

# BMVdigest

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*For Non-Muslims only*

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



## **The Dhamek Stupa, Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh, India.**

The Dhamek Stupa was built in 500 CE to replace an earlier structure commissioned by the great Mauryan king Ashoka in 249 BCE, along with several other monuments, to commemorate the Buddha's activities in this location. The Dhamek Stupa is said to mark the spot where the Buddha gave the first sermon to his first five disciples. Made of brick with a facing in red sandstone, the name probably derives from the Sanskrit word dharmeksha, or 'pondering on the law'. This elongated cylindrical shape is 42 metres in height with panels of carvings around the base with delicate floral and geometric patterns and with scrolls and medallions. With a base in stone, the top is made of brick and in the centre there are eight niches that probably once held images of the Buddha.

*Picture Credits 'Daksha Prajapati'*

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## Observance of Vassa

At BMV - 24th July to 20th October 2021

“Vassa (in Pali) or Vas”, also referred to as Rains Retreat, is the three-month annual retreat observed by the practitioners of Theravada Buddhism. From the time of the Buddha and even until now the Vassa period remains unchanged for Theravada monks regardless of geographical and climatic differences. According to the “Vinaya” monks may not break Vas except that he may leave the Vas dwelling under specified circumstances and must always return before seven days. If he does not, it is an offence for he has broken his Vas.

Vassa typically lasts for three lunar months. It usually starts in July and ends in October. Vassa begins with the Esala puja on the full moon of July. In Sri Lankan tradition, betel leaves is usually offered to the Maha Sangha inviting them to observe the Vas period.

Buddhist monks and nuns spend Vassa inside temple grounds and monasteries, dedicating the period to meditation, dhamma study, give dhamma talks and help laypeople and junior monks in spiritual development and self reflection. The layperson should take the opportunity of “Vas” period to discuss and learn the “Dhamma” with the monks.

## Kathina Ceremony

At BMV - 24th October 2021



The three-month rains-retreat seclusion of Buddhist Saṅgha concludes with the pavāraṇā (invitation) ceremony, which is in turn followed by Kaṭhina ceremony. It is a traditional ceremony and ancient custom mostly found in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. Today, the Kaṭhina ceremony is a large, annual festival where Buddhists get together and celebrate the day by offering monastics gifts, such as robes and alms.

Kaṭhina means “hard”, “stiff”, “difficult”, etc. The word Kaṭhina denotes a cloth offered to the monks annually after the end of the rains-retreat (vassāvāsa). It also refers to a wooden frame used by the monks in sewing their robes. However, the word mostly denotes the robe, cīvara in pali, known as Kaṭhina cīvara. The character of the material used symbolizes the cīvara, which is one of the four requisites of a monk. The Kaṭhina robe is offered to the monastic Saṅgha by lay followers. The Buddha has stated that there are eight major or great offerings of dana that accrue much merit to those who give. Offering of the Kathina robe is one of eight. The rest are (1) Offering of a Buddha image with a temple for public common worship (2) Offering of a Sanghavaśa (residence for monks) (3) offering of toilets for the Maha Sangha (4) Offering of a Atapirikara (5) Offering of a Dhamma dana (writing of Buddhist scriptures, publishing them, etc) (6) A Sanghika dana to monks who have received Upasampada (Higher Ordination) (7) Gifts or Dana given to Individuals

## Mindfulness in Plain English by Bhante G

Ancient Pali texts liken meditation to the process of taming a wild elephant. The procedure in those days was to tie a newly captured animal to a post with a good strong rope. When you do this the elephant is not happy. He screams and tramples, and pulls against the rope for days. Finally, it sinks through his skull that he can't get away, and he settles down. At this point you can begin to feed him and to handle him with some measure of safety. Eventually you can dispense with the rope and post altogether, and train your elephant for various tasks. Now you've got a tamed elephant that can be put to useful work. In this analogy the wild elephant is your wildly active mind, the rope is mindfulness, and the post is our object of meditation-- breathing. The tamed elephant who emerges from this process is a well trained, concentrated mind that can then be used for the exceedingly tough job of piercing the layers of illusion that obscure reality. Meditation tames the mind.

## When in Meditation Say.....

May all share with me these merits.

May the samma ditti devas,

In the heavenly realms of Tusita and Tavatimsa,

The guardian gods who watch with care,

The world from the four directions.

All beings - those that are seen and those unseen,

In happy states or sad,

My Mother, Father,

All those near and dear to me.

My teachers, friends, companions,

All they who have come with me,

On this long journey of life after life;

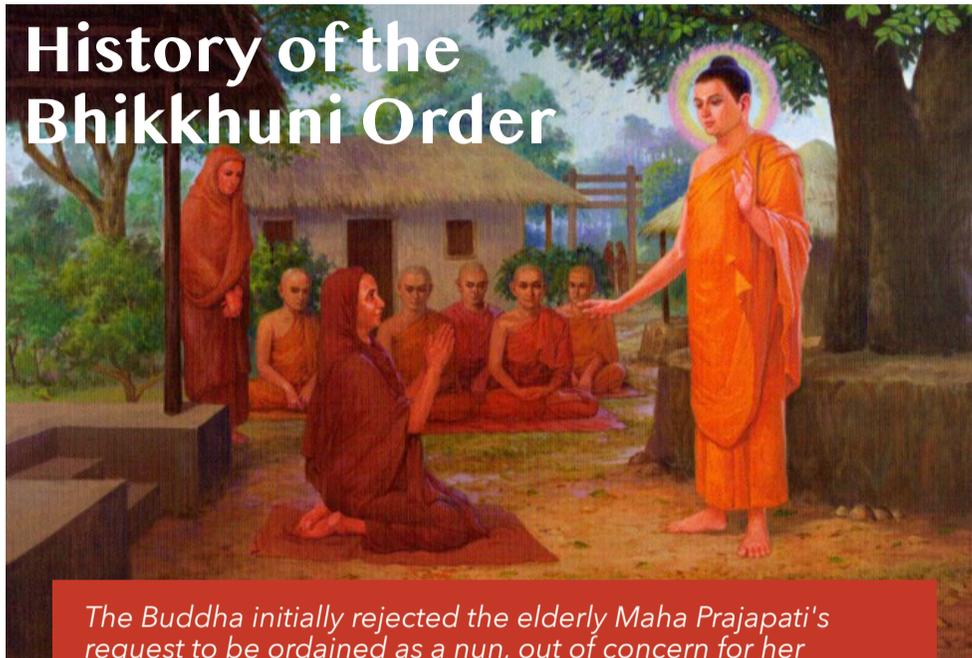
May they all share with me my happiness,

And the good accrued from this.

# Feature

*In commemoration of the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Order on the Full Moon Day of September during the Buddha's time.....*

## History of the Bhikkhuni Order



*The Buddha initially rejected the elderly Maha Prajapati's request to be ordained as a nun, out of concern for her physical well-being.*

The full moon in the month of September or Binara Poya (in Sinhala) occupies a significant place in the history of Buddha Sasana. It is on this full moon day that the Bhikkhuni Sasana was founded. When the Buddha was residing at Nigrodharamaya in the city of Kapilavasthu, Maha Prajapathi Gothami requested permission for women to enter the Order. Maha Prajapathi was the Buddha's maternal aunt and adoptive mother, raising him after her sister Maha Maya, the Buddha's birth mother, passed away.

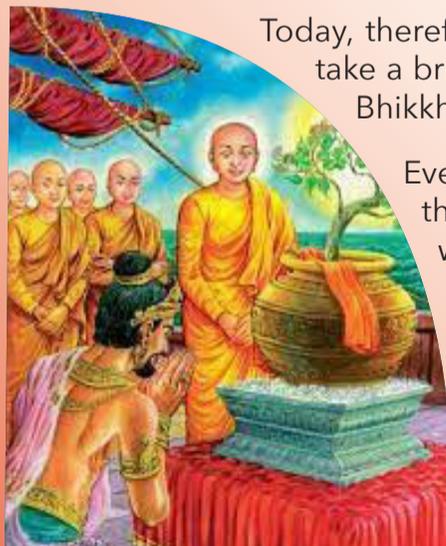
Buddhist scriptures tell us that after an initial reluctance, he decided to grant permission, but after laying down eight tenets of the code to be followed by the Bhikkhunis.

The Queen and the 500 Sakyan princesses who accompanied her agreed to follow. Ordination was conducted thereafter. She was true to her destiny, as not long afterwards she became an Arahant. So likewise did her companions on listening to the discourse called the Nandakovada Sutta by the Buddha. The King of Lichchavis built a residence for her and her followers at Vesali.

### **Mahā Prajāpatī passed away at the age of 120.**

The Bhikkhuni Order in India however, lasted not more than 5 centuries as it went into extinction with the decline of Buddhism from the late Gupta period.

### **Bhikkhuni Order in Sri Lanka**



Today, therefore, it may be appropriate for us to take a brief journey through the history of the Bhikkhuni order in Sri Lanka.

Every Buddhist knows that it was during the 3rd century BC, the Bhikkhuni order was established in Sri Lanka under the guidance of Sanghamitta Theri.

The Princess Anula, wife of the younger brother of King Devanampiyatissa, along with 500 other women, joined the higher ordination of Buddhism as Buddhist nuns.

*Sanghamitta Theri takes the Bhikkhuni Sangha to Sri Lanka*

Within a short period of time, Buddhism earned many followers in Sri Lanka. During that time, the island had a large Buddhist religious community of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis who advocated the Buddhist teachings across the country.

The Bhikkhuni Sasana lasted till the end of the Anuradhapura Era. The final mention of a Nunnery in the Chronicles was during the reign of Mihindu the fourth (956-972) who built Mahawallaka Nunnery for Theravada bhikkhunis.

### **Visits to China and Tibet**

History tells us that in 429 CE, Bhikkhuni Devasara took a cutting from the Sri Lankan bodhi tree at Anuradhapura, and travelled to China with a group of bhikkhunis to establish a bhikkhuni sangha there.

At the same time the mission left to China, Bhikkhuni Chandramali led the second group to Tibet, described as a greatly hazardous journey. In Tibet, they translated six Tibetan texts from Sanskrit to Tibetan including the Tibetan Tripitaka which was called the Kanjur.

Bhikkhus in China politely asked the visiting group whether some of them would be willing to return home and bring more bhikkhunis so they would have enough quorum for an ordination. While some of the original bhikkhunis stayed behind, others returned to Sri Lanka. They gathered the requisite number of bhikkhunis to make a quorum for the ordination and four years later, arrived back in China. It is said that over 300 Chinese nuns were ordained at the Nan Lin Southern Forest Monastery in Nanjing.

Unlike Sri Lanka, China's bhikkhuni lineage, has continued to the present day in an unbroken upasampada (ordination) lineage. And, in between, the bhikkhuni order was transmitted to Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam from China. There are now thousands of Taiwanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese bhikkhunis.

### **Extinction**

Around the 11th century, however, the Order of Buddhist nuns slowly began to lose its place among Buddhist culture in Sri Lanka. There is a number of reasons for this catastrophe.

In 1017 Cholian tribes, who were extremist Hindus, came down from India and conquered the Anuradhapura Kingdom and as a result, the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni orders disappeared and became defunct. After 50 years of the Cholian rule though, Vijayabahu the First (1055-1110) expelled the invaders. During this half century, the local Buddhist practices became more and more under Tamil and Hindu influence.

Since the fall of the Anuradhapura kingdom, fewer women were inclined to join the Buddhist clergy. There were only a few Buddhist nuns left to perform the higher ordination for the novices.

### **Dipavamsa**

Vijayabahu the First wanted to revive the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Orders. He got down Bhikkhus from Burma for the ordination of Sri Lankan bhikkhus. However, there is no indication that he got the services of senior Bhikkhunis from Burma.

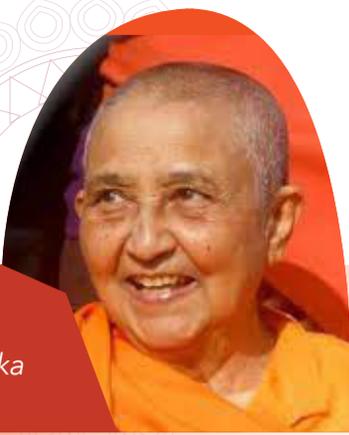
So, the bhikkhuni order died out in the Theravada tradition. However, women continued to practice. Women's monasticism took different forms, for example, eight and ten-precept nuns.

## Revival

In the latter part of last century, there were attempts to revive Bhikkhuni Order in Sri Lanka.

Higher ordination was not given to dasasilmathas (ten preceptors) in Sri Lanka because the Sangha led by the three Mahanayaka Theras decreed that the Order of Nuns (Bhikkhuni Sasana) died down centuries ago in the country and cannot be revived except by a Bhikkhuni of the Theravada unbroken lineage. This was not possible since the lineage, even in remotest Chinese Buddhist territory, had gone extinct.

Yet, in 1996, a group of dasasilmathas led by Sister Kusuma went to Buddha Gaya and received higher ordination from a South Korean senior Bhikkhuni and later received ordination again from Sri Lankan Theravada monks led by Sumangala Thera in Rangiri Dambulla Vihara. Thus, some believe, the lineage or Order of Bhikkhunis was restored. The event was organised by Venerable Mapalagama Vipulasara Thera.



*Ven Dr Bhikkhuni Kusuma, the first among nine others to be ordained in 1996 thus re-establishing the Bhikkhuni Sasana in Sri Lanka after 1,000 years.*

Six months later, Sumangala Thera got these 20 bhikkhunis to confer ordination on 22 samaneris of Sri Lanka along with many from other countries. Most of the bhikkhunis have gone to other countries to build the bhikkhuni sangha.

*Source :<https://www.dailynews.lk/2018/09/24/features/163386/history-bhikkhuni-order-brief-study>*

## Teachings & Practise



### How to Cultivate Kindness When Other People Make You Crazy

By Kimberly Brown

There might be some people in your life right now—maybe you live with them, maybe you don't—who you feel angry or frustrated with. That's okay.

In the past year or so, many of our relationships have been strained. A lot of us are working from home, kids are not in school, and we're with partners, children, or roommates all the time. This can cause conflict and annoyance. Also, because it's such a stressful moment—with social distancing and economic uncertainty—many of us simply feel more irritable and impatient, both with ourselves and with each other.

When you're upset with someone, you're suffering from difficult feelings like anger and frustration. And it's likely that the other person is suffering too. Kindness is a form of skillful means—upekkha in Pali or upaya in Sanskrit—to orient your thoughts, words, and actions to alleviate that suffering and to prevent causing more suffering.

Kindness doesn't mean just being nice or pretending like you care. Cultivating kindness means opening your heart, with patience and attention, to your painful feelings—and to other peoples' painful

feelings. So when you're upset with someone else, it's important to acknowledge it. Pay attention to it. Feel it in your body. You could even say to yourself, "I'm upset right now, I'm struggling."

Other people are who they are. They have their own feelings and views, and it's not up to us to make them do or say what we want them to. Although someone else may have done something hurtful, you're responsible for your feelings. Your feelings are your feelings, and only you can take care of them.

Now, this doesn't mean we let people harm us. If they're dangerous or causing hurt, then we might choose to distance ourselves. But if they're simply frustrating, or won't listen to us, or we're angry with them about a disagreement, then we can use our wisdom to understand that what they do and how they do it aren't up to us. And we can do this by recognizing that just like us, they want to be happy and not suffer.

All of us, even the worst among us, want to be happy—to have love, a peaceful mind, and contentment—even if we don't know how to make that happen. So, when we've taken care of our feelings, our body, and our mind, then we can extend our kindness to the difficult person too.

Extending our hearts, being patient, offering kindness—it doesn't mean to forget or to just ignore how you've been treated or what happened with your friend or family member. What it does is help us see our own emotions and reactions clearly. Then we can see the situation clearly, so we have a choice in how we respond. Instead of reacting thoughtlessly, out of habit, we can use our wisdom and choose what we want to do. We might choose to talk to this person, or recognize our part in the problem. Whatever we choose will come from a clear and steady mind.

Below is a meditation to cultivate kindness, both for yourself and for a person who has been frustrating, annoying, or upsetting to you. This can be practiced each day, maybe ten minutes in the morning or ten minutes before bed. Another time that it's good to practice this is when you feel tempted to yell or criticize this person or complain about them to someone else. Before you do that, take a pause to do this meditation very briefly so that you don't react out of anger, but choose how to act out of your clear mind and heart.

## PRACTICE

Get still, get quiet, and take your time to settle into your seat. Take a few conscious breaths, inhaling and exhaling at your own pace. You can close your eyes, or if you're sleepy, keep them open with a soft, unfocused gaze. Give yourself permission to relax, to be here at this moment.

Bring your attention to your heart center, the center of your chest, with the intention to connect with yourself. You make this connection by imagining you're looking in the mirror or imagining yourself as a child, or just getting a sense of your presence right here, with you. And say this phrase silently to yourself, as though you are giving it as a gift to you:

May I be peaceful and happy.  
May I be peaceful and happy.  
May I be peaceful and happy.

You can let go of this connection with yourself and this phrase. Bring your attention back to the heart center, where you will connect with a difficult person, a person who is frustrating you. You can imagine them as a child or as you know them; just get a sense that they are here with you. And give them this phrase silently, as a gift of kindness:

I release you from my demands and expectations of you.

I release you from my demands and expectations of you.

I release you from my demands and expectations of you.

You may get caught in anger or a story about them and swept away from this practice. That's okay. Just notice what's happening, and choose to begin again. Reconnect with the person and start over, repeating silently, "I release you from my demands and expectations of you."



You can keep this connection with this person, and now include yourself too. Silently give this gift to the two of you:

May we be peaceful and happy.  
May we be peaceful and happy.  
May we be peaceful and happy.

Source : <https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/cultivating-kindness/>



About the Writer : Kimberly Brown is a meditation teacher, author of *Steady, Calm, and Brave: 25 Practices for Resilience and Wisdom in a Crisis* (2020), and former executive director of the Interdependence Project in New York City. Her teaching methods integrate depth psychology, compassion training, and traditional Buddhist techniques as a means to help everyone reconnect to their inherent clarity and openness.

## Anicca Vata Sankhara

*Anicca vata sankhara* —  
"Impermanent, alas, are all formations!".

- Buddha

By Bhikkhu Bodhi



**Anicca vata sankhara** – «Impermanent, alas, are all formations!» – is the phrase used in Theravada Buddhist lands to announce the death of a loved one, but I have not quoted this line here in order to begin an obituary. I do so simply to introduce the subject of this essay, which is the word *sankhara* itself. Sometimes a single Pali word has such rich implications that merely to sit down and draw them out can shed as much light on the Buddha's teaching as a long expository article. This is indeed the case with the word *sankhara*. The word stands squarely at the heart of the Dhamma, and to trace its various strands of meaning is to get a glimpse into the Buddha's own vision of reality.

## Feature

The word *sankhara* is derived from the prefix *sam*, meaning «together,» joined to the noun *kara*, «doing, making.» *Sankharas* are thus «co-doings,» things that act in concert with other things, or things that are made by a combination of other things. Translators have rendered the word in many different ways: formations, confections, activities, processes, forces, compounds, compositions, fabrications, determinations, synergies, constructions. All are clumsy attempts to capture the meaning of a philosophical concept for which we have no exact parallel, and thus all English renderings are bound to be imprecise. I myself use «formations» and «volitional formations,» aware this choice is as defective as any other.

However, though it is impossible to discover an exact English equivalent for *sankhara*, by exploring its actual usage we can still gain insight into how the word functions in the «thought world» of the Dhamma. In the suttas the word occurs in three major doctrinal contexts. One is in the twelvefold formula of dependent origination (*paticca-samuppada*), where the *sankharas* are the second link in the series. They are said to be conditioned by ignorance and to function as a condition for consciousness. Putting together statements from various suttas, we can see that the *sankharas* are the kammically active volitions responsible for generating rebirth and thus for sustaining the onward movement of *samsara*, the round of birth and death. In this context *sankhara* is virtually synonymous with *kamma*, a word to which it is etymologically akin.

The suttas distinguish the *sankharas* active in dependent origination into three types: bodily, verbal, and mental. Again, the *sankharas* are divided into the meritorious, demeritorious, and "imperturbable," i.e., the volitions present in the four formless meditations. When

ignorance and craving underlie our stream of consciousness, our volitional actions of body, speech, and mind become forces with the capacity to produce results, and of the results they produce the most significant is the renewal of the stream of consciousness following death. It is the sankharas, propped up by ignorance and fueled by craving, that drive the stream of consciousness onward to a new mode of rebirth, and exactly where consciousness becomes established is determined by the kammic character of the sankharas. If one engages in meritorious deeds, the sankharas or volitional formations will propel consciousness toward a happy sphere of rebirth. If one engages in demeritorious deeds, the sankharas will propel consciousness toward a miserable rebirth. And if one masters the formless meditations, these «imperturbable» sankharas will propel consciousness toward rebirth in the formless realms.

A second major domain where the word sankharas applies is among the five aggregates. The fourth aggregate is the sankhara-khandha, the aggregate of volitional formations. The texts define the sankhara-khandha as the six classes of volition (cha cetanakaya): volition regarding forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile objects, and ideas. Though these sankharas correspond closely to those in the formula of dependent origination, the two are not in all respects the same, for the sankhara-khandha has a wider range. The aggregate of volitional formations comprises all kinds of volition. It includes not merely those that are kammically potent, but also those that are kammic results and those that are kammically inoperative. In the later Pali literature the sankhara-khandha becomes an umbrella category for all the factors of mind except feeling and perception, which are assigned to aggregates of their own. Thus the sankhara-khandha comes to include such ethically variable factors as contact, attention, thought, and energy; such wholesome factors as generosity, kindness, and wisdom; and such unwholesome factors as greed, hatred, and delusion. Since all these factors arise in conjunction with volition and participate in volitional activity, the early Buddhist teachers decided that the most fitting place to assign them is the aggregate of volitional formations.

The third major domain in which the word sankhara occurs is as a designation for all conditioned things. In this context the word has a passive derivation, denoting whatever is formed by a combination of conditions; whatever is conditioned, constructed, or compounded. In this sense it might be rendered simply «formations,» without the qualifying adjective. As bare formations, sankharas include all five aggregates, not just the fourth. The term also includes external objects and situations such as mountains, fields, and forests; towns and cities; food and drink; jewelry, cars, and computers.

The fact that sankharas can include both active forces and the things produced by them is highly significant and secures for the term its role as the cornerstone of the Buddha's philosophical vision. For what the Buddha emphasizes is that the sankharas in the two active senses – the volitional formations operative in dependent origination, and the kammic volitions in the fourth aggregate – construct the sankharas in the passive sense: «They construct the conditioned; therefore they are called volitional formations. And what are the conditioned things they construct? They construct the body, feeling, perception, volitional formations, and consciousness; therefore they are called volitional formations» (SN XXII.79).

Though external inanimate things may arise from purely physical causes, the sankharas that make up our personal being – the five aggregates – are all products of the kammically active sankharas that we engaged in our previous lives. In the present life as well the five aggregates are constantly being maintained, refurbished, and extended by the volitional activity we engage in now, which again becomes a condition for future existence. Thus, the Buddha teaches, it was our own kammically formative sankharas that built up our present edifice of personal being, and it is our present formative sankharas that are now building up the edifices of personal

being we will inhabit in our future lives. These edifices consist of nothing other than sankharas as conditioned things, the conditioned formations comprised in the five aggregates.

The most important fact to understand about sankharas, as conditioned formations, is that they are all impermanent: «Impermanent, alas, are formations.» They are impermanent not only in the sense that in their gross manifestations they will eventually come to an end, but even more pointedly because at the subtle, subliminal level they are constantly undergoing rise and fall, forever coming into being and then, in a split second, breaking up and perishing: «Their very nature is to arise and vanish.» For this reason the Buddha declares that all sankharas are suffering (sabbe sankhara dukkha) – suffering, however, not because they are all actually painful and stressful, but because they are stamped with the mark of transience. «Having arisen they then cease,» and because they all cease they cannot provide stable happiness and security.

To win complete release from suffering – not only from experiencing suffering, but from the unsatisfactoriness intrinsic to all conditioned existence – we must gain release from sankharas. And what lies beyond the sankharas is that which is not constructed, not put together, not compounded. This is Nibbana, accordingly called the Unconditioned – asankhata – the opposite of what is sankhata, a word which is the passive participle corresponding to sankhara. Nibbana is called the Unconditioned precisely because it's a state that is neither itself a sankhara nor constructed by sankharas; a state described as visankhara, «devoid of formations,» and as sabbasankhara-samatha, «the stilling of all formations.»

Thus, when we put the word sankhara under our microscope, we see compressed within it the entire worldview of the Dhamma. The active sankharas consisting in kammically active volitions perpetually create the sankhara of the five aggregates that constitute our being. As long as we continue to identify with the five aggregates (the work of ignorance) and to seek enjoyment in them (the work of craving), we go on spewing out the volitional formations that build up future combinations of aggregates. Just that is the nature of samsara: an unbroken procession of empty but efficient sankharas producing still other sankharas, riding up in fresh waves with each new birth, swelling to a crest, and then crashing down into old age, illness, and death. Yet on it goes, shrouded in the delusion that we're really in control, sustained by an ever-tantalizing, ever receding hope of final satisfaction.

When, however, we take up the practice of the Dhamma, we apply a brake to this relentless generation of sankharas. We learn to see the true nature of the sankharas, of our own five aggregates: as unstable, conditioned processes rolling on with no one in charge. Thereby we switch off the engine driven by ignorance and craving, and the process of kammic construction, the production of active sankharas, is effectively deconstructed. By putting an end to the constructing of conditioned reality, we open the door to what is ever-present but not constructed, not conditioned: the asankhata-dhatu, the unconditioned element. This is Nibbana, the Deathless, the stilling of volitional activities, the final liberation from all conditioned formations and thus from impermanence and death. Therefore, our verse concludes: "The subsiding of formations is blissful!"

Source : [https://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/bps-essay\\_43.html](https://www.accesstoinight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/bps-essay_43.html)



About the Writer : Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi is an American Buddhist monk from New York City. Ven. Bodhi has many important publications to his credit either as author, translator, or editor, most recently a translation of the entire Anguttara Nikaya, The numerical Discourses of the Buddha (Wisdom Publications 2012).

## Feature

# Suicide and its After Death

By Ven K Rathanasara

People commit suicide due to many different reasons and causes. It can stem from social issues (e.g. relationship problems, family issues), economic issues (e.g. unemployment, financial difficulties), ego or the inability to cope with failure/ stress (e.g. failing the exams), medical conditions or mental disorders (e.g. incurable diseases, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder), political disputes (e.g. as a way of protesting, as a strategy in war), or cultural issues (e.g. as a means to restoring honour).

Scientists and psychologists have studied and found that those with lower levels of serotonin (a neurological substance in the brain responsible for guarding the "happy" moods of human or which act as a defence against depression) have greater tendencies to commit suicide, and any form of suicide is always associated with some form of depression.

Spiritual leaders from many religions in the world have shared their views, generally against suicide, and they do not encourage the act of committing suicide. So what does Buddhism say about suicide? The Buddha recognises all human actions as either skillful actions which are ethically praiseworthy, spiritually beneficial, and karmically productive, or unskillful actions which are ethically blameworthy, spiritually harmful, and karmically destructive. Trying to end a problem by committing suicide is regarded in Buddhism as an unskillful action; doing so not only does not solve the problem, it is an unwholesome way out of a problem.

Human lives are so precious in the eyes of Buddhists, as this life is the culmination of many positive qualities and merits from past rebirths. Human beings have wonderful mental abilities and the potential to achieve perfect enlightenment, and the Buddha teaches us to use this precious human life to achieve enlightenment by following the Noble Eightfold Path to develop our ethical, spiritual, and intellectual

faculties. So if someone destroys their life by committing suicide, that person is in fact destroying this precious opportunity.

The Buddha teaches in the Second Noble Truth that craving is a cause of suffering; this includes craving for sensual pleasure, craving for existence, and craving for self-destruction. Hence, Buddhism recognises that suicide (self-destruction) is in fact deep rooted in the mind itself. The root cause of suicide is associated with hatred, in particular, the hatred for oneself. When things do not go as we wish, when we cannot perform as we expect, or when our body cannot give what we want, we might hate ourselves or have some form of self-destructive behaviour. Thus anyone could be potentially suicidal if such hatred with oneself is left unchecked. Hence when we practise Metta meditation, the first step is always to radiate boundless love and compassion towards oneself first, because only a peaceful person can give peace to the world, only a happy person can give happiness to the world, and only a person who is free from hatred can give love to the world.

So what happens after death in suicide cases? Buddhism recognises thought processes as rapid successions of thought after thought, and that the last thought of this life is the first thought and beginning of the next life. Since a person who is committing suicide is always associated with some degree of depression, misery, sadness, sorrow, hatred, anger, or pain, death by suicide will almost certainly lead to rebirth in lower realms of misery with possibly even greater sufferings, which counter the path towards enlightenment.

Those who end their own lives thinking that doing so would solve their problems, will in fact be born again and they will continue to suffer perhaps in more severe conditions. So suicide is not the solution to problems and is not encouraged in Buddhism.



Source: <https://dhammakami.org/2018/08/26/suicide-and-its-after-death/>



About the Writer: Venerable K. Rathanasara joined the famous Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple in Singapore as Resident Monk in 2001. After sixteen fruitful years at the temple, in 2018, he heralded a new beginning in his lifelong monastic career by dedicating full time to teaching the Dhamma at the Dhammakami Buddhist Society in Singapore, where he is the Founder and Spiritual Advisor. His Dhamma talks, Sutta classes, religious functions and retreats consistently witness a growing interest among the attendees.



## Buddhist Institute Sunday Dhamma School (BISDS)

**BUDDHIST INSTITUTE  
SUNDAY DHAMMA SCHOOL  
STAFF  
RECRUITMENT**

**Positions available :**

- ✓ Staff Welfare Committee member  
*Responsible for staff benefits and welfare*
- ✓ Registration Head and Committee member  
*Responsible to update and maintain staff and student registration*
- ✓ Project Head and Committee member  
*Plan and manage BISDS events*
- ✓ Student welfare Head and Committee member  
*Organise students welfare activities*
- ✓ Training Committee member  
*Coordinate training for staff*

**Requirements:**

1. Those who would like to volunteer their time for the betterment of the school and the Buddhist society
2. Team player
3. IT skills is an advantage

If interested, contact Sis Woon Lay Sean 012-206 8615

**周日佛教学校  
招募职员**

**待填补的职务:**

- ✓ 职员福利组员  
*负责职员的利益和福利*
- ✓ 职员注册组组长和组员  
*负责更新和维护职员与学生的注册*
- ✓ 计划组组长和组员  
*策划和管理学校活动*
- ✓ 学生福利组组长和组员  
*组织学生福利相关活动*
- ✓ 训练组组员  
*协调职员的训练*

**必备条件:**

1. 有意愿为改进学校和佛教社群奉献时间
2. 必须具备团队精神
3. 具备电脑知识将占优势

有兴趣者请联系 Sis Woon Lay Sean 012-206 8615

# BMV News & Events

## Past Events in June to August 2021.

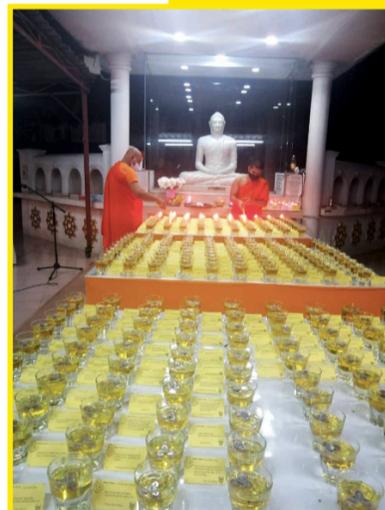
### A. Virtual Dhamma Sharing (Streamed online via BMV Public Facebook Page)

 <p><b>Dr G. Sumanapala</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Fri, 11th June</p> <p><b>The Vision and Mission of Buddhism</b></p>	 <p><b>Bhante M. Chandima Thera</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Sun, 13th June</p> <p><b>Five Thinking Patterns to Overcome Anger</b></p>	 <p><b>Bhante Prof. L. Siriniwasa Thera</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Fri, 18th June</p> <p><b>Dhammapada Verse 77 &amp; 78 :</b></p> <p>The Virtuous Cherish Good Advice</p>	 <p><b>Bhante M. Gnanawasa Thera</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Thurs, 24th June</p> <p><b>Dhammapada Verse 155 :</b></p> <p>Regrets in Old Age</p>	 <p><b>Bhante D. Vijitharatana</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p><b>Mandarin Talk -</b></p> <p>Fri, 25th June - Dhammapada Verse 15 &amp; 16</p> <p>Sat, 24th July - Dhammapada Verse 17 &amp; 18</p>	 <p><b>Ven. Dr. Dhammapala Thera</b> (Malaysia)</p> <p><b>Mandarin Talk -</b></p> <p>Sun, 27th June - Mangala Sutta Verse 6</p> <p>Sun, 25th July - Mangala Sutta Verse 7</p>
 <p><b>Dr Rathnasiri Rathnayaka</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Fri, 2nd July</p> <p><b>Buddhist Perspective on Wealth Creation and Management</b></p>	 <p><b>Bhante Dr. P. Yasassi Thera</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Sun, 4th July</p> <p><b>Buddhist and Modern Work Ethics</b></p> <p>Sun, 11th July</p> <p><b>How to be Successful in your Career</b></p>	 <p><b>Bhante G. Dhammananda</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Fri, 9th July</p> <p><b>Principles of Non-Decline</b></p>	 <p><b>Prof. Dr. Sumana Rathnayaka</b> (Sweden)</p> <p>Fri, 16th July</p> <p><b>Success in Work and Life</b></p> <p>Sun, 18th July</p> <p><b>Managing Stress and Emotions in Daily Life</b></p>	 <p><b>Bhante D. Sudewa Thera</b> (Sri Lanka)</p> <p>Fri, 30th July</p> <p><b>A Buddhist Perspective on How to Embrace Life</b></p>	

Note : The Dhamma Dana Series Organisers took a short break from 1st to 14th August after 16 months of continuously broadcasting dhamma talks.

### B. A Day to Remember All Fathers – 20th June

Buddhist Maha Vihara organized lighting of oil lamps and dedication messages from devotees to their fathers with blessings from the Maha Sangha for 2 days - 20th and 21st June. A big sadhu to the Maha Sangha for their blessings and the BMV Administration team for their dedication and effort.



### C. Esala Full Moon Puja and Observance of Vassa – 24th July

The Esala full moon celebrates the Buddha's first sermon, Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta as well as a few other significant events which also includes the commencement of Vassa for the Sangha. The Maha Sangha at BMV will observe the Vassa (Rains Retreat) for 3 months from 25th July to 20th October 2021. During this 3-month period, devotees are encouraged to join the daily online sutta chanting by the Sangha every day at 6.30pm.



### D. Covid 19 Pandemic Community Relief Projects

Since the start of the lockdown in Malaysia on 18th March 2020, we have continued to run support programs for those economically affected. In 2021 the following initiatives continued with:

#### Sinhala Community Support.

We continued to support 22 families in January, February and June 2021 and later 2 more families in Penang. The funds have been exhausted but many of the earlier contributors have indicated that they would like us to continue the support program and have started to contribute to this fund.

#### Myanmar Community Support

In June 2021, we again supported the Ashokarama Buddhist Temple in Puchong and the 81 Myanmar families with provisions. The Chief monk at this centre is Ven. Uttara.



#### BMV Community Support

We made an appeal to the Buddhist community as BMV was running low on select provisions due to the lockdown. The appeal was for items for internal use but the response was overwhelming. The excess provisions were used for FOV distribution, donated to the Malaysian Association of the Blind and to the Sri Lanka Workers Welfare Society. We also raised funds totalling RM27K of which RM10K was

channelled to the Theravada Buddhist Council of Malaysia to buy medical equipment for local hospitals.

### International Aid

We have limited ourselves from providing support for overseas projects due to the reservations we had about the ground support at the receiving country. However, we have to date provided aid through our resident monks stranded in Sri Lanka and also our regular Dhamma speakers to:



Sri Lanka via Ven Sumangala (RM5K ) for food distribution; via the Sri Lanka Workers Welfare Society and Ven Siridhamma (RM8K) medical equipment and food aid; via Ven Vineetha (RM 3K) for food aid; via Bhante N Jinananda (Canada) with USD1,000 to build a house for a poor family; via Bhante N Samitha Thera (USA) with RM1,000 for helping Covid 19 victims.



### BMV Covid 19 Community Relief Project

The extension of the MCO in May and June of 2021 brought tremendous hardship to the daily paid workers in Malaysia who are refugees, undocumented workers and B40 group. The inability to earn and buy daily provisions started a flurry of organisations providing aid in the form of provisions. We decided to take a slower and measured approach and started a project at BMV with the support of our inhouse teams of BISDS, FOV, Dhamma for the Deaf and KSDI from 1st July to 31st July. In the first 10 days we collected data based on proposers nominating names of individuals, families



and organisations that needed aid. We got names and contact of 888 families and 24 organisations. We set a target of RM300K needed to support them for 1 month. As of 8th August, we had donations of RM305,627 from 794 individual and corporate donors. The process of sourcing and buying started immediately. Packing of items started the weekend of 21st and 22nd August. Deliveries of the 888 packages benefiting 3552 individuals started on 23rd August and was completed by 28th August. Bro James Attygalle and his committed team of volunteers were at BMV daily from 20th August. They sorted, packed and loaded the packages. The sourcing and purchasing and getting corporate sponsorship was helped by Sis Jian.



The logistics of delivery was by Mr Mahinda of Jayalanka Cargo, Mr S W Tan of SW Builders and David Ng of FOV. Many other individual contributors such as Ruby Song and Josephine Hor identified deserving individuals, families and welfare homes. Staff of BMV worked tirelessly on this project since 1st July to solicit funds, source & purchase items and coordinated delivery .

A Thank You and a Huge SADHU to ALL of them.

**Report by Sirisena Perera**

## Friends of the Vihara

### Monthly Provisions to 3 Homes in Klang

Pusat Jagaan Kanak2 Berlian, Pusat Jagaan Ros Biru and Pusat Anak Yatim Sri Sai received monthly provisions from FOV volunteers.



# PEN PORTRAITS

## PORTRAITS OF 93 EMINENT DISCIPLES OF THE BUDDHA

### No 46. Kimbila Maha Thera ~ The nobility embraced the Order

Kimbila was an aristocrat through and through. He was a Sakyan nobleman and a kinsman of Gautama Buddha. Since the days of Padumuttara Buddha, he had enjoyed every royal comfort. From heavenly planes to earthly life, every conceivable comfort was his.

Finally, during this Dispensation, he was born to a Sakyan royal family. The Buddha's father King Suddhodana, who was much perturbed that there were thus far no followers of the Blessed One from his royal household, went about canvassing for support.

At last, six Sakyan Princes accompanied by their barber Upali, set out to meet the Buddha. Kimbila was in that august company, as were Anuruddha and his friend, the King Bhaddiya and Bhagu.

Kimbila who was destined to be a Maha Arahant, sought ordination, spurred by the dictates of his own conscience. He and the remaining five members as well as Upali the barber singularly distinguished themselves and all attained arahantship.

### No 47. Bhagu Maha Thera ~ A kinsman who stooped to conquer

He was a nobleman by birth. He was a Sakyan Prince. He too was in that distinguished company of six Sakyan Princes with their barber, Upali who sought ordination.

An incident occurred while he was a Bhikkhu. He was meditating. It was peripatetic, that is to say he was walking engrossed in meditation. He became drowsy, slipped and fell. He took that falling as text for meditation (Kammattana) and continued to meditate.

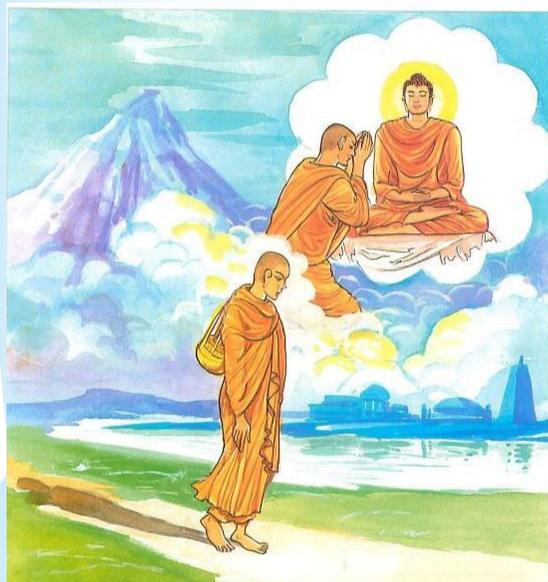
Human beings fall many a time. In one life alone, many falls have occurred. Falling was due to weakness. This was a fruitful theme to the Bhikkhu. In another case, when Patachara Maha Theri was washing her feet, she found that however much water she used, each time the water goes further and gets absorbed in the soil. This supplied to her the theme of inevitability of Death. In yet another case, when



Half the group of 6 Sakyan princes meeting the Buddha

Uppalavanna Maha Theri was in charge of the shrine room and was engaged in lighting lamps, the oil and wick gave her much matter to ponder about Kammic force and memories of her former existence came crowding upon her. Such simple things provided a raft for meditation that took people across the ocean of Samsara.

## Treasury of Truth - Dhammapada



### Chapter 1 - Yamaka Vagga (Twin Verses)

#### Verse 2 - Happiness Follows the Doer of Good

*Manopubbangama dhamma  
manosettha manomaya  
manasa ce pasannena  
bhasati va karoti va  
tato nam sukhamanveti  
chayava anapayini. (1:2)*

*Mind precedes all knowables,  
mind's their chief, mind-made are they.  
If with a clear, a confident mind  
One should either speak or act  
happiness follows caused by that,  
as one's shadow ne'er departing.*

### Explanatory Translation

All that man experiences springs out of his thoughts. If his thoughts are good, the words and deeds will also be good. The result of good thoughts, words and deeds will be happiness. This happiness never leaves the person whose thoughts are good. Happiness will always follow him like his shadow that never leaves him.

### The Story of Mattakundali

While residing at the Jetavana monastery in Savatthi, the Buddha uttered Verse (2) of this book, with reference to Matthakundali, a young Brahmin.

Matthakundali was a young brahmin, whose father, Adinnapubbaka, was very stingy and never gave anything in charity. Even the gold ornaments for his only son were made by himself to save payment for workmanship. When his son fell ill, no physician was consulted, until it was too late. When he realized that his son was dying, he had the youth carried outside on to the verandah, so that people coming to his house would not see his possessions.

On that morning, the Buddha arising early from his deep meditation of compassion saw, in his Net of Knowledge, Matthakundali lying on the verandah. So when entering Savatthi for alms-food with his disciples, the Buddha stood near the door of the brahmin Adinnapubbaka. The Buddha sent forth a ray of light to attract the attention of the youth, who was facing the interior of the house. The youth saw the Buddha; and as he was very weak he could only profess his faith mentally. But that was enough. When he passed away with his heart in devotion to the Buddha, he was reborn in the Tavatimsa celestial world.

From his celestial abode the young Matthakundali, seeing his father mourning over him at the cemetery, appeared to the old man in the likeness of his old self. He told his father about his rebirth in the Tavatimsa world and also urged him to approach and invite the Buddha to a meal. At the house of Adinnapubbaka, the question of whether one could or could not be reborn in a celestial world simply by mentally professing profound faith in the Buddha, without giving in charity or observing the moral precepts, was brought up. So the Buddha willed that Matthakundali should appear in person; Matthakundali soon appeared fully decked with celestial ornaments and told them about his rebirth in the Tavatimsa world. Then only, the audience became convinced that the son of the brahmin Adinnapubbaka by simply devoting his mind to the Buddha had attained much glory.



**How to Utilise Your Time Effectively during this Covid-19 Lockdown**

By Lina Sutton

Unprecedented! That's the word being used for the current public health emergency surrounding COVID-19 and the coronavirus outbreak. Malaysians are still being asked - and ordered - to alter their lifestyles by staying home, eliminating public activities and practicing social distancing. This is especially important for our most vulnerable population, people over age 60, and those with underlying health issues.

It troubles me that so many aging adults are homebound until the coronavirus is under control. Considering our rising daily reported numbers here, it could be months.

Regardless of how long this pandemic grips our country, I know from experience that loneliness and social isolation often result in fear, anxiety and depression among seniors. This not only impacts their mental health, but also physiological health.

In preparation for this article I decided to do a short term observational study of 6 uncles and aunts of different demographics and social economic status to learn how they are keeping themselves occupied through this lockdown.

All of them are extremely bored and frustrated that they are unable to socialise with family members and friends who don't live in the same household.

Nevertheless, to help keep their minds and bodies busy, here are some activities that I found they were indulging in and you could try them out too:

**1. Old movies** - Many of us have old home videos or movies featuring family fun or our favorite performers. Furthermore, there are so many television channels and streaming platforms from which to choose, virtually any movie or classic TV show can be found and binged! Subscribe to Netflix or Find your favourites on YouTube, A movie a day.

**2. Photos** - Whether you have boxes of old photos or a SIM card full on your phone, now's a great time to review them and place in albums, or sort into files on the computer. You will be surprised how many sweet memories this activity will bring back.

**3. Board and Card Games** - Checkers, Chess, Carom, Mah-jong, Scrabble, Solitaire, Gin Rummy, Backgammon, etc are games that can be played alone, or virtually online. Bring out your grandchildren's mix board game box and start exploring. "A study published by Dr Robert Wilson and a team at Rush University Medical Center, tracked almost 1,100 people with an average age of 80, for nearly five years, and found that playing trivia games and other forms of board games helped stave-off mental decline by promoting activity changes in the temporal and hippocampus regions of the brain.

**4. Puzzles** - Puzzles are a great way to pass time, and studies have shown improvements in memory when seniors worked on puzzles for as little as 45 minutes a day, twice per week.

**5. Brain-Training Computer Games** - "A study of 2,800 people over the age of 65, has found that those who did a type of brain-

training intended to boost a person's brain processing speed were 29% less likely to develop dementia over a ten-year period," says Mallory Locklear.

**6. Memory Boxes** - Memory boxes are a good way of stimulating and recalling favorite memories. Build a collection of old photos, items reminiscent of work or volunteering, and any objects that mean something and put them in the box to peruse when bored. If someone is especially agitated, looking at these objects may have a calming effect.

**7. Books** - You probably have a small library from which to choose, so gather a few paperbacks and do some reading. There are numerous selections of audio books that you can listen to and enjoy too. You can find them on YouTube or if willing to pay - Audible.

**8. Gardening** - It's a good time to start an indoor green corner and revamp your garden outside.

"Gardening provides a change of scene and will also ensure you both get some fresh air and exercise. It may be a good idea for the person to have his or her own patch of garden to dig and plant in. Weeding, trimming lawn edges, sweeping paths, and general tidying in the garden can all be tasks many people with dementia can cope with," Alzheimer Scotland.

**9. Exercise** - Chair exercises, walking, riding a stationary bike, yoga, dance, Tai Chi, and almost anything that gets the body moving, will help strengthen muscles and improve mood and mental acuity by increasing oxygen and blood flow to the brain.



**10. Music** - all have our favorite tunes, musicians, bands, and genres of music. Turn on your music device and crank up your playlist. If you don't have one, it's time to create one. Music has a way of soothing the soul!

**11. Communicate** - Reach out to family, friends, and neighbors to see how they're doing during this crazy time. The recipient of a call, text, email, letter or card will feel very special and it will be good emotional support for you both! Weekly Zoom, Facetime or Skype sessions with family, friends and neighbors are also something you can do.

**12. Short online courses** - Be a life-long learner. Online sites such as Coursera and Udemy offer free short online course on virtually any subject. Try one you always wanted to learn. Here's a couple you can explore - i) Science of Wellbeing by University of Yale <https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being> ii) Buddhism and Modern Psychology by University of Princeton <https://www.coursera.org/learn/science-of-meditation>

I hope this provides a few fresh ideas to help you cope with being homebound during this Pandemic. Having a schedule that includes 2 or more of these activities everyday will surely keep you busy. Mix your activities around throughout the week. Spark some excitement! Stay safe and have fun! This too will pass.....



*About the Writer : A devotee who frequents Buddhist Maha Vihara, Lina Sutton provides consulting, training and coaching for executive clients, work units and individuals. She has extensive experience specialising in executive coaching, health coaching, organizational development, program design and leadership development that spans over 20 years across a wide array of industries. She is a certified master practitioner of wellness and nutrition. She is also a certified coach, health coach and a certified pranica healer.*

# Faith in a Time of Crisis



Psychologists' research shows why some people can find peace during the COVID-19 pandemic, while others may be struggling with their faith.

By Bryan Goodman

Kay Bajwa, a real estate agent in Washington, D.C., spends her time in quarantine praying five times a day and working with members of her mosque to find ways to help the less fortunate during these difficult times.

"This whole ordeal is bringing us closer together and closer to Allah," she says. "Spending time praying and being with him is comforting."

Bajwa is not alone in turning to her faith to weather life's storms. Religion and belief are now seen by many researchers and clinicians as an important way to cope with trauma and distress thanks to research over the last three decades.

"Religion was largely looked upon as an immature response to difficult times," says Kenneth Pargament, PhD, professor emeritus of psychology at Bowling Green State University, who since the 1980s has been on the forefront of the research on religion and resilience.

Despite the attitudes he faced at the time, Pargament and a handful of others pressed on, conducting research on the impact of religion on people's mental health.

That research identified positive and negative forms of religious coping – as well as evidence that how people experience and express their faith has implications for their well-being and health. "People who made more use of positive religious coping methods had better outcomes than those who struggled with God, their faith or other people about sacred matters," Pargament says.

### Positive and negative aspects

What are those positive effects? Research shows that religion can help people cope with adversity by:

Encouraging them to reframe events through a hopeful lens. Positive religious reframing can help people transcend stressful times by enabling them to see a tragedy as an opportunity to grow closer to a higher power or to improve their lives, as is the case with Bajwa.

Fostering a sense of connectedness. Some people see religion as making them part of something larger than themselves. This can happen through prayer or meditation, or through taking part in religious meetings, listening to spiritual music or even walking outside.

Cultivating connection through rituals. Religious rituals and rites of passage can help people acknowledge that something momentous

is taking place. These events often mark the beginning of something, as is the case with weddings, or the end of something, as is the case with funerals. They help guide and sustain people through life's most difficult transitions.

"It is extremely important that people use their beliefs in a way that makes them feel empowered and hopeful," says Thomas Plante, PhD, a professor of psychology at Santa Clara University. "Because it can be remarkably helpful in terms of managing stress during times like these."

Unfortunately, religious beliefs may also undermine healing during stressful times. These negative religious expressions include:

Feeling punished by God or feeling angry toward a higher being. Trauma and tragedy can challenge conceptions of God as all-loving and protective. As a result, some people struggle in their relationship with God and experience feelings of anger, abandonment or being punished by a higher power.

Putting it all "in God's hands." When people engage in "religious deferral," they believe God is in charge of their well-being and may not take the necessary steps to protect themselves. One example of this deferral is church leaders who say God will protect their congregations as they hold church services in defiance of physical distancing guidelines aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19.

Falling into moral struggles. People can have difficulty squaring their behavior with their moral and spiritual values. For example, health-care providers who are on the front lines of treating coronavirus patients may describe the anguish they feel as they are being forced to decide how to allocate limited life-sustaining resources, decisions that put them in the uncomfortable role of playing God.

### Takeaways for people of faith – and those without

Even though you cannot congregating due to physical distancing rules, there are many ways to lift your spirits right now, says Plante. "You can play a spiritual or uplifting song, you can join fellow congregants on Zoom or you can decide to help other people by giving to those in need." Bajwa says she is inspired by both the practical and spiritual information she is getting during Zoom calls with members of her mosque.

"We are inviting doctors and financial advisors to hold seminars on key topics during our Zoom meetings, and they are giving us a lot of information that is helping us with all of the issues that are popping up during this difficult period," she says. "Our leaders are coupling the seminars with emotional and spiritual support, which is really helpful."

Plante says that the benefits of religion are not exclusive to believers. "There are so many religious practices that are now used by non-believers," he says. "Yoga comes from Hinduism and mindful meditation from Buddhism, yet agnostics, atheists and people of all belief systems now take part in these traditions."

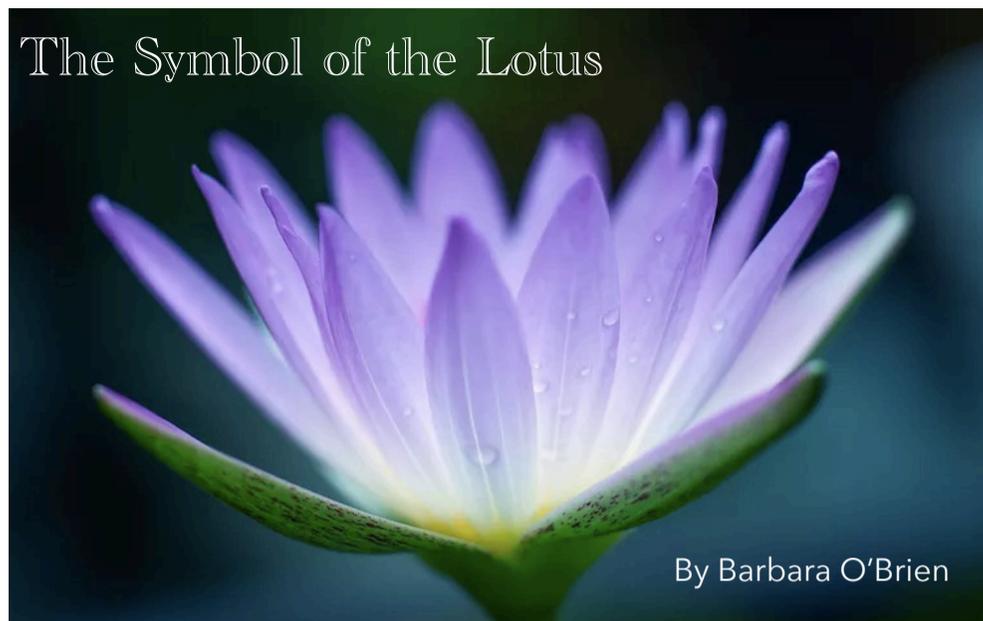
Plante says atheists and agnostics can seek inspiration in literature, nature and by connecting with others, but he notes that the world's religions are ready-made for when the world is turned on its head.

"Religion has been helping people get through hard times for thousands of years," he says. "It's tested and ready to go at a moment's notice."

Source : <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/faith-crisis>

# Buddhist Art, Symbols & Literature

## The Symbol of the Lotus



The lotus has been a symbol of purity since before the time of the Buddha, and it blooms profusely in Buddhist art and literature. Its roots are in muddy water, but the lotus flower rises above the mud to bloom clean and fragrant.

In Buddhist art, a fully blooming lotus flower signifies enlightenment, while a closed bud represents a time before enlightenment. Sometimes a flower is partly open, with its center hidden, indicating that enlightenment is beyond ordinary sight.

The mud nourishing the roots represents our messy human lives. It is in the midst of our human experiences and our suffering that we seek to break free and bloom. But while the flower rises above the mud, the roots and stem remain in the mud, where we live our lives. A Zen verse says, "May we exist in muddy water with purity, like a lotus."

Rising above the mud to bloom requires great faith in oneself, in the practice, and in the Buddha's teaching. So, along with purity and enlightenment, a lotus also represents faith.

### The Lotus in the Pali Canon

The historical Buddha used the lotus symbolism in his sermons. For example, in the Dona Sutta (Pali Tipitika, Anguttara Nikaya 4.36), the Buddha was asked if he was a god. He replied,

"Just like a red, blue, or white lotus—born in the water, grown in the water, rising up above the water—stands unsmudged by the water, in the same way I—born in the world, grown in the world, having overcome the world—live unsmudged by the world. Remember me, brahman, as 'awakened.'" [Thanissaro Bhikkhu translation]

In another section of the Tipitaka, the Theragatha ("verses of the elder monks"), there is a poem attributed to the disciple Udayin:

As the flower of a lotus,  
Arisen in water, blossoms,  
Pure-scented and pleasing the mind,  
Yet is not drenched by the water,  
In the same way, born in the world,  
The Buddha abides in the world;  
And like the lotus by water,  
He does not get drenched by the world.

[Andrew Olendzki translation]

### Other Uses of the Lotus as a Symbol

According to legend, before the Buddha was born, his mother, Queen Maya, dreamed of a white bull elephant carrying a white lotus in its trunk.

Buddhas and bodhisattvas are often portrayed as either seated or standing on a lotus pedestal. Amitabha Buddha is nearly always sitting or standing on a lotus, and he often holds a lotus as well.

The Lotus Sutra is one of the most highly regarded Mahayana sutras.

The well-known mantra Om Mani Padme Hum roughly translates into "the jewel in the heart of the lotus."

In meditation, the lotus position requires folding one's legs so that the right foot is resting on the left thigh, and vice versa.

According to a classic text attributed to Japanese Soto Zen Master Keizan Jokin (1268-1325), "The Transmission of the Light (Denkoroku)," the Buddha once gave a silent sermon in which he held up a gold lotus. The disciple Maha Kassapa smiled. The Buddha approved Maha Kassapa's realization of enlightenment, saying, "I have the treasury of the eye of truth, the ineffable mind of Nirvana. These I entrust to Kassapa"

### Significance of Color



It is said the color of a lotus conveys a particular meaning.

A blue lotus usually represents the perfection of wisdom. It is associated with the bodhisattva Manjusri. In some schools, the blue lotus is never in full bloom, and its center cannot be seen.

A gold lotus represents the realized enlightenment of all Buddhas.

A pink lotus represents the Buddha and the history and succession of Buddhas.

In esoteric Buddhism, a purple lotus is rare and mystical and might convey many things, depending on the number of flowers clustered together.

A red lotus is associated with Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion. It also is associated with the heart and with our original, pure nature.

The white lotus signifies a mental state purified of all poisons.

Source : <https://www.learnreligions.com/the-symbol-of-the-lotus-449957>



About the Writer : Barbara O'Brien is a Zen Buddhist practitioner who studied at Zen Mountain Monastery. She is the author of "Rethinking Religion" and has covered religion for The Guardian, Tricycle.org, and other outlets.

# Projects

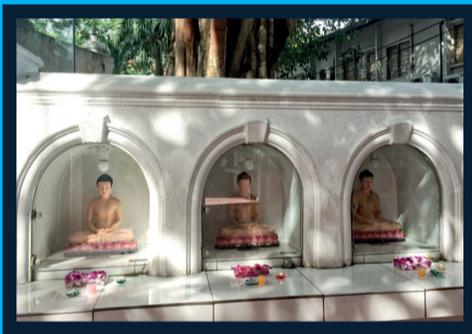
## LEND A HAND

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 realise the following:



**SHRINE HALL** i) Heritage Refurbishment  
 - Balance Required - RM111,850  
 ii) Outside Hall Lights  
 - Balance Required - RM39,400

### Bodhi Tree Area



**Stainless Steel Panels with tampered glass for all 56 Buddha statues' Huts**  
 Balance Required – RM15,670

### Buddha Frieze for the sponsorship @ Meditation Pavilion, BMV



**Seated Buddha Frieze**  
**RM 18,000 each**

34 statues left to be sponsored



**Standing Buddha Frieze**  
**RM 38,000 each**

2 statues left to be sponsored

Sponsorship can be made in Your Name or In Memory of a dearly departed family member or friend

# WISMA DHAMMA CAKRA



**21 Lotus Pillars available for sponsorship at RM25,000 each.**

Each pillar is named after the Buddha's core teachings

PILLARS ON MEZZANINE FLOOR (18 nos) TEN MERITORIOUS ACTIONS & EIGHTFOLD NOBLE PATH	8 pillars available for sponsorship
SAMMA DITTHI (Right View)	Available
SAMMA VACA (Right Speech)	Available
SAMMA AJIVA (Right Livelihood)	Available
SAMMA SATI (Right Mindfulness)	Available
SAMMA SAMKAPPA (Right Resolve)	Available
SAMMA KAMMANTA (Right Action)	Available
SAMMA VAYAMA (Right Effort)	Available
SAMMA SAMADHI (Right Concentration)	Available

PILLARS ON LEVEL 1 (5 Nos) FIVE PRECEPTS	3 pillars available for sponsorship
ADINNA-DANA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from taking things not given)	Available
KAMESU MICCHA-CARA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from missing sexual misconduct)	Available
SURA MERAYA-MAJJA-PAMADATTHANA VERAMANI SIKKHA PADAM SAMADIYAMI (I observe the precept to abstain from taking anything causing intoxication or heedlessness)	Available



**Dhammacakra Wheel**  
**Balance Required:**  
**RM200,000**

# General Items for Temple and Devotees' Use

Items displayed are for illustration purpose only



Supply and Install Visual System at 1st Floor, Puja Hall (for dhamma talks and retreats)

Estimated Cost : RM25,730



Meditation cushion with cushion

Big 2 feet x 2 feet @ RM65 x 62 nos = RM4,030

Small 10 x 14 x 46mm

@ RM55 x 106 nos = RM5,830

Total Estimated Cost : RM 10,120



Wireless Head Set Microphone

Balance Required : RM2,300



Microphone System

Estimated Cost : RM4,800



10-seater Round Tables (50 tables)

Estimated Cost : RM9,000



Mobile Stage with Skirting and Staircase

Estimated Cost : RM7,700



Skirting for Banquet Table (for 100 tables - 6 ft x 2 ft)

Estimated Cost : RM9,500

## Vehicle for Transport



Balance Required: RM77,500

## CONTACT BMV ADMIN OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE

Account Name:

**Buddhist Maha Vihara**

Account Number: 292-00-01161-8

Bank: Hong Leong Bank

TEL: 03 - 2274 1141 / 011- 2689 6123

eMAIL: info@buddhistmahavihara.org

Tax Exempt Receipts can be issued for sponsorship

### Partial Sponsorship

Names of Sponsors for Amounts RM500 and above

*Buddha Statues Huts at the Bodhi Tree Area*

Mandy Chong & Family - RM1,000

*With the merits accrued by your generous donations, May you and your family be blessed and protected by the Noble Triple Gem*

*Sadhu.....Sadhu.....Sadhu*

### PRAYER FOR FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING

May all beings everywhere plagued with sufferings of body and mind quickly be freed from their illnesses.

May those frightened cease to be afraid, and may those bound be free.

May the powerless find power, and may people think of befriending each other.

May those who find themselves in trackless, fearful wilderness-- the children, the aged, the unprotected-- be guarded by beneficent celestials.



# Buddhist Maha Vihara (Established in 1894)

The Vihara was founded by the Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, which is the oldest registered Buddhist Society in the country. The Vihara was elevated to that of a Maha Vihara since 1994 with the full complement of the three main sacred objects of veneration namely the Buddha image (1894); the Bodhi Tree (1911) and the International Buddhist Pagoda (1971). Being the oldest Buddhist temple in the Klang Valley, we have served the community selflessly as follows:

## Religious Activities

- Daily Buddha Puja at designated hours
- Full Moon and New Moon Buddha Puja
- Bojjangha Puja for good health
- Dhamma Talks
- Meditation Classes and Retreats
- 8 Precept Programme
- Chanting Classes
- Wesak Programme and Candle Light Procession
- All Night Chanting to invoke Blessings
- Kathina Ceremony
- Novitiate Programme



## Socio-Welfare Activities

- Weekly Feeding the Homeless and Needy
- Festive Season Midnight Aid Distribution to the Homeless
- Grocery Aid Distribution to Welfare Homes and Orang Asli Settlements
- Weekly Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic
- Pursuing inter-religious harmony through the Malaysian Consultative Council for Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and Taoism (MCCBCHST)

## Education Programme

- FREE Buddhist education for children and adults via the Sunday School since 1929.
- Systematic tertiary Buddhist education.
- Distributed more than 2 MILLION free publications and CDs/MP3/ DVD/VCD in 30 languages since the 1950s.
- Dharma for the Deaf class since 1999

## VISION

To be a leading international center for the Learning, Practise and Dissemination of the Buddha Dhamma

## MISSION

To provide a conducive environment to:

- promote scholarship and study of the Buddha Dhamma
- propagate the Buddha Dhamma
- be the focus of Buddhist activities for the larger community
- foster Theravada Buddhist cultural and traditional practices

## Six Strategic Objectives

To be the Buddhist center of choice for:

1. Pariyatti - Structured Buddhist education for children and adults.
2. Patipatti, Pativedha - Regular programmes for the practice and the realization of the Buddha Dhamma.
3. Dhammadutta - Dhamma materials for the masses locally and abroad
4. Karuna - Compassion in Action
5. Kalyana Mitrata - Networking and Fellowship with Buddhist and non-Buddhist organisations to sustain the Buddha Sasana.
6. Samajivikata - Financial viability while committing to Religious and Cultural Obligations.

## Four Ennoblers

1. Loving Kindness
2. Compassion
3. Altruistic Joy
4. Equanimity

## Motto

Go forth, for the good, happiness and welfare of the many, out of compassion for the world.

## 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

## 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

Afternoon Puja & Talk

### Sat

- 8.00pm - 9.30pm  
- 8.30am - 10.30am

Dhamma Talk

### Sun

- 8.30am - 10.30am  
- 2.00pm - 7.00pm

Qigong Practise  
Tai Chi Practise  
Degree & Master's in Buddhism Classes

- 7.30pm - 8.30pm

Bojjhanga Puja

- 8.30am - 9.30am

Morning Puja

- 9.30am - 11.00am

Abhidamma Class

- 9.30am - 12.00noon

Sunday Dhamma School for Children & for Adults

- 10.00am - 11.30am

Dhamma Talk

- 10.00am - 2.00pm

Traditional Chinese Medicine  
(Every Sunday except Public Holiday)

- 11.00am - 12.30pm

Pali / Sutta Class

- 1.30pm - 5.00pm

Sinhala Language Classes

- 2.00pm - 7.00pm

Sinhala Cultural Dance Classes

- 3.00pm - 4.30pm

Diploma & Degree in Buddhism Classes

- 5.00pm

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.

**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**



**BUDDHIST MAHA VIHARA**

123 Jalan Berhala, Brickfields 50470 Kuala Lumpur.

Tel: 03-2274 1141 H/P: 6011-2689 6123

Email: info@buddhistmahavihara.org

Website: www.buddhistmahavihara.org

www.bisds.org