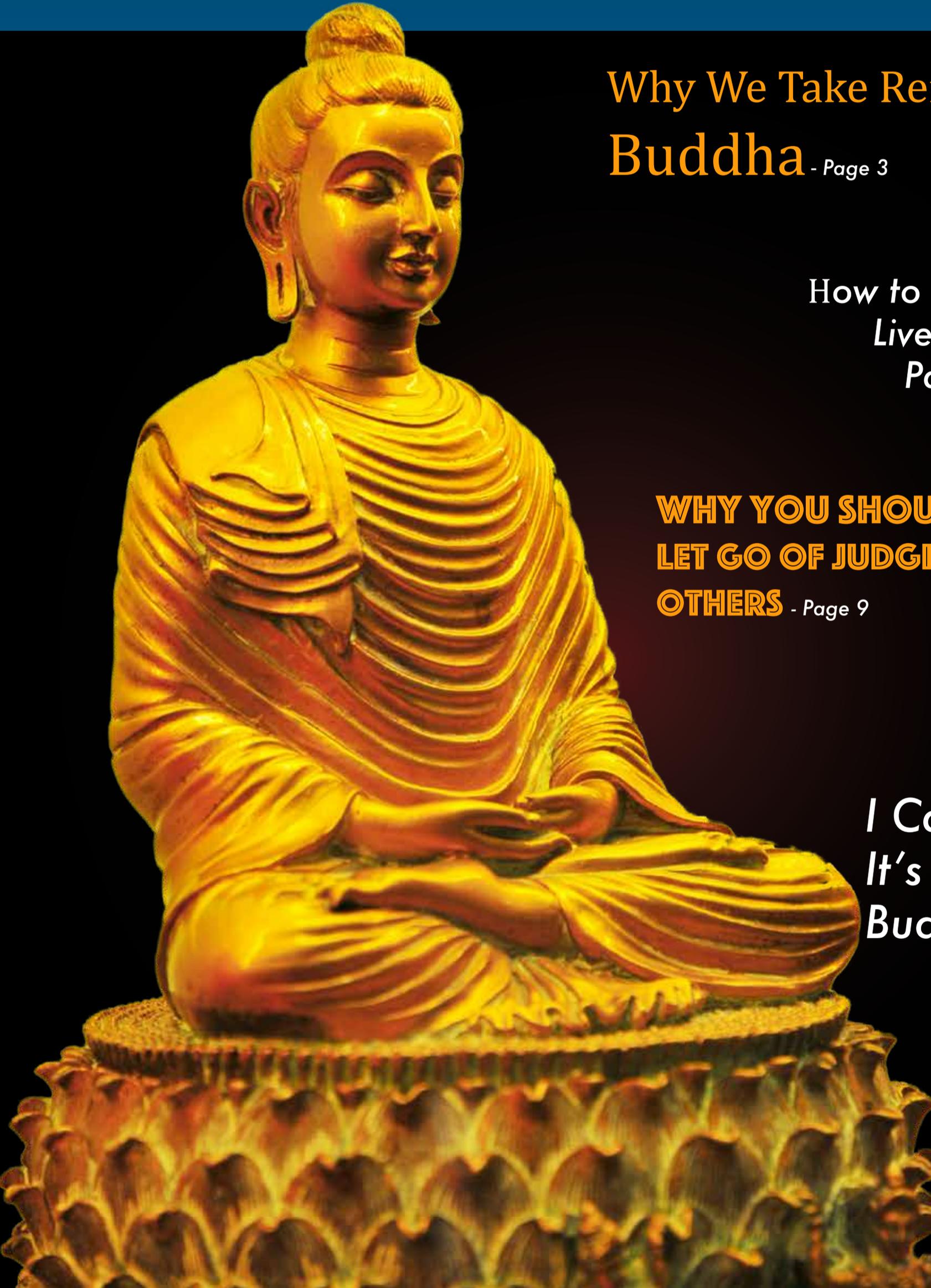


BMMVdigest

ISSUE • MAY - JUNE 2020
For Non-Muslims only

Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti ~ The Gift of Dhamma excels all other Gifts



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Wesak Messages

Venerable Chief's Message

Sukhi hotu.

Firstly, I would like to extend my best wishes for Wesak. Wesak is the thrice sacred day for all Buddhists as we commemorate the Birth, Enlightenment and Passing away of the Lord Buddha. It is the most important day in the Buddhist calendar so let me wish you a Happy Wesak.

Many would be saying, what is there to be happy about. Our movements have been restricted since March 18 and now this pandemic does not seem to be going away soon. Our business has been badly affected, many jobs had to be terminated, we are cooped up at home almost 24/7....so what is so happy about Wesak.

Yes, we have all had to experience a Movement Control Order and this had made some people very unhappy and yet some are happy. Let us now reflect and go back 2,600 years in history. The Buddha too had to endure many challenges in this life and in his previous lives. If you recall the **Jaya Mangala Gatha**, the Buddha had to face **Mara on the elephant Girimekhala, Alavaka** - the unstable ogre, **Nalagiri** - the amok elephant, **Angulimala** the murderer with a swinging sword, **Saccaka** with provocative views, **Devadatta** - his jealous cousin and many more. How did the Buddha deal with each problem - he was not hasty or was angry or frustrated. He used generosity, well-trained mental endurance, loving kindness, compassion and goodwill to overcome his foes.

This Wesak we will have to celebrate it differently. We have to practice social distancing and participate in religious activities online. This is a good opportunity for us to be serene, be calm and be mindful. We have to take care of ourselves in body, mind and in spirit. Find a quiet corner of your home and spend a few minutes daily reflecting on oneself. Share and radiate your loving kindness to yourself, your family and neighbors, and to those who are working around the clock

to keep us safe. Focus your mind on good and positive thoughts. **Tell yourself the Covid-19 Virus pandemic can be overcome.**

We also have to be mindful of the messages we receive on social media and online news. We have to evaluate consciously this bombardment of information and sieve through and only pick the positive and uplifting news like patients recovering from COVID 19 virus, doctors and nurses who serve selflessly to find relief for patients, good hearted people who go out of their way to help other less fortunate people.....this brings peace and happiness to our minds.

We, the monks at Buddhist Maha Vihara are constantly thinking of you and conducting prayer sessions for all our devotees and donors. This Wesak we will be conducting daily Morning puja, have a simple lunch dana and then in the evening we will recite the Ratana Sutta and other suttas for blessings at 7.30pm at the Main Shrine Hall. Please do join us on Facebook to follow the chanting.

This Wesak please take time to reflect on the teachings of the Buddha, do some reading or view videos online like the **BMV Dhamma Dana YouTube Channel** and get closer to the Dhamma.

As Buddha had said "Everything is Impermanent. So too is this pandemic. It is Impermanent."

We will get out of this difficult time together in due course.

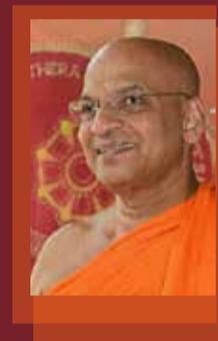
Be Happy. Be Mindful. Be Confident. Be Safe.

Have a Happy Wesak.

**Venerable Datuk K Sri Dhammaratana
Nayaka Maha Thera**

Chief Incumbent Bhikkhu

Buddhist Maha Vihara



President's Message

Dear Devotees and Friends of Buddhist Maha Vihara

BMV's Approach during these Challenging Times

Let me start by saying the obvious, these aren't normal times. As we all manage our way through a pandemic unlike anything we have seen in a century, I hope that you and your families are safe and well.

Since the imposition of the Movement Control Order(MCO) on 18th March by the Malaysian government, we had closed the Buddhist Maha Vihara to all except for deliveries of essentials. Our initial concern was the well being of the Maha Sangha, the devotees who were patronising the temple, our volunteers and our staff.

We have gradually become accustomed to the rigours of the MCO. Our disappointment has been that we have not been able to serve the Buddhist community as we normally do. The primary role of any place of worship is to be a centre of learning and a sanctuary during times of despair and need .

We are aware that there are the sick and those who are mourning, who need blessings . Circumstances prevent us from opening our gates or sending monks out, however our hearts have always been open and we have decided to restart providing services, by using technology. We are not the most savvy at this but we are learning and seek expert advice and assistance. We have begun the process by broadcasting live, our daily 7.30pm puja, blessing for the departed and more recently a Friday night talk. Our intention is to restart ALL our activities on our calendar albeit online via technology. How long the MCO will last is an uncertainty, depending on circumstances and the control of the spread of the virus. These are unpredictable times.

Dear devotees and friends, kindly note we are reaching out but in new ways. There is some learning, unlearning and relearning that needs to be done but rest assured we are working at being at our best in being there for the community in need.

The recent notices by the Malaysian Buddhist Consultative Council, of which we are founding members and the Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia, of which we are members, to continue to practice social distancing even during Wesak. We are committed to this and if there are any impending changes, we will act accordingly but with the interest, primarily of public health and safety. We are in this challenging times together with the nation while we find ways and means to stay open virtually. You have always supported us during thick and thin and it's only right we take a resolute approach to be there for you now, albeit in new ways.

We must commend the Malaysian Health Authorities especially the front liners for taking a huge risk in carrying out their duties and we must all do our part in practising social distancing. We must not be part of the problem but be part of the solution to this pandemic.

May the Blessings of the Noble Triple Gem be upon you and your loved ones.

Happy Wesak

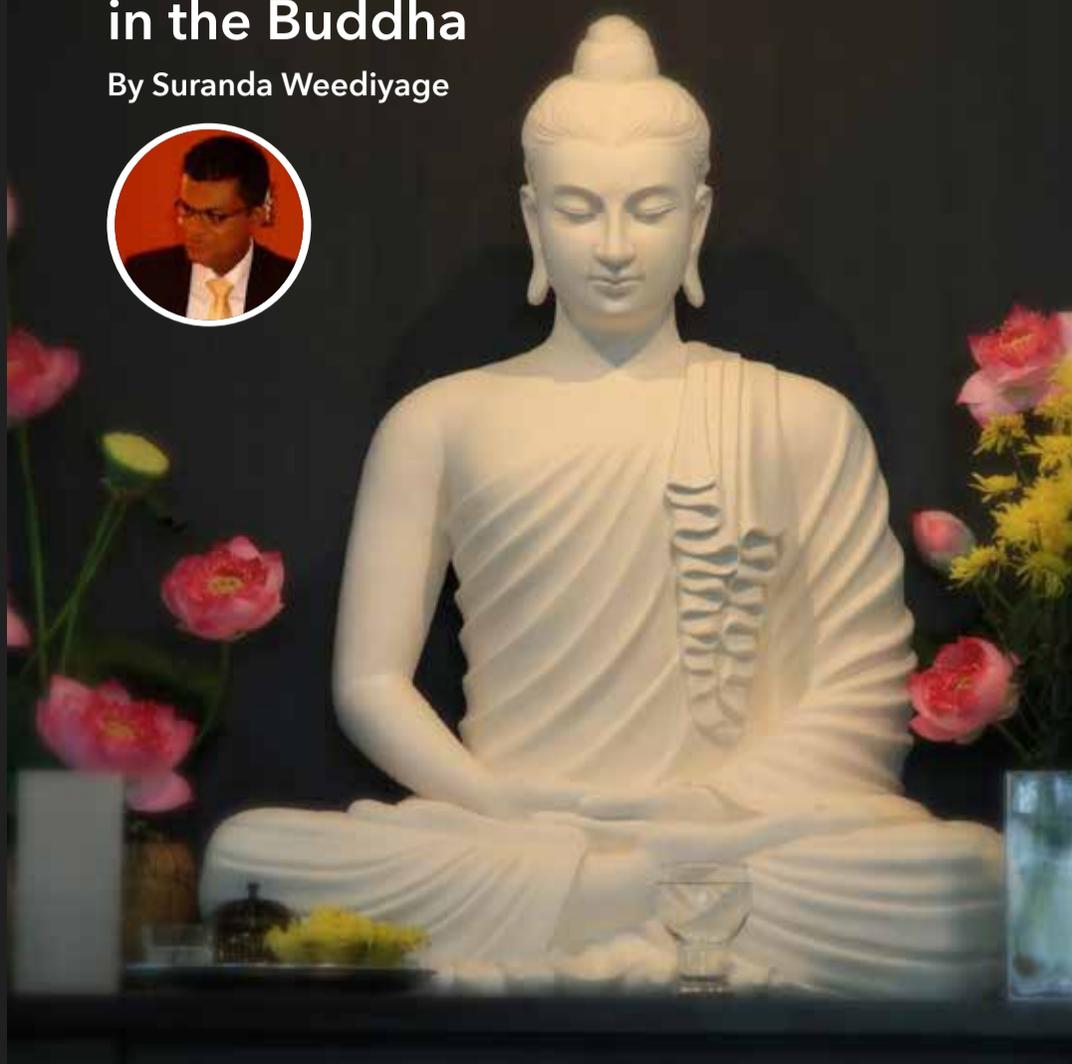
**Theruwana Saranai
Sirisena Perera
President
Buddhist Maha Vihara**



Wesak Feature

Why We Take Refuge in the Buddha

By Suranda Weediyaage



Buddhists take refuge in the Buddha not out of fear of Him, but to gain inspiration and right understanding for their self-purification. Buddhists do not take refuge in the Buddha with the belief that He is a god or son of god. The Buddha never claimed any divinity. He was the Enlightened One, the most Compassionate, Wise, and Holy One who ever lived in this world. Therefore, people take refuge in the Buddha as a Teacher or Master who has shown the real path of emancipation. Buddhists pay homage to Him to show their gratitude and respect, but they do not ask for material favors.

Buddhists do not pray to the Buddha thinking that He is a god who will reward them or punish or curse them. They recite verses or some sutras not in the sense of supplication but as a means of recalling His great virtues and good qualities to get more inspiration and guidance for themselves and to develop the confidence to follow His Teachings.

There are critics who condemn this attitude of taking refuge in the Buddha. They do not know the true meaning of the concept of taking refuge in and paying homage to a great religious Teacher. They have learned only about praying which is the only thing that some people do in the name of religion. When Buddhists seek refuge it means they accept the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha as the means by which they can eradicate all the causes of their fear and other mental disturbances. Many people, especially those with animistic beliefs, seek protection in certain objects around them which they believe are inhabited by spirits.

The Buddha advised against the futility of taking refuge in hills, woods, groves, trees and shrines when people are fear-stricken: No such refuge is safe, no such refuge is Supreme. Not by resorting to such a refuge is one freed from all ill. He who has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha sees with right knowledge the Four Noble Truths -Sorrow, the cause of Sorrow, the transcending of Sorrow, and the Noble Eightfold Path which leads to the cessation of Sorrow. This indeed is secure refuge. By seeking such refuge one is released from all Sorrow. – (Dhammapada 188-192)

In the Dhajagga Sutta, it is mentioned that by taking refuge in Sakra, the king of gods or any god, the followers would not be free from all their worldly problems and fears. The reason is, such gods are themselves not free from lust, hatred, illusion and fear, but the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha (i.e. the community who has attained perfection) are free from them. Only those who are free from unsatisfactoriness can show the way to lasting happiness.

Francis Story, a well-known Buddhist scholar, gives his views on seeking refuge in the Buddha:

'I go for refuge to the Buddha. I seek the presence of the Exalted Teacher by whose compassion I may be guided through the torrents of Samsara, by whose serene countenance I may be uplifted from the mire of worldly thoughts and cravings, seeing there in the very assurance of Nibbanic Peace, which He himself attained. In sorrow and pain I turn to Him and in my happiness I seek His tranquil gaze. I lay before His Image not only flowers and incense, but also the burning fires of my restless heart, that they may be quenched and stilled, I lay down the burden of my pride and my selfhood, the heavy burden of my cares and aspirations, the weary load of this incessant birth and death.'

Some people say that since the Buddha was only a man, there is no meaning in taking refuge in Him. But they do not know that although the Buddha very clearly said that He was a man, he was no ordinary man like any of us. He was an extraordinary and incomparably holy person who possessed Supreme Enlightenment and great compassion toward every living being. He was a man freed from all human weaknesses, defilements and even from ordinary human emotions. Of Him it has been said, 'There is none so godless as the Buddha, and yet none so godlike.' In the Buddha is embodied all the great virtues, sacredness, wisdom and enlightenment.

Another question that people very often raise is this: 'If the Buddha is not a god, if He is not living in this world today, how can He bless people?' According to the Buddha, if people follow His advice by leading a religious life, they would certainly receive blessings. Blessing in a Buddhist sense means the joy we experience when we develop confidence and satisfaction. The Buddha once said, 'if anyone wishes to see me, he should look at my Teachings and practise them.' (Samyutta Nikaya) Those who understand His Teachings easily see the real nature of the Buddha reflected in themselves. The image of the Buddha they maintain in their minds is more real than the image they see on the altar, which is merely a symbolic representation. 'Those who live in accordance with the Dhamma (righteous way of life) will be protected by that very Dhamma.' One who knows the real nature of existence and the fact of life through Dhamma will not have any fear and secure a harmonious way of life.

In other religions, the people worship their god by asking for favours to be granted to them. Buddhists do not worship the Buddha by asking for worldly favours, but they respect Him for His supreme achievement. When Buddhists respect the Buddha, they are indirectly elevating their own minds so that one day they also can get the same.





Taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha

How to Navigate Our Lives through this Pandemic

By Bhante Dr S. Pamarathana



We all are going through a very difficult period right now. It is a challenging time for the whole world. First of all, let us wish everyone blessings of the noble Triple Gem to stay safe and healthy.

This pandemic has taught us so many lessons. One important lesson is about the true refuge. When everything is going smoothly, we tend to rely on our wealth, our reputation or even our physical strength. We think that wealth, power or physical strength

can bring us what we need. But during a crisis, we realize that true and more reliable refuge in our life is not those things. True refuge are inner qualities that we develop through the teachings of the Buddha. The true refuge in our life is actually the Buddha as a great compassionate teacher, the Dhamma (teachings of the Buddha) and Sangha (disciples of the Buddha). Hence, it is important to remember this true refuge and to reconnect with true refuge during this time. Turning ourselves to these three refuges, we can develop wisdom and wholesome qualities that will help us through this difficult period with some strength within us.

This period is a very appropriate time for us to put into practice what we have been learning. We have been listening to Dhamma talks and attending retreats. We have also been chanting and making offerings. We have also been doing a lot of charity work. All these practices can develop certain skills, certain virtues, certain qualities in us. This is the time that we need to put these skills and qualities into use to go through this difficult time. This is similar to sports people who have time for training and game days. When sportsmen and sportswomen engage in training, they practice consistently. On game days, they use all the skills and techniques that they learnt during their practice sessions and compete with their opponents. Our spiritual practice is also quite similar to this process. Attending temple activities, listening to Dhamma talks, practicing meditation, chanting and serving others are instances of training. We train our mind in skills of mindfulness, loving kindness, compassion, patience, and gratitude. All these skills of course develop our wisdom. Then whenever we encounter difficulties in our life, these skills and wisdom should be applied to face them. Hence, a problem in our workplace, a disagreement in our family, an illness or an unexpected incident are our game days. During this covid 19 pandemic, we have a real big game day. We need all the skills and wisdom we developed through our Dhamma practice to go through this difficult period.

I would like to highlight two important skills that you can use during this period. One is mindfulness. We have always been hearing about mindfulness while listening to Dhamma talks and while practicing meditation. Mindfulness is the ability to observe our own body and our own mind. It is objective observation of what is happening in our body and what is occurring in our mind. And through that observation we can decide which kind of behaviors and thoughts we need to develop and which ones to abandon. During this period, we can use the skill of mindfulness to pay attention to what we do with our hands, what we do with our bodies and particularly be mindful of where we touch with our hands. We should try to be mindful and stop unintentionally touching our face. According to studies, we touch our face at least once every 3 minutes. Therefore, we can use our mindfulness not to touch our face if there is no purpose. If we have to touch, then we must make sure our hands are clean. Being mindful of our hands can save our life.

Mindfulness can also be used to overcome our negative emotions. During this global crisis, news from around the world cause fear, anxiety, frustration and sadness. It is very normal to feel these emotions. We can use mindfulness to watch these emotions arising. It is okay for fear to arise. But we can use mindfulness to watch this

emotion and stop developing it further. When we are fearful, we observe it and acknowledge it. When we observe the state of fear and related sensations, it will not grow. Then we get an opportunity to replace those negative emotions with the wholesome ones. We can purposely turn our attention to good things. Many people are out there working so hard to help mitigate the effects of this pandemic. Especially, health care professionals who are working day and night to help people. We can think about measures taken by authorities to mitigate this situation. Then we can quickly replace fear with gratitude towards all these dedicated people.

The second skill we can use during this time is loving kindness. We have practiced loving kindness meditation and this is the time that we need it the most. Because loving kindness can heal ourselves and it can heal others too. You can first practice loving kindness on yourself. Taking good care of yourself is practicing loving kindness. The best help we can give to the world right now is not to become a link in the chain of this virus. We can also expand our loving kindness to others. It is very important that whenever we hear of patients, whenever we hear of difficult situations in other countries, we should make good wishes in our minds. We repeat in our mind the phrases, "May they be well. May they be safe. May they be healed." This can be our mantra for these days. By making these genuine wishes, we add more love and positive energy to the world. We do not contribute to the negativity of the world but we contribute to the positivity to the world. We can also start more regular practices like morning lovingkindness meditation. Every morning, it would be good if we can start with the loving kindness meditation, wishing a safer day for the world.

We can also ACT with loving kindness. Particularly these days, we may not have opportunities to go out and help other people but there are many other ways we can be of help to others. Whenever we shop, we make sure that we only buy the things that we really need. We should leave items for other people to buy. We can also think about helping elderly people. They are more vulnerable to this infection and may not be able to go out and shop. While maintaining social distance, we can shop for them. Even giving calls to elderly people or calling someone staying at home alone is a good act of lovingkindness. We can also think about donating to charities, which focus on helping needy people during this time.

It will also be beneficial, during this period, to remember the Buddha's teaching on impermanence. Everything in this world is impermanent. Everything includes this pandemic too. This pandemic too will pass. But how fast it will pass will depend on our actions today. If enough people in the world act vigilantly with mindfulness, this pandemic can pass very quickly. This virus is transmitted from person to person. It is unlike a natural disaster like a hurricane or thunderstorm. The spread of this virus needs movement of people. There are countries which have managed to control the spread of this virus. Let us contribute our part to stop this pandemic. Remembering the impermanence can help us to stay positive.

This pandemic can also be a very important wake up call for all of us. It asks us to pay attention to how we treat animals and how we take care of this earth and her bio-diversity. It teaches us that we cannot ignore our surrounding environment. We cannot continue to exploit natural resources. We need to find a way to slow down our way of living and cut down our level of consumption. Hopefully, governments and authorities will change their policies. As individuals, we can make changes to the level and pattern of our own consumption and start to care more about the animals, the climate and nature.

Let us hope that something good will come from this pandemic. When this pandemic is over, some positive lessons will remain with us. Meanwhile, let us keep practicing mindfulness and lovingkindness. Let us make the phrase, "be well, be safe, be healed" our mantra for these days. Let us keep spreading lovingkindness and not the virus.

Source : Video sermon by Bhante Pamarathana on 30th March. Transcribed by Pamela Jayawardena. Updated and edited by Bhante Pamarathana.

About the Writer : Bhante Dr S Pamarathana Thera is the Chief Abbot of the Pittsburgh Buddhist Center (PBC), USA. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Buddhist studies from the Peradeniya University of Sri Lanka, a Master's in Philosophy from the National University of Singapore and a Ph.D from the Pittsburgh. He travels regularly in the US and to Sri Lanka and South East Asia to deliver dhamma talks and conduct meditation retreats and workshops.

Feature

Thinking Like a Buddhist during a Pandemic

By Nishanathe Dahanayake



Thinking like a Buddhist can calm the mind and help us focus

The coronavirus pandemic is challenging our health, work, family, food and fun. It's also disturbing our peace of mind and forcing us to question our own existence.

We are each asking our own existential questions: Why is this happening to me? Why can't I go on with my usual life? Who created the problem and why?

While scientists are working hard to find medical solutions, concepts from Buddhism can provide us with some solace for our overburdened minds. The Buddha's answer would be to focus solely on the existential facts, aiming first for understanding and then to adopt a pragmatic meditation practice.

A troubling disciple

Consider the case of Mālunkyaputta, a disciple who kept troubling the Buddha some 2,500 years ago in ancient India. Mālunkyaputta prompted him to answer a series of complex questions.

One particular day, he walked up to the Buddha and insisted he needed to be given the answers.

The Buddha responded with an anecdote of a man wounded with a poisonous arrow coming to see a physician for medication. The man insisted that he would not let the arrow be taken out until he knew who shot him and how. The Buddha said by the time all the answers had been given the man would be dead.

The Buddha defined this teaching as eschewing answers to philosophical questions and dealing only with the existential facts: "there is birth [...] ageing [...] dying [...] grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation, and despair" and their "suppression [...] here and now".

What this means for us is that although it is natural to have such questions, worrying about the answers may only bring more suffering. We would be wiser to work to reduce our own suffering and that of others.

Three marks of existence

What remains in this core Buddhism is the pure existentialism of dispassionate detachment from the space-time world that results in nirvana. This state is defined simply as the absence of greed, hatred, and delusion.

Buddhism teaches us the coronavirus is causing us to experience some heightened forms of the three marks of our existence (tilakkhaṇa). They are the impermanence (aniccā), the un-satisfactoriness or suffering (duḥkha) and the non-self (anatta).

The pandemic's sudden encroachment on our society, causing death and misery, reminds us of that impermanence. It shows us the inevitable nature of our own death and the associated suffering, leading us to do some soul-searching.



The little things

Buddhism teaches meditation practices with deep introspection. These are designed to make us mindful of nature and help relieve us from sufferings, as described in several Buddhist suttas - the records that hold the Buddha's original utterings.

The process involves loosening our grasp - those things we cling to that are governed by our desires - on both tangible and intangible things in life by realising their true nature - relating them back to three tilakkhaṇa. Meditation invites us to be happy with the simplest and most basic things in life.

The meditation steps taught in the suttas can guide our mind, calm our body and help our senses find peace and delight. It is hoped that meditation bring about our inherent yet dormant happiness without relying on our body or our dispositions, which are impermanent.

The big picture

While these deliberations, because of their psychological effect, can bring in peace, happiness and even health benefits to the individual, there are other benefits.

Firstly, such mindful practice can help us get on with our day-to-day life in a more disciplined and safer manner, which as we can see is extremely valuable in a crisis situation such as today.

Meditation might help us not to panic (or panic buy), to be conscious of our own behaviour so that we will be careful even with what we touch, or not touch (including our face). It would help us to be conscious of cleaning our hands regularly and mindful of others around us so that we are careful about any chances of passing on germs.

Many believe meditation can help the rest of the world as well, because of the thoughtfulness it creates. The pandemic can affect rich and poor (although there are also concerns it may increase inequity). Our meditation practices can help us evaluate the impermanence, decay and inevitable death of our existence, against any privileges we may have. Meditation can direct us to consider the possibility of living a happy life by meeting basic needs alone. For some, this can make us reevaluate what we see as our misfortunes.

Buddhism may be seen as yet another of the world's religions, with its own rituals around praying to deities and sending away demons. But the Buddha can also be seen as simply an insightful thinker and teacher. He proposed a natural outlook, providing solutions that do not appeal to any supernatural force.

Coupled with the psychological solutions and health benefits meditation can bring, we may find it is possible to adopt Buddhist concepts into a framework for contemplation - one geared for salvation from our current crisis.

Source : theconversation.com/thinking-like-a-buddhist-about-coronavirus-can-calm-the-mind-and-help-us-focus-134651?fbclid



About the Writer : Nishanathe engages in research studies in western and eastern philosophies, with a focus on ethics, Buddhism and relativism, having submitted his PhD thesis at the University of New England. His articles, written as a researcher in philosophy, have been published in the journal Philosophical Investigations.

BMV Events & Activities

All BMV activities and events (including Dhamma talks and Retreats) were suspended on 13th March due to the Coronavirus Covid-19 outbreak which was upgraded to pandemic level by WHO. Puja ceremonies and Dana offering continued till the Malaysian Government imposed the Movement Control Order (MCO) on 18th March. The Vihara closed both the main entrance and side entrance gates to devotees in accordance with the Order which included all places of worship.

As the President said in his message on Page 2, BMV's intention is to restart all activities on BMV calendar albeit online via technology. The daily Buddha puja, Full Moon and New Moon puja, Dana, dhamma talks, Saturday Bhojangga puja were amongst a few activities that have been broadcast live into your homes.

All future events at the Buddhist Vihara once the MCO is lifted will be relayed to devotees via email, social media platforms and in the July-August issue of the BMV Digest.

We wish to inform that we will be limiting the number of printed copies for the May-June and most likely the July-August issues of the Digest. This is to keep the cost of printing low. We also regret to advise that Sasana Society members will not be receiving their May-June issue by mail but the soft copy of the Digest will be available on the BMV website, emailed to you and posted on various social media platforms.

May the global Covid-19 crisis subside soon.

May the Noble Triple Gem bless and protect you and your family. May all beings be well and happy, peaceful and comfortable.

Happy Wesak.

Pamela Jayawardena - Editor

Notice of Appeal

"BMV Management would like to thank all donors who have used online payment and direct debit methods to help us to keep the Buddhist Maha Vihara operational during the Covid-19 Pandemic. We especially would like to thank the devotees who donated without hesitation towards our Resident monks' Dana expenses and their daily needs as well as towards the Shrine Hall lighting and the Standing Buddha image and Sarnath Buddha image lighting.

Please continue to donate to us at HONG LEONG BANK A/C 292-00-01161-8 and send us your deposit slip or Whatsapp your request to 011-26896123 or us to issue a Tax Exemption receipt".

BMV News & Events *Past Events in February, March and April*

A. Dhamma Sharing with Live Audience

i. Bhante Kovida (Canada)

Every Friday and Sunday from 16th February to 1st March



iii. Bhante P Wineetha

6th March - Aditta Sutta (The House of Fire)



iv. Bro James Ong

8th March - Do you believe in Karma?



ii. Bhante Assaji (UK)

17th February -

Buddhist Economics and Use of Wealth

24th February -

Origination and Evolution of Human Beings

Dhamma Sharing with Virtual Audience (Streamed online via BMV Public Facebook Page)

1) Bhante P Wineetha

10th April - Sumana Raja Kumari Sutta (The Levels of Benefits to the Giver)

14th April - Significance of Sinhala New Year after Sinhala New Year puja and blessings

17th April - How to be Noble among Others

2) Dr Sunil Kariyakarawana (UK)

20th April - The Buddha's New Message and its Relevance Today



B. Other BMV Events

i. Blessings for Victims of Covid-19 - 22nd February

A blessing service was held for the well being of those affected by the Covid-19 virus on 22nd February from 9.30am to 12 noon. Prayers were led by members of the Maha Sangha from the Mahayana, Theravada and Vajrayana Buddhist traditions. Vegetarian lunch and light refreshments were served to the monks and the devotees who attended. Those who did not attend, joined live via a video feed set up on Facebook.

Since the MCO was imposed on 18th March, the Maha Sangha led by Ven Dhammaratana at BMV have been reciting the Ratana Sutta daily after the Buddha puja and this was streamed live via BMV FB page for devotees to join, in the comfort of their homes. A big sadhu to the Maha Sangha for their wisdom and guidance to chant the suttas daily for blessings and healing during this difficult time.



ii) Painting of BMV Gates – 15th March

Five students from the BISDS Adult Class and their teacher Bro Tan Bok Huat painted the main entrance and side entrance gates (3 in number) in preparation of Wesak. It took them the whole day to complete this tedious task. A big thank you to Bro Tan and his team for their hard work, time and effort. Thank you Bro Tan for sponsoring the paint as well.



iii) K Sri Dhammananda Institute Covid-19 PPE Donation

In order to meet the shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for medical staff and other front liners, a fund raising drive with a target of RM22,000 was started by a few of the K Sri Dhammananda Institute volunteer teachers. The amount was to produce 10,000 pieces of leg covers and 5,000 pieces of head covers for Hospital Kuala Lumpur. The amount was successfully raised and the leg and head covers were delivered to the Hospital in several batches upon completion. Buddhist Maha Vihara wishes to thank all donors and sponsors for their very generous contribution towards this noble cause during this Covid-19 pandemic and to our KSDI teachers and workforce (seamstresses and transporters) a very big Sadhu for their tireless effort in raising funds and working within a short period of time to produce the PPE. May the Noble Triple Gem bless and protect you and your family always.



iv) Puja Honouring Departed Relatives and Loved Ones – 7th April

Special blessing services (chanting of sutras) was held daily from 4th April at 7.30pm till the full moon puja on 7th April which was conducted by Venerable Dhammaratana and the Maha Sangha via live streaming on BMV facebook page for all our devotees to follow.

The monks recited sutras and Bhante P Wineetha Thera delivered a dhamma talk on the significance transferring merits on 7th April. Before the full moon puja commenced, the resident monks led by Venerable Dhammaratana lighted oil lamps that were sponsored by devotees in memory of their departed loved ones. For those who had made an early contribution for Puja Trays, their contribution was converted to lighting of oil lamps for ten days.

BUDDHIST INSTITUTE SUNDAY DHAMMA SCHOOL

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Phone: +60 3-2274 1141 Email: info@bisds.org Website : www.bisds.org



Announcement

公告

Cancellation of BISDS April and May events

取消周日佛法学校(BISDS) 四和五月份的所有项目

To All BISDS Staff, Students, Parents & Devotees,
致所有周日佛法学校教职员, 学生, 家长, 和信徒

In view of the current COVID-19 situation and following the advices and guidelines by the Ministry of Health and the current Movement Control Order (MCO), the BISDS EXCO members have decided on the following:

由于冠状病毒病毒肆虐, 也为了遵守卫生部所发出的劝告和指示, 及配合行动管制令, BISDS 执行委会决定采取以下行动:

1. Cancel all BISDS School classes in April. We will review classes for May at the end of April, taking the guidance from our relevant Malaysian ministries.

1. 取消周日佛法学校四月份的课程。我们将于四月底听取各政府部门的指示后考虑是否也取消五月份的课程。

2. Cancel all BISDS activities and programmes scheduled in our BISDS Year Planner 2020, for the month of April and May 2020.

2. 取消2020年周日佛法学校全年活动规划里的四和五月份所有活动和节目。

We will inform you of any new developments / updates via our BISDS website, BISDS Family facebook and the various WhatsApp group chats.
若有新发展/信息, 我们将利用BISDS 网址, BISDS Family 面书, 和各种WhatsApp 群组通知您。

Please disseminate this information to all stakeholders. We appreciate your kind understanding. May we all be safe and healthy.
请把此讯息广传给所有利益相关人士。衷心感激您的谅解。愿我们所有人都平安和健康。

Thank you.
谢谢您。

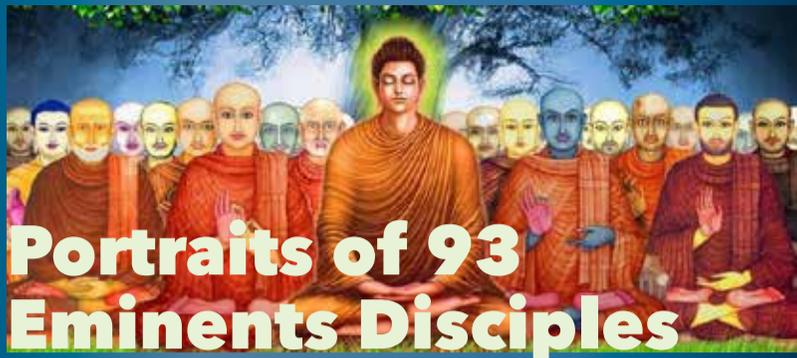
BISDS EXCO Management

5th April 2020

BISDS 执行委会

2020年4月5日

Pen Portraits



Portraits of 93 Eminent Disciples of Buddha

The theme is to pay tribute to the 80 Maha Arahants and the 13 Maha Theri Arahants who had by their efforts won emancipation of a rare distinction. They belonged to the innermost circles in the life of the Gautama Buddha. The Buddha and the Maha Arahants were together at all times. Their lives portray heroic endeavor.

No 38. Maha Kappina Thera

- Clever in admonishing the Bhikkhus

One of the most eminent disciples of the Buddha, considered foremost among those who taught the monks (bhikkhuvādakānam). He was older than the Buddha, and was born in a frontier kingdom in the city of Kukkata (or Kukkutavatī according to some accounts) located near Himavanta or Himalaya. On the death of his father he became rājā under the name of Mahākapphina or Kappina possibly being an appellation rather than a given name. His chief wife was Anojā, from Sāgala in the Madda kingdom. She had been his companion in past births. Every morning Mahākapphina would send men out of the four gates of the city to stop any scholarly or learned men who might happen to pass along the road, and then to return and tell him of them.

One day, after the Buddha's appearance in the world, traders came from Sāvatti to Kukkutavatī and, after disposing of their goods, went to see Mahākapphina. He received them and asked them about their country and the teaching (sāsana) which they followed. "Sire," they replied, "we cannot tell you with unwashed mouths." A golden jug of water was brought, and with cleansed mouths and clasped hands they told the king of the appearance of the Buddha. At the word "B u d d h a" Kappina's body was suffused with rapture. He made them utter the word three times, giving them one hundred thousand pieces. The men told him also of the Dhamma and the Sangha, and he trebled his gifts and forthwith renounced the world, followed by his ministers.



They set forth to find the Buddha, and reached the bank of a river which they crossed by an "Act of Truth," saying, "If this teacher be a Sammāsambuddha, let not even a hoof of these horses be wetted." In this manner they crossed three mighty rivers: the Aravacchā, the Nīlavāhana, and the Candabhāgā. The Buddha perceived them with his divine eye, and after he had eaten at Sāvatti, went through the air to the banks of the Candabhāgā and sat down under the great banyan tree facing the landing stage of the river, sending forth Buddha rays. Kappina and his men saw him and prostrated themselves. The Buddha taught them the

Doctrine, and they became arahants and joined the Order, the formula "Ehi bhikkhu" being their sanction and their ordination.

Anojā and the wives of Kappina's ministers hearing that their husbands had renounced the world and gone to see the Buddha, determined to do likewise. They crossed the river in the same way as Kappina and his retinue, and approached the Buddha as he sat under the banyan tree on the banks of the Candabhāgā. The Buddha made the husbands and wives invisible to each other and preached to the latter. They became sotāpannas and were ordained by Uppalavannā, the Chief Female Disciple. The Buddha took the monks to Jetavana.

Mahā Kappina spent his days in the ecstasy of jhāna, and so full of happiness was he that he constantly repeated wherever he went:

"aho sukhaṃ!, aho sukhaṃ!!"

(Oh happiness!, Oh happiness!!)

The monks concluded that Kappina's mind dwelt in the happiness of kingship. The Buddha dispelled their doubts and informed them that Kappina was extolling the joys of an Arahant or the happiness of Nirvana

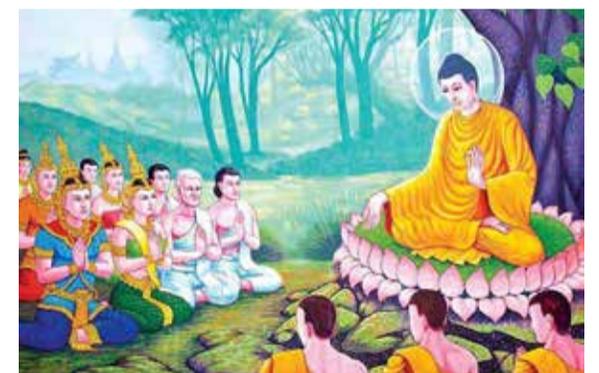
One day the Buddha discovered that Kappina lived inactively, enjoying his happiness, and that he never taught anybody. (Vin.i.105 records that when Kappina was in the Deer Park at Maddakucchi he wondered whether he need attend the uposatha ceremonies, since he himself was pure). The Buddha appeared before him, telling him to go. He sent for him and asked him to teach the Doctrine to his associates. This Kappina did, and at the end of a single sermon one thousand listening recluses became arahants, hence the title conferred on him.

In the time of Padumuttara Buddha, Kappina had registered a vow to become chief among admonishers of monks, having seen a similar honour conferred on a disciple of the Buddha. He was at that time an assessor (akkhadassa) of Hamsavatī, and having invited the Buddha and his monks entertained them with great honour. In another birth he was a Koliyan, and waited upon five hundred Pacceka Buddhas and gave them robes. The story of the entertainment of the Pacceka Buddhas is given at length in DhA.ii.112ff., and the number given there is one thousand. They came to Benares, but the king, occupied with the ploughing festival, asked them to return on the third day. The wife of the senior weaver of a village near by heard this and invited the Pacceka Buddhas to her village, where there were one thousand artisans. On the invitation being accepted, she returned quickly to the village, told the people of what

she had done, and they all made the necessary preparations, each family looking after one Pacceka Buddha. The Pacceka Buddhas, by their own wish, stayed on for three months, the same woman seeing to all their comforts. At the end of their visit, she persuaded each family to give a set of robes to its own Pacceka Buddha. The senior weaver was Kappina and his wife Anojā.

In the time of Kassapa Buddha, he was the leader of a guild of one thousand men and built a great parivena containing one thousand rooms. It is said (DhA.ii.115f) that once Kassapa Buddha was preaching and that all the householders of Benares, with their families, went to hear him. Scarcely had they entered the monastery when there was a heavy downpour of rain. Those who had friends among the novices and monks found shelter in their cells, the others were unprotected. The senior householder then suggested that they should build a great monastery so that all might be sheltered in future; the others agreeing, he himself gave one thousand, each of the other men five hundred, and each woman two hundred and fifty. The monastery had one thousand pinnacles, and when money ran short, each gave half as much again. At the dedication ceremony the festival lasted for seven days. The senior householder's wife, Anojā, offered the Buddha a casket of anoja flowers and placed at his feet a garment of the colour of the flowers worth one thousand, and made a wish that in future births her body should be of the colour of the anoja flower.

Although Kappina was famed as a teacher of monks, the Theragāthā, curiously enough, contains verses in which he admonishes the nuns (bhikkhuniyo) (Thag.vss. 547 556; ThagA.i.511).



Kappina is described by the Buddha as pale, thin, and having a prominent nose (tanukam tunganāsikam). He possessed great iddhi-powers and had attained every samāpatti, which could be attained. (It was owing to his iddhi powers that he was able to follow the Buddha to the Brahma world, where he is described as samādhībhāvanīya). Mahā Kappina was quite often in the company of Sāriputta, and it is said (Thag.vs.1086) that once, seeing the profound homage the gods paid to his colleague, he smiled by way of congratulation.



Why You Should Let Go of Judging Others

By Tony Fahkry

Complex Lives

"Before you judge someone walk a mile in their shoes. Then when you do, you'll be a mile away and you'll have their shoes." – Unknown

The Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho writes:

A young couple moved into a new neighbourhood.

The next morning while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbour hanging the washing outside.

"That laundry is not very clean; she doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap."

Her husband looked on, remaining silent.

Every time her neighbour hung her washing out to dry, the young woman made the same comments.

A month later, the woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband, "Look, she's finally learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this."

The husband replied, "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

Your intolerance of others is largely influenced by the filters you use to perceive them. Regrettably, a distorted lens composed of one's prejudices and limitations obscures your interaction with people.

You are absorbed in your own reality, to walk a mile in another person's shoes comes at the expense of judging them.

Judgement signifies a lack of self-acceptance, because you are at war with yourself. To appease your pain, you cast aspersions onto others to feel good.

Judging can become entrenched into your psyche so you become oblivious to it. As you make sense of the world early in life, you label and judge what you like and dislike. Moreover, the mind's inherent negativity bias means you exercise unfavourable judgement to explain other people's actions, much to your misfortune.

Judgement perpetuates a destructive mindset since you uphold this negativity when you entertain such thoughts. To overcome your criticism of people, be mindful of your thoughts as they arise.

Equally, self-judgement is difficult to spot because it becomes addictive and you may not be aware of it. At its core, judging others reflects your narrow assessment of yourself.

"If I notice myself judging, I simply witness it and come back to the moment and to what the person facing me is experiencing. If I notice that I am transferring my own fears onto the other, I tap myself on the shoulder metaphorically and redirect my attention to what the other is feeling," affirms psychotherapist and teacher David Richo.

Your knowledge of others is limited at the best of times because your judgement of them is witnessed through an ambiguous lens. There is more depth to a person than your perception of them.

Judging others offers you the opportunity to become curious. Rather than direct anger towards others, become curious and note where the judgement arises. What could it be advising you?

Conceivably, underneath every judgement is the need for love, acceptance and validation. Unless you get to the core of the issue, you will perpetuate the same disempowering emotions each time.

Self-sabotaging Thoughts

"Judging is preventing us from understanding a new truth. Free yourself from the rules of old judgments and create the space for new understanding." – Steve Maraboli

There is seldom any justification to judge others because you are unaware of their values, beliefs and outlook. Whilst you might disagree on their life choices, you are a mere bystander exposed to a facet of their being.

Instead of judging them, contemplate the consequences of their actions. This is likely to reveal a deeper layer to their motivation instead of skimming the surface.

I invite you to see others through the eyes of compassion since your judgement of them serves nobody. I am drawn to the Dalai Lama's quote, "Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them."

You can become aware of judging others by observing your thoughts at the time. Judgement has a negative felt energy and if you are attuned to it, you can meet it with openness. Therefore, mindfulness allows you to witness your thoughts before acting on them.

The Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh states, "You have to practice breathing mindfully in and out so that compassion always stays with you. You listen without giving advice or passing judgement. You can say to yourself about the other person, 'I am listening to him just because I want to relieve his suffering.' This is called compassionate listening."

Reframe self-talk by investigating your inner dialogue. Don't succumb to destructive thoughts, instead confront them with truthfulness, knowing the self-constructed narrative has no authority unless you award it power.

Label your thoughts when you notice yourself judging others. Notice when you are judging and follow the self-sabotaging thoughts.

I use an inner mantra when I catch myself unconsciously judging others. I silently affirm to myself, "Isn't that interesting." That thought alone is neutral and does not impose my prejudices on them. Instead, I witness it through the eyes of equanimity.

Another useful approach is to move into your body. You may spend a great deal of time engaged in your thoughts, while at the mercy of believing them. Breathe into your body and become mindful of your body sensations.

Exercise and movement is useful to dissipate negative emotions. I'm amazed how good I feel following a brief jog or a resistance session which disperses the cycle of habitual thoughts.

Emotionally resilient people avoid judging others because they recognise the futility of it. Instead, they channel their strengths rather than feeding their weaknesses.

It is vital to heal your pain and resolve the wounds of your past.

Dr. Alex Lickerman writes in *The Undefeated Mind*, "For if we can approach people first and foremost not with judgement but with curiosity we'll have taken an important step on the journey to compassion and thus to an undefeated mind."

To condemn others perpetuates a fear-based mindset and deflects having to look deep into yourself.

As the opening story invites you to consider, seeing others through a darkened lens is toxic to your emotional wellbeing.

Not only do you form a distorted view of people, you diminish your self-worth and project your unresolved emotions on them, instead of meeting them with compassion.

Source : <https://medium.com/the-mission/why-you-should-let-go-of-judging-others-68bee339afe8>



About the Writer :

Tony Fahkry is a self-empowerment Author, Expert Speaker and Coach

Buddhist Tales

The Wind and the Moon [Friendship]

Once upon a time, there were two very good friends who lived together in the shade of a rock. Strange as it may seem, one was a lion and one was a tiger. They had met when they were too young to know the difference between lions and tigers. So they did not think their friendship was at all unusual. Besides, it was a peaceful part of the mountains, possibly due to the influence of a gentle forest monk who lived nearby. He was a hermit, one who lives far away from other people.

For some unknown reason, one day the two friends got into a silly argument. The tiger said, "Everyone knows the cold comes when the moon wanes from full to new!" The lion said, "Where did you hear such nonsense? Everyone knows the cold comes when the moon waxes from new to full!"

The argument got stronger and stronger. Neither could convince the other. They could not reach any conclusion to resolve the growing dispute. They even started calling each other names! Fearing for their friendship, they decided to go ask the learned forest monk, who would surely know about such things.

Visiting the peaceful hermit, the lion and tiger bowed respectfully and put their question to him. The friendly monk thought for a while and then gave his answer. "It can be cold in any phase of the moon, from new to full and back to new again. It is the wind that brings the cold, whether from west or north or east. Therefore, in a way, you are both right! And neither of you is defeated by the other. The most important thing is to live without conflict, to remain united. Unity is best by all means."

The lion and tiger thanked the wise hermit. They were happy to still be friends.

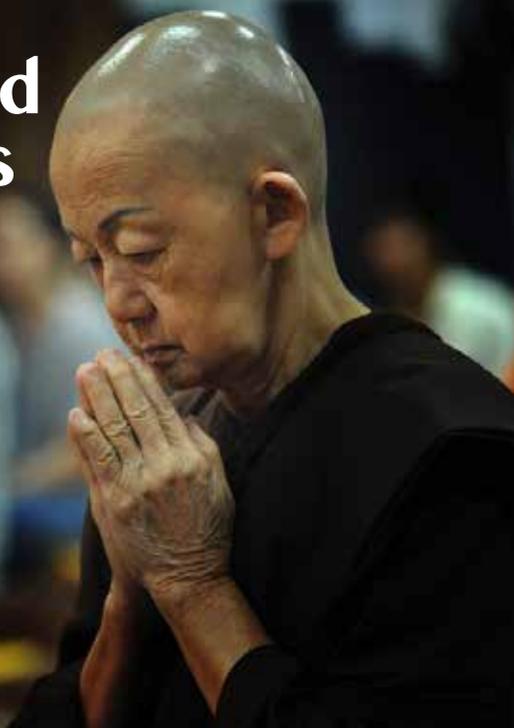
The moral is: Weather comes and weather goes, but friendship remains.



Sukhi hotu and What It Means



By Eric Carter Hah



The greeting "Sukhi hotu", which means, "May you be happy and well always"(not just in the morning or afternoon or night), greatly merits universal usage. This age-old greeting is an invocation of benevolent thoughts which are radiated each time it is used to greet a fellow human being. In common parlance, the greeting may be referred to as the Lotus Greeting. This is because it is accompanied by the wonderful gesture of bringing one's palms together mindfully, to extend sincere good wishes and regards to the person or persons being greeted. In turn, the person who is being greeted automatically responds by bringing his or her palms together and reciprocating the benevolent thoughts encapsulated in the greeting.

The two palms, which are placed together in harmony in the shape of a lotus bud, is a most wonderful way of expressing one's respect and honour to a fellow human being. Further, the lotus symbolised by the palms and ten fingers placed together, evokes in the minds of both the person who greets and the one who is being greeted, the beauty and fragrance of the lotus and the valuable lessons to be drawn from it as espoused in the Buddha's Teaching. Significantly, according to ancient Indian and Chinese wisdom and culture, the lotus is regarded as the symbol of purity, wisdom and spirituality. The inspiring qualities which the lotus evokes are personified in the person and personality of Buddha and is deeply embedded in the psyche of Dhammaputris and Dhammaputras. In addition, the ten fingers of the two palms brought together in harmony represent the Ten Paramitas or Virtuous Perfections attained by a Bodhisattava, that is, One Aspiring to attain Bodhi or Supreme Self-Awakening or Enlightenment. It is important to recall here that a fundamental Teaching of the Buddha is for us to earnestly develop the ten paramis in order to realise our own success, well-being, happiness and inner peace here and now in this life. Thus, when someone greets a fellow human being, "Sukhi hotu" he or she straightaway invokes the benevolent thought, "May you (he or she) come into full bloom like the beautiful and fragrant lotus."

Simultaneously, the person greeting brings into his or her mind the noble aspiration to likewise bloom like the radiant and sweet-scented lotus.



Beyond question, the Lotus Greeting, " Sukhi hotu", carries a far greater meaning and purpose than the usual practice of wishing someone, "Good Morning" or "Good Afternoon" or "Good Night". In fact we need only to reflect, for just a moment, to recognise the inappropriateness of such modern day greetings that unfortunately have become prevalent in contemporary society. It is patently obvious that there is really nothing good about the morning, especially when

the electronic and print media abounds with reports of horrible tragedies, sufferings and killings that take place all around the world every day. The question may be asked: Why then do people continue to routinely use such meaningless greetings? Why do we not use the far more meaningful and humane greeting, "Sukhi hotu"? To reiterate, the reason as to why we continue to use such meaningless greetings rather in a routine manner is because we have been acculturised to do so right from a young age.

Viewed from a historical perspective, Sukhi hotu is the greeting that the Buddha Himself preferred to use to invoke His Maha Karuna (Boundless Compassion) to disciples, lay followers as well as to those professing other religious beliefs. This age-old Buddhist way of greeting each other is surely more dignified and meaningful than the modern gesture of shaking hands with one another as people are so accustomed to do today. Not only are handshakes somewhat graceless, but they can at times be rather awkward and even unwelcomed in some societies. One can readily recall from one's own experience as to how painful some handshakes can be, especially those extended by physically strong, broad shouldered big-built persons. Also, in many cultures, ladies consider it inappropriate to shake hands with men. In sharp contrast, however, the Lotus Greeting is cast in a most graceful and dignified mould and stands out as a marvellous and truly meaningful universal greeting that cuts across time and geographical location.

The spiritual underpinning of the Lotus Greeting, "Sukhi hotu" is equally pregnant with meaning and purpose. The greeting is born out of the Buddha's Teaching of the importance of cultivating Brahma Vihara, that is, the four sublime mental and emotional states of metta (unconditional friendliness or universal benevolence or good will), karuna (compassion), mudita (sympathetic or altruistic joy) and upekkha (equanimity). Sukhi hotu should be that wonderful greeting that a husband extends to his wife when he gets up in the morning and again before he retires for the day. Likewise, it is the first thing a wife expresses to the husband in the morning and later again at night before going to sleep. Similarly, children should joyfully greet their parents, "Sukhi hotu" in the morning and do the same at night daily. In the spirit of unconditional love, parents are to reciprocate the Lotus Greeting to their children. The same goes with one's neighbours and friends and with the rest of society. Thus, it is to be duly appreciated that Sukhi hotu is an excellent greeting which can be readily used by any person to greet anyone, regardless of his or her social status, station in life, gender, culture, religion or ethnicity. In short, it is a universal greeting that transcends all differences in society. As such its usage deserves to be actively encouraged worldwide as a benevolent greeting for all humankind to adopt in their inter-relationships among the family at home and with society at large, regardless of whatever ethnic, cultural, social and religious differences.



Source : <http://rickycarter93.blogspot.com/2012/05/sukhi-hotu.html>

Social Interest



BY Bodhipaksa of Lion's Roar Magazine

You've heard about "fake news." What about "fake buddha quotes"? When it comes to dhamma, you can't believe everything you read on the internet.

They're everywhere you look. In Facebook memes, quotes sites, blog articles, and even in published books, Hallmark-style Fake Buddha Quotes (FBQ) abound.

I first started to document these a few years ago after spotting some obvious fakes on Twitter. As they accumulated, I began detailing how to tell when quotes are fake, identifying their origins when I could, and offering some genuine scriptural quotations to show what (as best we know) the Buddha really taught. Fake quotes became teachable moments.

The most common Fake Buddha Quotes (FBQ) giveaway, usually, is the style, which may be too flowery, poetic, or literary. Sometimes it's the vocabulary, which sounds too contemporary for someone who lived some 2,600 years ago.

How do Fake Buddha Quotes arise? There are simple errors of attribution, where someone else's words have somehow been ascribed to the Buddha. Then there are the "lost in translation" quotes where someone has creatively rendered the Buddha's words into a "new, improved" version that may express their own view of spirituality but are so far from the original meaning that they're essentially fake. And sometimes people just make up a spiritual-sounding quote and stick "–the Buddha" on the end. But it can be hard to tell; I've been convinced a quote is genuine only to discover that it's not.

"If you can't find a quote in the scriptures we should regard it as fake".

Is there such a thing as a genuine Buddha quote? We can never know! The Buddha didn't write anything down. The best record we have of what the historical Buddha said is found in the scriptures of Nikaya Buddhism, including, but not limited to, the Pali canon. But these teachings were passed down orally for hundreds of years before being committed to writing, and in the process they were simplified, edited, and made easier to memorize by being made repetitious. There's no guarantee that anything in the scriptures is exactly what the Buddha said. But it's the best we have to go on.

However, we don't have to be certain about what the Buddha did say in order to know what he didn't say. My rule of thumb is this: if you can't find a quote in the scriptures—any scriptures, including those of the Mahayana traditions—we should regard it as fake. If there's no evidence of him having said something, then we shouldn't claim he did.

People often tell me that the Buddha was "too spiritual" to be bothered about being misquoted. But the reality is that the scriptures are full of stories in which the Buddha sets some seeker straight about what he's said, and where he condemns those who have misquoted him.

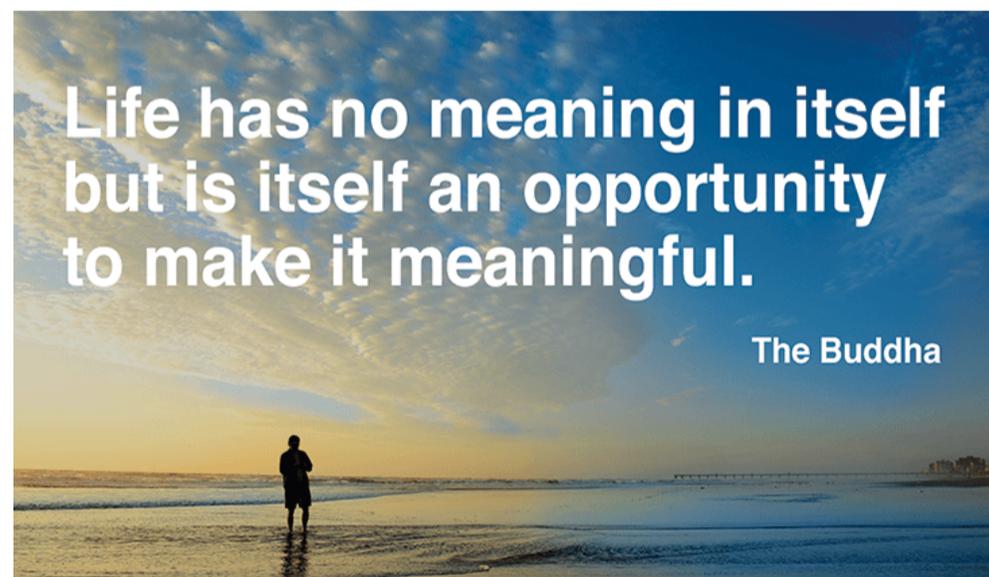
I've devoted a lot of time to rooting out and debunking these fake Buddha quotes. Here are some of my favorites



Did the Buddha say something even vaguely like this?

No, the Buddha never told us to "go with the flow." He did not use metaphors like "the flow of the universe." He did, however, talk about streams and rivers in a metaphorical way. Here's a lovely, actual example from the Nalaka Sutta:

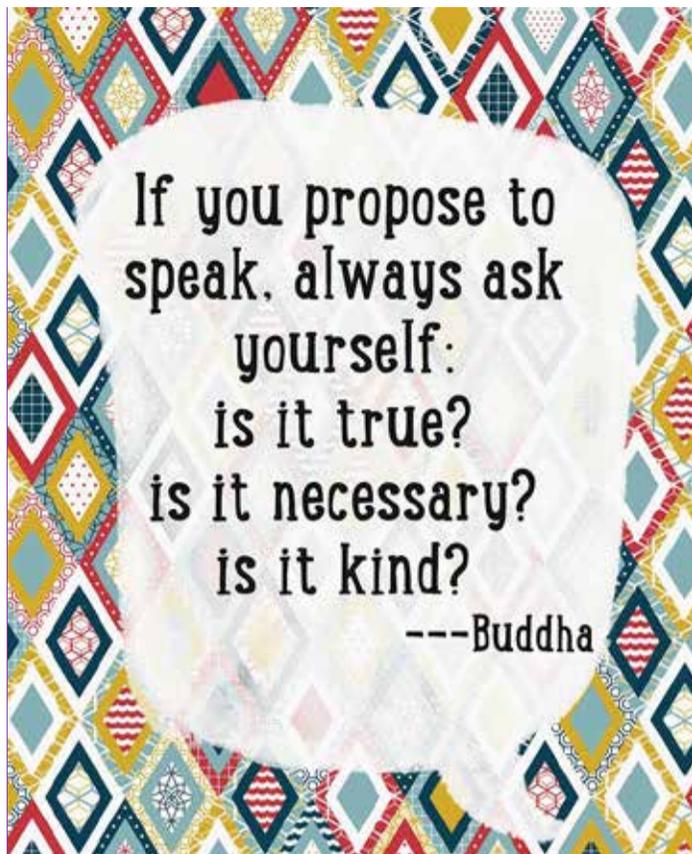
*Know from the rivers
in clefts and in crevices:
those in small channels flow noisily,
the great flow silent.
Whatever's not full makes noise.
Whatever is full is quiet.*



Did the Buddha say something even vaguely like this?

Sorry. Completely bogus. There's nothing in the Pali canon where the Buddha talks about the meaning of life, "the secret of existence," or any such thing.

The phrase, "the meaning of life," is actually quite modern, at least in English. I haven't found any instance of that expression before the mid-1800s. All the earliest references to the "meaning of life" come in a Christian context, at a time when Christianity was emphasizing the development of character. That makes this quote rather ironic: what does it say about our character if we think it's acceptable to fabricate a quote and put it in the mouth of the Buddha?



Did the Buddha say something even vaguely like this?

He might have, but these aren't his words.

One objection I often hear to my investigation of suspicious quotes is that it's the meaning and spirit of a quote that are important, not who said it. And it's true that just because a quote is fake doesn't mean that it's wrong or spiritually invalid. Some fake quotes are so Buddhist that I wish the Buddha had actually said them. This particular quote is actually based on the words of Mary Ann Pietzker, a Victorian poet, but it certainly isn't at odds with the Buddha's teachings. In fact, it strikingly resembles the suttas. So what's the problem?

The problem is that to attribute a quote to the Buddha is to make a claim about fact: "This is something the Buddha said." A quote may be in line with the Buddha's teaching, and may even be inspiring and spiritually useful, but surely it's better to get our facts straight. After all, didn't the Buddha have a few things to say about truthful speech?

Source : <https://www.lionsroar.com/i-cant-believe-its-not-buddha/>



About the Writer :

Bodhipaksa is a Buddhist teacher and writer. He is the founder of Wildmind.org and runs FakeBuddhaQuotes.com.

Buddhist Art and Symbolism

Understanding Buddhist Art

Buddhist Art is the artistic practices that are influenced by Buddhism. Buddhist art originated on the Indian subcontinent following the historical life of Siddhartha Gautama, 6th to 5th century BCE. After the Buddha, it evolved by contact and interactions with other cultures and artistic traditions as it spread throughout Asia and the world. Buddhist Art includes the depiction of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other notable Buddhist figures, both historical and mythical. Buddhist Art also includes narrative scenes from the lives of Buddhist figures; mandalas and other graphic aids for the practice of Buddhism; as well as objects used in the Buddhist traditions, such as vajras, bells, stupas and Buddhist temple architecture.

Anthropomorphic representations of the Buddha - The Greek Influence

Anthropomorphic images of the Buddha started to emerge in the 1st century from regions with Greco-Buddhism under the Indo-Greeks. Greco-Buddhism is the cultural combination of Hellenistic culture and Buddhism, which developed between the 4th century BC and the 5th century AD in Bactria and the Indian subcontinent. It was a cultural consequence of a long history of interactions that began with Greek forays into India from the time of Alexander the Great. The Indo-Greek Kingdoms were Hellenistic kingdoms covering various parts of Afghanistan and the northwest regions of the Indian subcontinent during the last two centuries BC.

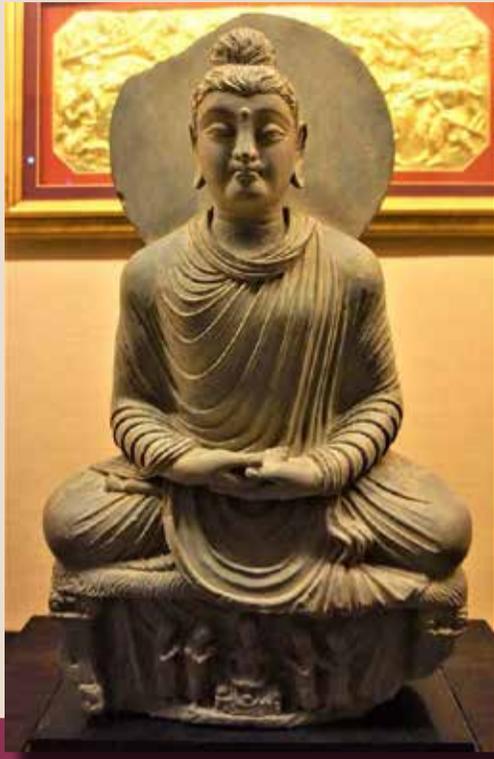
As Buddhism expanded outside of India from the 1st century CE, its original forms blended with other artistic influences, leading to a progressive differentiation among the countries adopting the faith. Northern Buddhist Art was influenced by a northern route which was established from the 1st century CE through Central Asia, Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, where Mahayana Buddhism prevailed. Southern Buddhist Art was influenced by a southern route, where Theravada Buddhism dominated and went through Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

Buddhist Art spread and adapted and evolved in each new host country. Before the spread of Islam and the modern era, Buddhist Art became common in the following areas.

Northern Buddhist Art

- In India, where Buddhist art flourished, it co-developed with Hindu and Jain art.
- In Northern India, Anthropomorphic representations of the Buddha, influenced by Hellenistic Greek Art, started to emerge from the 1st century CE.
- In Afghanistan or old Bactria, Buddhist Art persisted for several centuries until the spread of Islam in the 7th century.
- In Central Asia, the meeting place between China, India, and Persia.
- Buddhism arrived in China around the 1st century CE and introduced new types of art into China.
- Korean Buddhist art generally reflects an interaction between other Buddhist influences and the strongly indigenous Korean culture.
- Japan received Buddhism through Korea, China, Central Asia, and eventually India.
- In Tibet and Bhutan, Tantric Buddhism started as a movement in eastern India around the 5th or the 6th century.
- Vietnam has been strongly influenced by Chinese Buddhist art, between the 1st and 9th centuries.
- Southern Buddhist Art
- Southern Buddhism became the practice in Sri Lanka, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia.
- Buddhism was introduced in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century BCE by Indian missionaries.
- The eastern part of Indian Buddhism strongly influenced Myanmar (Burma).
- In Cambodia, the cultural influence came directly from India.
- Buddhist art in Thailand was first influenced by direct contact with Indian traders, from the 1st to the 7th centuries.
- Indonesia seems to have been most strongly influenced by India from the 1st century CE.

Buddhist Art and Symbolism



Title:	Meditating Buddha Shakyamuni
Date:	2nd century
Material:	Grey Schist, a metamorphic rock
Size:	H: 65 cm; W: 35 cm; D: 23 cm
Origins:	Gandhara, Pakistan
Museum:	Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum, Singapore

Meditating Buddha Shakyamuni shows Buddha with a chipped halo behind his head in the meditation pose with his right hand in his left palm, both facing upwards. His legs are crossed, and the feet are resting upturned on the thighs in a traditional posture. He is dedicated with long earlobes and wavy hair, and he has a conventional mark between his eyebrows. The Buddha was an ascetic and sage, on whose teachings Buddhism was founded. He lived and taught mostly in the eastern part of ancient India sometime between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE. Gautama Buddha is also known as Siddhārtha Gautama or Shakyamuni Buddha.

This statue of the Buddha comes from ancient Gandhara in modern-day Pakistan. Like other Gandharan or Greco-Buddhist art, the sculpture shows influence from Ancient Greek sculptural art. Gandhara had been part of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom established by Alexander the Great. Gandhāra was an ancient Indic kingdom in the northwestern region of Pakistan, around Peshawar.

Statues of the Buddha were not made until after the 1st century CE. For the first four hundred years after his death Buddha was represented by symbols alone such as his footprint or an empty throne or Bodhi tree. The statue was made in the 2nd or 3rd century, and although Buddha lived in the 4th century before Christ, this is an early and rare example of Buddha in human form.

The statue was carved in excellent detail and with the pose, which was to become one of the several standard ones and shows Buddha as a teacher sitting on a platform. On the front of the base, there are much smaller figures of a bodhisattva, flanked by kneeling figures probably representing donor portraits. His robes feature the distinctive folds carved in well-rounded ridges and terraces that smooth out at the knees and shoulders. The neckline is in high relief with a plunging, and a semi-circular edge that is echoed as the robe overlaps the seat.

Greco-Buddhist Art

Greco-Buddhist Art is the cultural merging of Classical Greek culture and Buddhism, which developed throughout about 1,000 years in Central Asia. This amalgamation of different religions and cultures started with the conquests of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC and ended with the Islāmic conquests of the 7th century AD. This Greco-Buddhist art is distinguished by the realism and sensual depiction of Hellenistic art and the first representations of the Buddha in human form. It is one of the earliest examples of cultural amalgamation of eastern and western traditions.

The birth of Greco-Buddhist art was in the Hellenistic Greco-Bactrian kingdom (250-130 BC), in today's Afghanistan. From this rich culture, Hellenistic trends rippled into northern India leading to the establishment of the Indo-Greek kingdom (180-10 BC). The Indo-Greek Kingdom was a Hellenistic kingdom covering various parts of Afghanistan and the northwest regions of the Indian subcontinent during the last two centuries BC.

This statue exemplified the subtle influence of Greco-Buddhist art that also spread to Central Asia and ultimately the arts of China, Korea, and Japan.



Walking Buddha

This "Walking Buddha" is a three-dimensional sculpture representing the transcendent qualities innovated in the Sukhothai period. The Kingdom of Sukhothai was an early kingdom in north-central Thailand from 1238 to 1438. Sukhothai is derived from Sanskrit, and means "dawn of happiness." This simply clad Buddha figure steps forward in smooth fluid motion with the right hand in the gesture of fearlessness.

This image depicts the Buddha walking back and forth in meditation. This sculpture displays the ideal features and marks that are prescribed in the Buddhist doctrine of the period, which includes:

Title:	Walking Buddha
Dates:	15th or 16th century
Providence:	Sukhothai, Thailand
Materials:	Bronze
Dimensions:	H: 117 cm
Museum:	Asian Civilisations Museum, Singapore

an egg-shaped head

eyebrows like drawn bows

a nose shaped like a parrot's beak

a lion-like torso

lotus petal-shaped eyelids

chin in the shape of the mango seed

arms like a young elephant's trunk

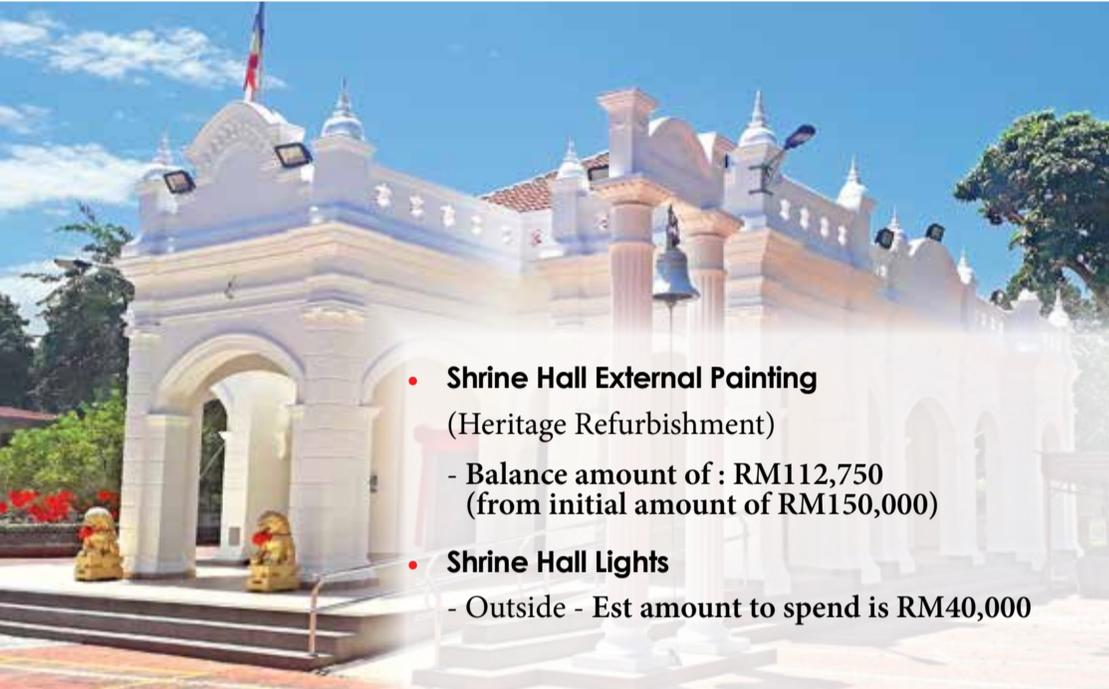
The dynamic walking posture with arms like a young elephant's trunk, the tapering fingers, the fitted robe with flowing hemline, and the raised hand accentuate the sense of motion. The pose represents the Buddha's walking meditation after his enlightenment.

Source : <https://joyofmuseums.com/most-popular/popular-buddhist-art/>

Projects

LEND A HAND

The Buddhist Maha Vihara "Lend A Hand" programme is to support the undertaking of a number of crucial projects that are needed for continuous maintenance and upgrading for the benefit of all devotees. We appeal to your kind generosity to help us realize the following:



- **Shrine Hall External Painting**
(Heritage Refurbishment)
 - Balance amount of : RM112,750
(from initial amount of RM150,000)
- **Shrine Hall Lights**
 - Outside - Est amount to spend is RM40,000



- **Vehicle for Transport**
 - Balance amount of : RM77,500
(from initial amount of RM80,000)

- **Replacing the 56 Buddha Statues' Huts with stainless steel panels/ tampered glass.**

- Balance amount of : RM22,080
(from initial amount of RM24,800)



BUDDHA FRIEZE

for Sponsorship at Meditation Pavilion



- **Seated Buddha Frieze**
 - RM18,000 each
 - 37 statues left to be sponsored



- **Standing Buddha Frieze**
 - RM38,000 each
 - 5 statues left to be sponsored



- **25 Lotus Pillars**

A total of 25 Lotus Pillars named after the Buddha's core teachings are available for sponsorship at the Wisma Dharma Cakra building at RM25,000 each. Names of the Sponsors will be placed on the pillar.

- *Mezzanine Floor – 18 pillars
- *First Floor – 4 pillars



- **Supply and Install Visual System at 1st Floor, Puja Hall**

Estimate Cost:- RM 25,850.00

- **Meditation Cushion with Cushion**

Big 2ft x 2ft @ RM65 x 66 nos = RM4290

Small 10 x 14 x 46mm @ RM55 x 106 nos = RM5830

Total Estimate Cost :- RM10,120

- **Wireless Head Set Microphone**

Estimate Cost :- RM 3,300

- **Tabletop Gooseneck Microphone system**

Estimate Cost :- RM4,800.00

- **Mobile Stage with Skirting and staircase**

Estimate Cost :- RM7,700

- **10-seater Round Tables**

Quantity – 50

Estimate Cost :- RM9,000

- **Skirting for Banquet table**

Quantity – 100 tables (6ft x 2ft)

Estimate Cost :- RM9,500

- **Dharmacakra Wheel at Wisma Dharma Cakra Building**

Balance amount : RM200,000

(from initial amount of :RM300,000)



A brief history of the 126 year old Buddhist Maha Vihara, Brickfields

The Buddhist Maha Vihara was founded in 1894 by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society (SAWS), the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the Klang Valley.

From its very inception, the Vihara has been managed by the Sinhala Buddhist community but was financially supported by the Chinese and Indian communities as well. The first structure of the Vihara was the Main Shrine Room, with its ceremonial laying of the foundation-stone taking place on 25th August 1894 and the simple rectangular shaped building completed sometime during the first decade of the 20th century. The donors for the Shrine room, as recorded in the Selangor Government Gazette 1896, pg 408 were clearly Chinese and Indian communities and among the main donors were:

Kapitan Yeap Quang Seng, Towkay Loke Yew, K. Tambusamy Pillay, R. Doraisamy Pillay, Loke Chow Kit, San Peng and Son, Lim Tua Taw, etc...

The Vihara was always the focal point to mobilise the Buddhist community. The large gathering to protest and stop the screening of the then controversial film "Light of Asia" in 1927 in Malaysia was also held at the Vihara, and so was the mass gathering and signature campaign in the 1950s to lobby the government to declare Wesak as a national holiday.

During the Emergency period of 1948-1960, monks from the Vihara made a massive impact reaching out to calm and educate the psychologically disoriented Chinese New Villagers who were evicted from their

traditional lands and placed in new settlements by the Governments which was fighting a communist insurgency.

Since the 1940s, the Vihara commenced a free Dhamma publications programme as a Dhammadutta outreach to the masses which by the year 2012 was made available in 28 languages, with millions of copies of books and CDs produced. The Vihara's Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS), founded in 1929, is the oldest Sunday School in the country with an enrolment of more than 1200 students and continues to produce systematic books on Buddhist studies for children.

The Wesak procession organised by the Vihara since the 1890s is the oldest and largest religious procession in the country. The 3-day Wesak celebrations at the Vihara attracts about 100,000 people.

Many students or devotees who have studied and benefited from the BISDS, the Vihara's Free Publications, Dhamma programmes, classes, talks, etc have gone on to set up new Buddhist societies and centers which help to spread Buddhism in the country far and wide.

The SAWS is also one of the founding members of the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST) formed in 1983, a Council which constructively engages the Government on matters effecting non-muslims in the country. The

MCCBCHST Administrative office is based at the Vihara.

In 2004, the Vihara was a major focal point in the country to collect relief aid to assist the South Asian Tsunami that killed almost 280,000 people. Several forty foot containers equivalent of relief aid were dispatched by the Vihara to Sri Lanka, Indonesia, India, Myanmar and Thailand by air, sea and land.

Buddhists remain the country's largest organ donors, thanks to Cornea and Organ Donation Campaigns carried out by the Vihara. The Vihara continues to operate to deliver its obligation to the Buddhist community till this day and is governed and directed by its Vision, 4 Missions, 6 Strategic Objectives and 4 Ennoblers in tribute and gratitude to all our past and current Sangha, volunteers, donors, friends, etc. We would be failing in our duty if we fail to mention the name of the foremost amongst them, our late Venerable Chief, that is Venerable. Dr. Kirinde Sri Dhammananda Nayaka Maha Thero.



DAILY ACTIVITIES

Mon - Sun	- 6.30am - 7.30am - 11.30am - 12.00noon - 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Daily Morning Buddha Puja Daily Noon Buddha Puja Daily Evening Buddha Puja
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WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Mon, Wed, Thurs	- 8.00pm - 10.00pm	Meditation Class
Tues	- 10.30am - 12.00noon - 8.30pm - 10.00pm	Senior Club Yoga for Beginners Qigong Practise
Thurs	- 7.30pm - 9.00pm	Senior Club Yoga for Intermediate
Fri	- 1.00pm - 2.00pm - 8.00pm - 9.30pm	Afternoon Puja & Talk Dhamma Talk
Sat	- 8.30am - 10.30am - 10.30am - 11.30am - 2.00pm - 7.00pm - 7.30pm - 8.30pm	Qigong Practise Tai Chi Practise Degree & Master's in Buddhism Classes Bojjhanga Puja
Sun	- 8.30am - 9.30am - 9.30am - 11.00am - 9.30am - 12.00noon - 10.00am - 11.30am - 10.00am - 2.00pm - 11.00am - 12.30pm - 1.30pm - 5.00pm - 2.00pm - 7.00pm - 3.00pm - 4.30pm - 5.00pm	Morning Puja Abhidamma Class Sunday Dhamma School for Children & for Adults Dhamma Talk Traditional Chinese Medicine <i>(Every Sunday except Public Holiday)</i> Pali / Sutta Class Sinhala Language Classes Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes Dhamma for the Deaf (fortnightly) Feeding the Needy and Homeless

You can donate towards our many projects :

- Dhammadutta
- Free Buddhist Publications
- Welfare Activities
- Monks Dana
- Sunday Dhamma School
- Maintenance of Shrine Hall
- K Sri Dhammananda Library
- Temple Lighting
- BISDS Building Fund

Payments can be made via :

- BMV Office Counter** : Cash, cheques & credit cards
Postage : Make cheques payable to "Buddhist Maha Vihara" & write your name & contact telephone at back of the cheque.
Direct Debit : Hong Leong Bank Brickfields
 Acct : 292-00-01161-8

BMV Statement of Accounts :

Buddhist Maha Vihara's Monthly Statement of Accounts is displayed on the Notice Board at the Reception area for public viewing. Please address all queries to the Hon. Secretary in writing.

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE BY :
 - Cash (at the BMV Counter)
 - Cheque (made payable to "BISDS Building Fund")
 - ATM Transfer / Direct Bank-in
 (Bank Acct : BISDS Building Fund,
 A/C No : CIMB 86-0011008-6.
 Please send the bank-in slip to
 info@buddhistmahavihara.org)

We accept VISA and MASTERCARD for donations. Thank You.

Donations to Buddhist Maha Vihara operations are tax exempt.

Any donor who wants a tax exemption for computation of personal or corporate tax can request for a tax exempt receipt.

PLEASE BEWARE OF UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS SOLICITING DONATIONS.

KINDLY ENSURE THAT ALL DONATIONS ARE ISSUED WITH A NUMBERED BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA OFFICIAL RECEIPT.

BMV OFFICE HOURS

MON - SAT : 9.00 am - 9.00 pm

SUN & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS : 9.00 am - 5.00 pm



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