleanliness has to do with keeping one's body and everything one owns clean.

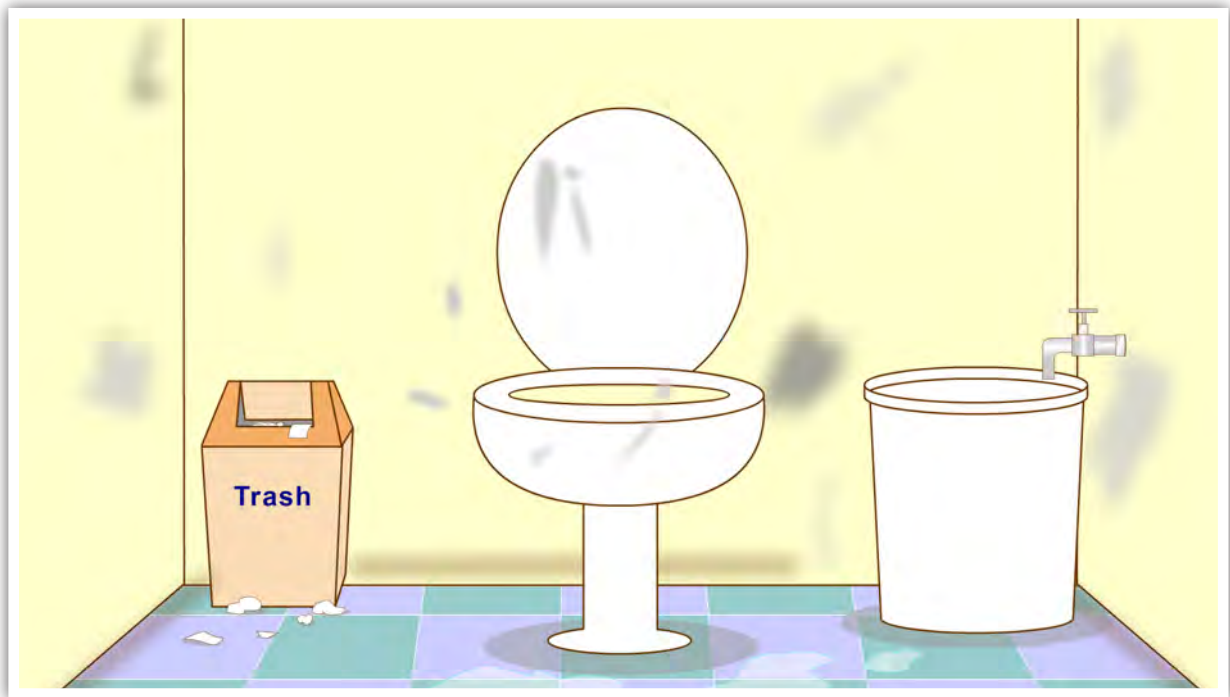
If one is clean and everything around one is clean, what follows is creativity. One knows to put everything in its proper place so that it is easy to locate. When one knows to put everything one owns in order, one will be able to put one's thought in order. When one knows to put one's thought in order, one will be able to put one's word in order. When one knows to put one's word in order, one will be able to control the way one sits, stands, lies down and walks. One has good manners and one knows to dress appropriately. One knows to exercise self-restraint at all times. One knows exactly how to choose the right word and the right tone so that one can communicate one's thought effectively and politely. One knows to manage one's time; therefore, one is punctual. With punctuality comes concentration. The more one practices meditation, the clearer and the more effective one's mind will be.

The Harm of Dirtiness



The Harm of Dirtiness

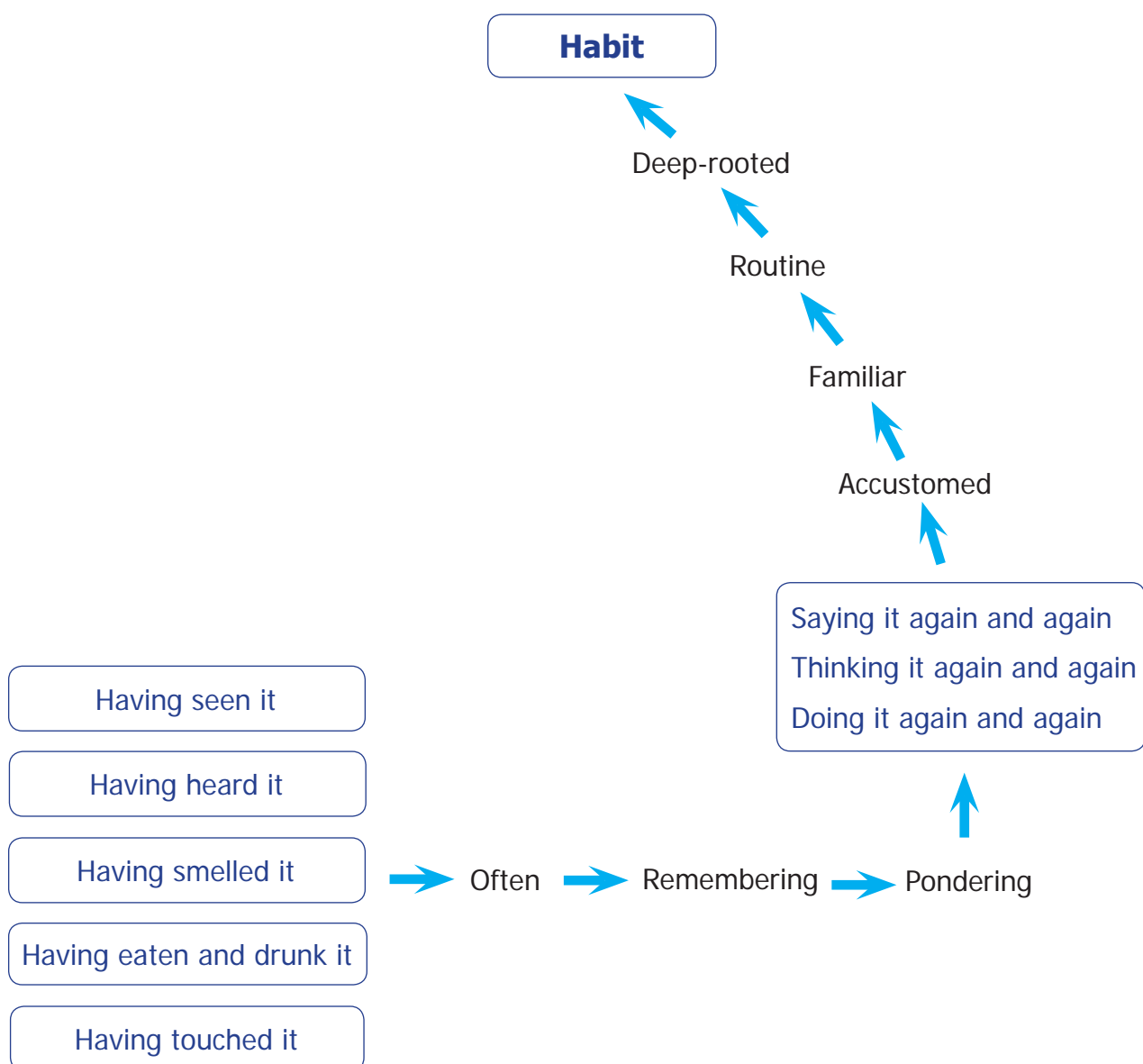
Dirtiness leads to unorderliness. When things are not put in their proper places, creativity cannot occur. When one cannot organize one's things, one will not be able to organize one's thought and word. One cannot choose the proper word and the proper tone in order to express oneself effectively. One's speech and writing suffer. One cannot control how one sits, stands, lies down and walks. One lacks good manners. One is impolite. One is self-indulgent in everything including sexual matters. One thinks nothing of committing adultery. One goes home late or not at all. One thinks nothing of lying. Eventually, one becomes attention deficient. These are the ill consequences of dirtiness.



14 Universal Goodness

A habit is defined as a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up. Habits are formed while performing all the activities having to do with the consumption of the four necessities of life and everything related to them. The habits thus formed, whether they are crude or refined, dictate how other activities in life are performed. As a result, a person's habit can be the cause of either his growth or his demise.

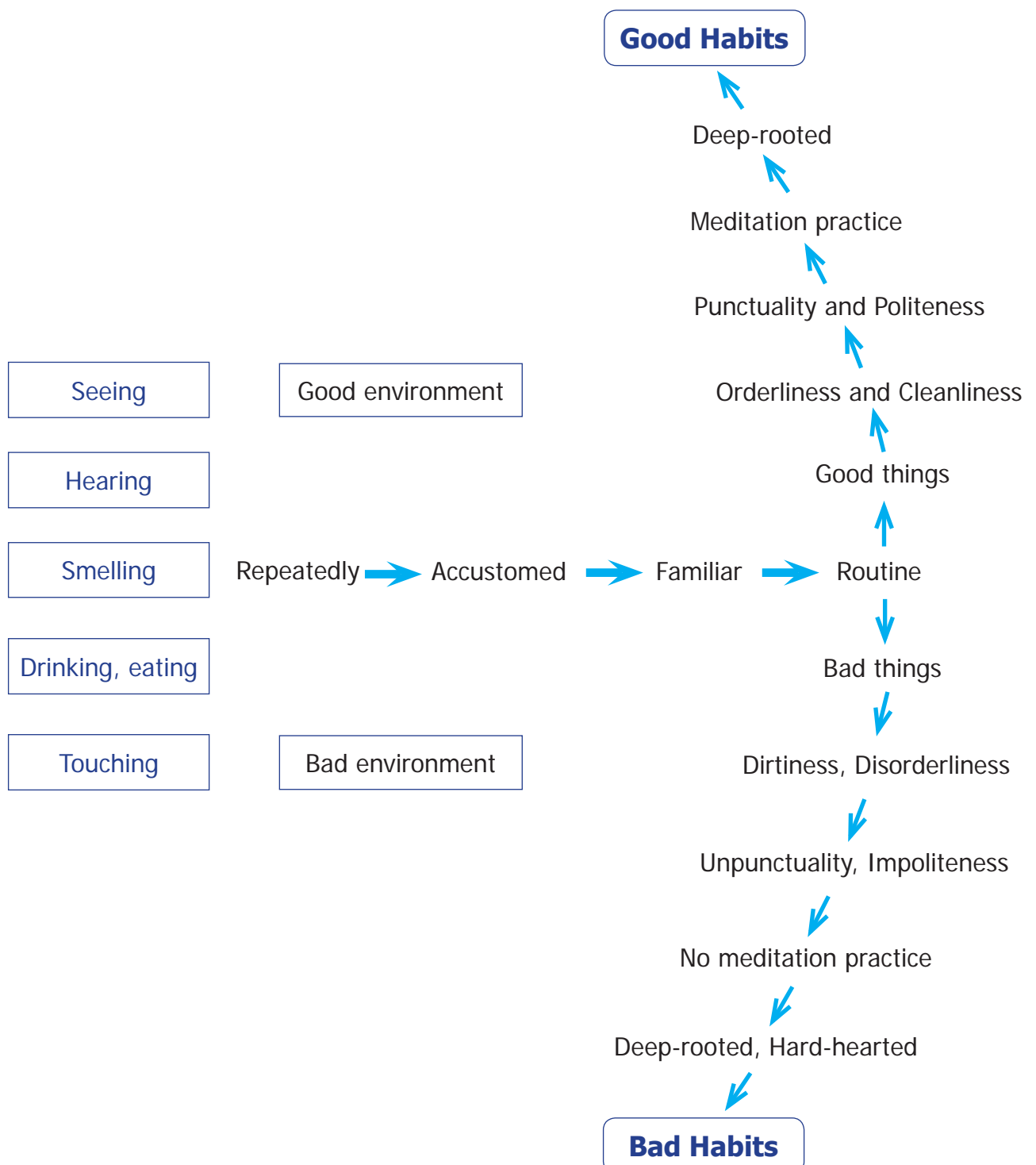
How Habits Are Formed



Good Habits – Bad Habits

Good habits do not occur naturally like the breeze or sunlight or weed growing in an empty paddy field. Good habits must be carefully cultivated in the same way that rice, vegetables and fruit trees must be carefully cultivated. Unlike good habits, bad habits occur naturally. They do not need to be cultivated. Good habits are formed by the way one conscientiously performs all the relevant activities in the five rooms of life.

Now, let's take a look at how our good and bad habits are formed.



Types of Habits

External gross habits are a reflection of one's irresponsibility shown in the consumption of the four necessities of life.

1. One has a habit of squandering and misusing the four necessities. One does not see to it that one's things are clean and kept clean.
2. One has a habit of leaving things in heaps and piles before, during and after using them instead of putting them away in their proper places.

Whether one is responsible for the dirt or someone else is, whether one is leaving things lying around or someone else is, one cannot be bothered to clean things up and put them away.

One does not dispose of garbage properly. One does not organize one's things so that they are easy to locate. One does not take good care of one's belongings.

Internal gross habits show up as irresponsibility. One does not have proper control of one's verbal and physical conduct. One is not mindful in the way one consumes the four necessities of life. One is unpunctual in regards to one's work. One has no concept of doing the right thing in the right place at the right time both inside and outside the house.

- One displays bad manners whether one is standing, walking, sitting, lying down, stretching one's arm or leg, looking around, eating or drinking.
- One dresses in an inappropriate or indecent manner.
- One does not know how to correctly express oneself verbally.

The Bedroom: The Room of Great Blessings

It is the place to cultivate love for wholesomeness.

Some people know how to get ready for bed while others do not. Some people chant and practice meditation at bedtime to keep their mind calm and neutral. They are giving themselves the opportunity to contemplate what is good and what is bad about their person. They are giving themselves the opportunity to think about how to address their weaknesses and correct their mistakes. In business, a ledger of income and outcome is carefully kept. Likewise, each person must keep a ledger of merit and demerit so that he can make an earnest effort to increase his merit and decrease his demerit. Unfortunately, some people watch soap opera or a movie filled with violence or spend time on Facebook, Line, etc., before they fall asleep. These people do not know how to get ready for bed.

For the bedroom to be a place of great blessings, one must practice meditation and spread love and kindness to all living beings.

Cleanliness begins with ...

- Taking a shower or having a bath
- Cleaning the altar or the altar room
- Practicing meditation to keep one's mind bright and clear

Orderliness begins with ...

- Organizing one's belongings
- Arranging sacred objects on the altar or in the altar room accordingly

Politeness begins with ...

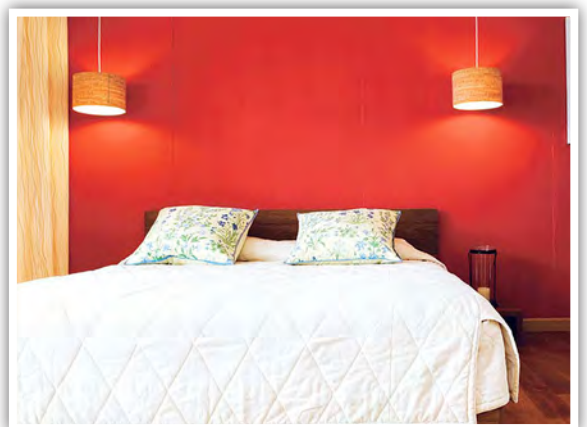
- Exercising good manners in the way one sits, lies down, stands and walks. In the company of another person, one is thoughtful and makes sure that one does not do anything that may bother the other person. For example, one walks softly, one does not turn on the light when another person is sleeping, one does not play the television loudly or talk loudly on the phone, one does not stay in the bathroom too long, etc.
- Knowing when it is the right time and where it is the right place to say or do something. For example, one does not send too many phone or Line messages to other people, one does not talk about one's problems at bedtime, etc.

Punctuality begins with ...

- Chanting, paying homage to the Triple Gem, practicing meditation and spreading loving-kindness on a daily basis
- Doing these things regularly until they become a habit

A clear mind begins with ...

- Letting go of everything
- Practicing meditation by keeping one's mind quiet and still at the center of one's body



The Bathroom: The Room of Great Contemplation

It is the room where one contemplates one's body and learns to cultivate a sense of care and consideration for others.

Activities performed in this room include:

Taking a bath or a shower, bathing one's face, brushing one's teeth, washing one's hair, eliminating body waste.

At the same time, it is the place where one checks the condition of one's body and considers the vicissitudes of life.

Forming good habits by practicing the five aspects of Universal Goodness on a daily basis.

Cleanliness begins with ...

- Giving one's body a thorough cleaning
- Cleaning the bathroom fixtures
- Cleaning the bathroom floor and walls and keeping them dry
- Opening the windows to allow cross ventilation
- Keeping the roof tiles clean if they are transparent to allow the sunlight to pass through
- Vowing to keep one's body clean and using it to perform wholesome deeds

Orderliness begins with ...

- Having enough of the things that one needs
- Organizing one's belongings into groups, and the items in each group are arranged in an orderly fashion
- Performing one's daily activities in the bathroom in a hygienic manner

Politeness begins with ...

- Using each implement in a gentle and agile manner
- Taking care to control smell and sound so as not to disturb others
- Disposing of garbage properly

Punctuality begins with ...

- Maintaining a proper daily routine
- Carrying out the routine until it becomes a habit



A clear mind begins with ...

- Contemplating one's body in terms of its dirtiness, its susceptibility to diseases, and its deterioration in order to loosen one's attachment to it

The Kitchen, Dining Room and Living Room: The rooms where moderation is exercised

These are the rooms where one learns to be thrifty and control one's speech.

The kitchen is the place where one does the cooking and everything else involved in the preparation of food. The dining room is the place where meals are served and eaten. The living room is the place where members of the family spend time talking to each other and watching television together, children are supervised in their homework, etc. It is also a place to welcome guests.

One learns to form good habits according to the five aspects of Universal Goodness in the dining room, the kitchen and the living room as follows.

Activity: Dining

One learns to control one's speech.

Cleanliness begins with ...

- Clean implements
- Clean table, clean chairs and clean floor
- Eating clean and nutritious food
 - to give one a strong and healthy body
 - for the purpose of performing wholesomeness

Orderliness begins with ...

- Cleaning every implement properly
- Knowing the right way to eat
- Cleaning and putting things away immediately after the meal

Politeness begins with ...

- Good table manners
- Good conversations
- Good ambience
- Giving praise to a member of the family or someone they know



20 Universal Goodness

Punctuality begins with ...

- Keeping the mealtime regular
- Making it a habit to have a regular mealtime

A clear mind begins with ...

- Keeping one's mind bright and clear during mealtime

The Dressing Room: The Room of Great Mindfulness

It is the room where one cultivates good habits by learning how to make right decisions, learning how to cultivate equanimity, gaining self-confidence and confidence in wholesomeness.

Activities: Purchasing, wearing, storing and taking care of one's clothes

One forms good habits in the dressing room according to the five aspects of Universal Goodness by doing the following.

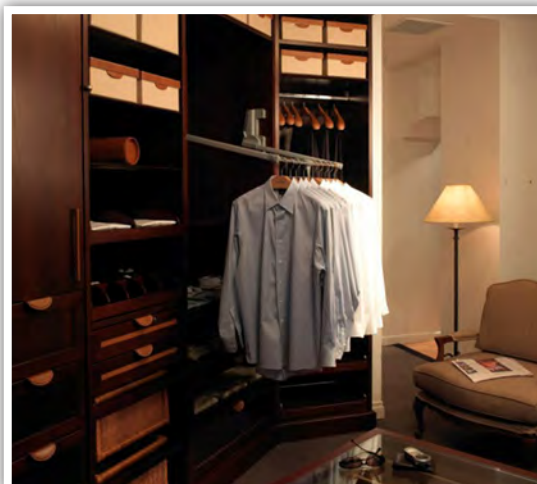
The good habits formed include self-confidence, having confidence in wholesomeness.

Cleanliness begins with ...

- Keeping the wardrobe, dressing table, floor, and wall of the dressing room clean
- The clothes are properly washed and ironed. They must not have malodor and stains.
- Dressing appropriately, wearing clothes that enhance one's personality
- Avoid wearing clothes that make one look scrungy
- Not dressing to show off one's wealth, body, etc.

Orderliness begins with ...

- Clothes being properly washed, hung out to dry, folded, organized and properly hung in the wardrobe. One should know how to take good care of each article so that it will be long-lasting. Clothes should be hung in the wardrobe so that they face the same direction. Jewelry should be kept in its place. Handbags, hats, scarfs, belts, socks, umbrellas, shoes are properly organized and stored.



- Being properly dressed for each occasion such as attending a royal ceremony, attending a meeting, attending a funeral service, attending a wedding, attending a temple, etc.

Politeness begins with ...

- Not dressing with the intention to provoke a negative reaction
- One should not dress in a sexually provocative manner. One should not wear clothes that are too thin, too short, too tight, too revealing, etc.
- One should not dress in such a way as to provoke unwholesomeness. School boys should tuck their shirt in properly. One should not wear a blouse that is too short or wear anything that is too revealing. A person should not wear eye-catching diamond and gold jewelry when riding in a taxi, walking in a crowded place or a deserted place.
- One should not dress in such a way as to provoke criticism. For example, one does not wear too much jewelry, clothes that do not fit properly, shoes that do not go with the clothes, clothes that make one look unkempt, etc.
- Clothes are washed, hung out to dry, folded, and stored properly.

Punctuality begins with ...

- Being properly dressed, such as wearing white to the temple
- Dirty clothes are washed in a timely manner. Laundered articles are ironed, folded, and stored properly.

A clear mind begins with ...

- Clothes being stored and worn in a mindful, proud, self-confident, and happy manner

The Office: The Room of Great Wealth

It is the place to cultivate habits for success and wholesomeness.

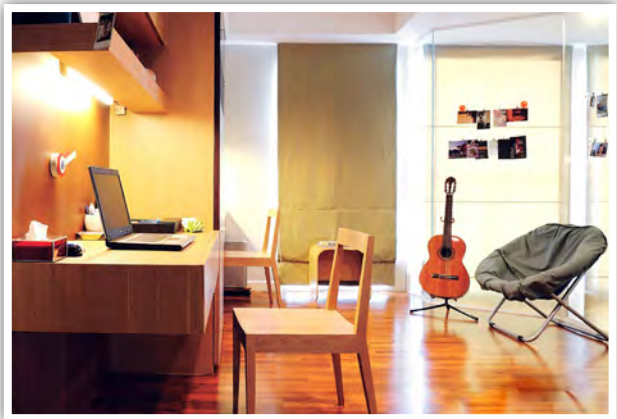
Activity: Performing one's work.

One forms good habits in the office according to the five aspects of Universal Goodness by doing the following.

22 Universal Goodness

Cleanliness begins with ...

- A clean office
- Clean implements
- Clean intention
- Performing the work in just the right way: One performs one's work correctly and effectively. One can solve any problem at hand correctly. One is clever in the way that one does one's work. For example,
 - To wash dirty clothes, one must try to remove all the stains.
 - To catch a gang of thieves, the leader and his right- and left-hand men must be arrested together.
 - To teach children in school, a teacher must begin by teaching them reading, writing, and arithmetic.
- Performing the work successfully: One has the ability to finish one's work in a timely manner. For example, to remove stain from a shirt collar, one scrubs it just the right number of times, not too many or too few.
- Performing the work accordingly in terms of time and investment: One neither over-performs nor under-performs.



Orderliness begins with ...

- Organizing one's belongings
- Performing one's work in accordance with the rule, the guideline and the method prescribed in different areas such as morality, the rule of law, customs and traditions, academics, etc.

Politeness begins with ...

- Agile and gentle manners
- Physical and verbal restraint to prevent conflicts and misunderstanding

Punctuality begins with ...

- Performing one's work correctly and thoroughly
- Performing one's work by bearing in mind the objective of the work
- Performing one's work in a timely manner whatever the timing, the circumstance and changing situation

A clear mind begins with ...

Performing one's work without the four categories of partiality:

- Chandagati: Partiality caused by love or fondness.
- Dosagati: Partiality caused by anger or hatred.
- Mohagati: Partiality caused by stupidity or misguidedness.
- Bhayagati: Partiality caused by fear or influence.

Preventing exploitation by making sure that everyone is treated fairly, and no one is taken advantage of.

Conclusion

A bad person did not begin by doing, saying or thinking things that were really bad. But it began with certain habits that appeared quite harmless initially. With time, however, these certain habits cause the level of badness in the person to increase continually and drastically. Bad habits have two major causes as follows.

The first includes recklessness, self-indulgence and insufficient attention to details. These certain habits cause one to make mistakes in matters which one deems to be unimportant.

The second includes immoderation in the consumption of the four necessities in one's personal life as well as in one's professional life.

Recklessness, self-indulgence and insufficient attention to details lead to immoderation. Immoderation leads to bad habits. Bad habits lead to bad deeds. And bad deeds make one a bad person.

These five rooms of life are the places where we perform our different activities every day of our life. These activities influence our habits. And our habits influence the level of our success and happiness. These five rooms include the bedroom, bathroom, dining room, dressing room and office. If we endeavor to perform our activities in these rooms in a responsible and mindful manner, we will end up with good habits. And our good habits will enable us to develop further and further as a human being until there is no end to the good that we can do for our self and our fellow men.

Good habits do not occur naturally like the breeze or sunlight or weed growing in an empty paddy field. Good habits must be carefully cultivated in the same way that rice, vegetables, and fruit trees must be carefully cultivated. Unlike good habits, bad habits occur naturally. They do not need to be cultivated. Good habits are formed by the way one conscientiously performs all the relevant activities in the five rooms of life.

