



# Minnesota Buddhist

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## *Practical Vipassana*

**Bhante Gunaratana**

You may have heard that you should be mindful all the time, whether you are at home or in the office, or on the bus or in your car or in somebody else's car, etc. You may interpret this advice to mean that you should keep your mind focused all the time on your breath. While driving, if you simply keep your mind on the breath you probably will get into some problems, such as losing your attention to your driving or forgetting your driving and you may have an accidents.

Sometimes you may think "to be mindful all the time" means to pay attention only to what ever you are doing at that particular time. This, of course, is what any person who is serious enough in his/her work normally does. An artist, painter, writer, singer, composer, thinking, speaker, shooter, cook, etc. must pay attention to whatever they do at any time they are engaged in their work.

Not only human beings do this. You may have noticed cats paying total attention to their prey in order to catch them without disturbing their prey by making any mistakes. Tigers, lions and crocodiles pay total attention to what they are going to catch. You may have noticed cranes standing on one single spot for a long time to catch a fish.

Sheep dogs pay total attention to the movements of sheep so they can run very quickly to direct the herd in the right direction.

Unfortunately neither cat, crane, nor sheep dog can remove their greed, lust etc., or cultivate an iota of insight by merely paying total attention to their objects.

Paying attention to whatever you are doing at any time is not going to eliminate your greed, hatred, and ignorance. This, in fact, is exactly what you do in tranquility meditation or concentration meditation. By paying attention to one thing at a time you cannot get rid of your psychic irritation. You may focus your mind on one single object for fifty years and still your psychic irritation will remain unchanged in your mind. One person may observe all the moral rules. Another may learn all the texts by heart. Someone else may gain concentration. Another may spend his/her entire life in solitude. All of them might think that they can experience supreme liberation from all psychic irritation, which no ordinary person can attain. But none of them can have that experience without destroying all the psychic irritation. Therefore in addition to all they practice they also must remove all their psychic impurities in order to experience the bliss of emancipation from all kinds of pain.

What is missing in focusing total attention to one single object all the time is wisdom. Your total attention should be coupled with wise attention. What is wise attention?

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It is attention accompanied by the three wholesome roots. What are the wholesome roots? They are generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom. This means that when you pay attention to something always attempt to pay attention without greed, hatred or delusion, but with the thought of generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom. These three are called wholesome roots; greed, hatred and delusion are called unwholesome roots. Don't let your mind be affected by unwholesome roots when you pay attention to something. Let the thought of generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom dominate your mind while paying attention to anything.

When you pay attention to pots and pans as you wash, you may not need any loving-kindness, generosity or wisdom towards them. You are cultivating mindfulness not for pots and pans, but for living beings. You should pay attention to any thought regarding yourself, or any other living beings. Have mindful reflection while wearing your clothes, eating your food, drinking your water, talking to someone, listening to sound, seeing an object, and walking or driving. When you pay total attention with wise consideration or mindful reflection, your greed, hatred and delusion fade away, because in your wise attention generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom are active. Your thoughts of generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom have the power of minimizing your greed, hatred and delusion while you are engaged in any activity.

While paying attention to something, without wise consideration or wise attention, you may inadvertently develop greed, hatred and confusion. You may see an object, for instance. That object may happen to be attractive, beautiful or pleasing to your eyes or it may be unattractive. At that time if you do not have wise attention, you may then end up cultivating greed or resentment for the object or you may get utterly confused ideas about the object. Or you may think

that the object is perma-

nent instead of realizing that it is impermanent, satisfactory instead of unsatisfactory, or having a self instead of being selfless.

You may then ask how your generous thoughts can get rid of your greedy thoughts, because the greedy thoughts want to cling to the object, or grasp it. When you perceive the object with greed, your mind will cling to it and not open to any thought of letting go of greed. You may not want to take your eyes away from the object. In fact, at that time your mind temporarily becomes blind to any thought of generosity. Even if you wish to let go of the attachment to it you may do so with great reluctance. You may feel that you are generous. But your generosity is only to fulfill your greedy purpose, like gaining something in return, or gaining recognition or becoming famous by being generous. Greed has very strong super glue in it. At the very first contact with the desirable object the mind sticks fast to it. Letting go of that object is as painful as cutting off of a limb or some flesh of your body, and you cannot let go of that object from your mind. This is where you really need your wise attention. This is where you must learn to see impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and selflessness in the object you are watching. Your wise consideration indicates that neither the object you perceive nor your feeling or sensation regarding the object remains the same even for two consecutive moments. You will not have the same sensation later on. You change, the object you perceive changes. With wise attention you will see that everything is impermanent.

This knowledge of impermanence allows you to let go of your resentment. When you see with wisdom that everything that is unsatisfactory is impermanent, then you see the connection between unsatisfactoriness and greed.

As you are attached to an impermanent object you will be disappointed with the change of the object that you are so attached to. When you have wise consideration you see that which is impermanent and unsatisfactory is without self.

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Then you might think “Ah! Since this object is going to change, I must be quick and smart to take the advantage of this object right now and enjoy myself as quickly as possible before it disappears. Tomorrow it won't be there”. Here you must remember haste makes waste. If you make a hasty decision and do something foolish, you will regret it later on. Sometimes you are attracted to a person, for instance, and grab hold of him/her without giving much consideration to him/her, and later on you will find many faults in that person. In any such hasty decision there is no mindfulness. You cannot beat the change nor can you stop it by making any foolish attempt. When your mindfulness is well developed, then even in haste you make a right decision. The only thing that makes sense in rushing to beat impermanence is to step back and check your own mind and see whether or not you make the decision with wise consideration. When you are mindful you will know how to take the advantage of the current moment so that you will not regret it later on. Any mindful decision you make will make you happy and peaceful and never make you regret it later on.

Always remember that **mindfulness is the state of mind full of generosity, loving-kindness, and wisdom together with compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. Any time you pay attention to anything you must ask whether your mind is full of these factors. If not you are not mindful.**

When you have generosity in the mind you will let go of any attractive sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought without any hesitation. You should certainly recognize them to be attractive in the conventional sense. Know that it is because of their attractiveness that people become attached to them and get involved in them. The deeper they get involved in them the deeper is their suffering. When you have loving-

kindness in your mind you will not try to reject any sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought if they happen to be unattractive. Mindfully perceive them with the thought of impermanence. When any sight, sound, smell, taste, touch or thought appears to be identical with self, look at it as an unreal concept inculcated in your mind by conditioning through generations of wrong notions and look at it with wisdom.

Mindfulness is not carefulness. It is not smartness. Anybody can be careful and smart. A man walking on a wire three hundred feet above ground is careful. Remember those gymnasts performing all kinds of balancing feats. Numerous daredevils who climb very steep mountains, across rocks, slippery places, rivers, and so on are very careful. Many thieves are very smart and outwit the police. Many drug dealers, bank robbers, criminals are very smart. None of them can be considered to be mindful.

**Mindfulness is that state of mind which reflects upon itself not to get caught in greed, hatred and ignorance, which cause suffering to yourself, to others or to both.**

When we ask people not to cultivate resentment some people ask us how can you live without resentment? This is the miracle of mindfulness. When you practice mindfulness you can learn to do most difficult things easily. Not becoming resentful, lustful, or confused is very difficult. Through constant training in mindfulness you learn to live without resentment, lust or confusion. Moreover to be mindful is more difficult than to be unmindful, and you learn to do that more difficult one more easily than the easier one. For this reason the Buddha said:

**Sukaram sadhuna sadhu - sadhu papena dukkaram  
papam papena sukaram - papam ariyena dukkaram.**

For the good to do what is good is easy

For the bad to do what is bad is easy

For the bad to do what is good is difficult

For the noble to do what is bad is difficult. (Udana 5.8)

This simply means that which is most difficult at the beginning becomes easy through constant practice.



## *Refuge in the Buddha*

By Bhikkhu Bodhi

The first step in entering the Buddhist path is going for refuge to the Triple Gem, and the first of the three gems that we approach as refuge is the Buddha, the Enlightened One. Because the act of going for refuge to the Buddha marks the beginning of a new chapter in our life, it is worth our while to repeatedly pause and reflect upon the significance of this momentous step. Too often we are prone to take our first steps for granted. Yet it is only if we review these steps from time to time in a deepening awareness of their implications that we can be sure the following steps we take will bring us closer to our desired destination.

The going for refuge to the Buddha is not a single action which occurs only once and is then completed with absolute finality. It is, or should be, a continually evolving process which matures in tandem with our practice and understanding of the Dhamma. To go for refuge does not imply that at the outset we already possess a clear grasp of the dangers that make a refuge necessary or of the goal towards which we aspire. Comprehension of these matters grows gradually over time. But to the extent that we have actually gone for refuge with sincere intent, we should make an earnest effort to sharpen and deepen our understanding of the objects to which we have turned as the basis for our deliverance.

In going for refuge to the Buddha it is most essential at the outset to clarify our conception of what a Buddha is and how he functions as a refuge. If such clarification is lacking, our sense of refuge can easily become tainted by erroneous views. We may ascribe to the Buddha a status he never claimed for himself, as when we regard him as the incarnation of a god, as the emanation of the

Absolute, or as a personal savior. On the other hand, we may detract from the exalted status to which the Buddha is properly entitled, as when we regard him simply as a benevolent sage, as an unusually astute Asiatic philosopher, or as a genius of meditative technology.

A correct view of the Buddha's nature would see him in terms of the title he assigned to himself: as a Fully Self-Enlightened One (*samma sambuddha*). He is self-enlightened because he has awakened to the essential truths of existence entirely on his own, without a teacher or guide. He is fully enlightened because he has comprehended these truths completely, in all their ramifications and implications. And as a Buddha he has not only fathomed these truths himself, but has also taught them to the world so that others may awaken from the long sleep of ignorance and attain the fruits of liberation.

Taking refuge in the Buddha is an act anchored in a particular historical individual: the recluse Gotama, the scion of the Sakyan clan, who lived and taught in the Ganges valley in the fifth century B.C. When we take refuge in the Buddha, we rely upon this historical individual and the body of instruction that stems from him. It is important to stress this point in view of the fashionable notion that taking refuge in the Buddha means that we take refuge in "the Buddha-mind within ourselves" or in "the universal principle of enlightenment." Such ideas, allowed to go unchecked, can lead to the belief that anything we contrive in the flights of our imagination can qualify as true Dhamma. To the contrary, the Buddhist tradition insists that when we go for refuge to the Buddha, we place ourselves under the guidance of one who is distinctly different from ourselves, one who has scaled heights that we have barely begun to glimpse.

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But when we rely upon the recluse Gotama as our refuge, we do not apprehend him merely as a particular individual, a wise and sensible sage. We apprehend him rather as a Buddha.

It is his Buddhahood -- his possession of the full range of excellent qualities that come with perfect enlightenment -- that makes the recluse Gotama a refuge. In any cosmic epoch, a Buddha is that being who first breaks through the dark mass of ignorance encompassing the world and rediscovers the lost path to Nibbana, the cessation of suffering. He is the pioneer, the trailblazer, who discovers the path and proclaims the path so that others, by following his tracks, may extinguish their ignorance, arrive at true wisdom, and break the fetters that tie them to the round of repeated birth and death.

For the refuge in the Buddha to be genuine, it must be accompanied by a commitment to the Buddha as an incomparable teacher, as unexcelled and unsurpassed. Strictly speaking, the historical Buddha is not unique since there have been earlier Fully Enlightened Ones who have arisen in past epochs and there will be others who will arise in future epochs as well. But in any one world system it is impossible for a second Buddha to arise while the teaching of another Buddha is still extant, and thus in terms of human history we are justified in regarding the Buddha as a unique teacher, unequalled by any other spiritual teacher known to humanity. It is this readiness to recognize the Buddha as "the unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed, the teacher of gods and humans" that is the hallmark of an authentic act of taking refuge in the Buddha.

The Buddha serves as a refuge by teaching the Dhamma. The actual and final refuge, embedded within the Dhamma as refuge, is Nibbana, "the  
deathless element free

from clinging, the sorrowless state that is void of stain" (Itiv. 51). The Dhamma as refuge comprises the final goal, the path that leads to that goal, and the body of teachings that explain the practice of the path. The Buddha as refuge has no capacity to grant us liberation by an act of will. He proclaims the path to be traveled and the principles to be understood. The actual work of walking the path is then left to us, his disciples.

The proper response to the Buddha as refuge is trust and confidence. Trust is required because the doctrine taught by the Buddha runs counter to our innate understanding of ourselves and our natural orientation towards the world. To accept this teaching thus tends to arouse an inner resistance, even to provoke a rebellion against the changes it requires us to make in the way we lead our lives. But when we place trust in the Buddha we open ourselves to his guidance. By going to him for refuge we show that we are prepared to recognize that our inherent tendencies to self-affirmation and grasping are in truth the cause of our suffering. And we are ready to accept his counsel that to become free from suffering, these tendencies must be controlled and eliminated.

Confidence in the Buddha as our refuge is initially awakened when we contemplate his sublime virtues and his excellent teaching. It grows through our undertaking of the training. At first our confidence in the Buddha may be hesitant, punctured by doubts and perplexity. But as we apply ourselves to the practice of his path, we find that our defilements gradually lessen, that wholesome qualities increase, and with this comes a growing sense of freedom, peace and joy. This experience confirms our initial trust, disposing us to advance a few steps further. When at last we see the truth of the Dhamma for ourselves, the refuge in the Buddha becomes inviolable. Confidence then becomes conviction, the conviction that the Blessed One is "the speaker, the proclaimer, the bringer of the good, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathagata."



## The Analysis of Empirical Existence

By Bhikkhuni Satima

In the Buddhist Teachings we find the analysis of empiric individuality and its relations to the external world.

We find many different ways of analysis each having a specific reason or a cause. To name a few;

1. The twofold analysis into Nama- Rupa or Name & form or psycho-physical personality.
2. The five fold analysis or pancaskhandha or the five aggregates
3. The six fold analysis into the six dhatus or elements
4. The twelve fold ayatanans – avenues of sense perception and mental cognition
5. Eighteen dhatus – elements – the same as in #4 plus the addition of the six kinds of consciousness

### **1. NAMA-RUPA - THE TWO FOLD DIVISION:**

This is the most elementary mode of division. It shows only the two main components – the psycho-physical or the mentality – materiality or mind and matter of the empirical individual.

**Nama** here is a collective term for the four psychological components, namely – Feelings –**vedana**; perception – **sanna**; formations – **sankhara**; and consciousness - **vinnana**.

Rupa denotes form or body made up of the four elements and their derivative forms.

### **2. PANCASKHANDHA OR THE FIVE AGGREGATES:**

This five fold personality factor is made up of;

- Body or form - rupa
- Feeling – vedanna
- Perception- sanna
- Formations – sankhara
- Consciousness – vinnana

Whether past, present or future; internal or external; gross or subtle; crude or refined; far or near, they are altogether referred to as the five fold mode of the empiric individual.

When these five factors are subject to grasping, they then are referred to as the panca-upadanna –skhandha, or the five grasping groups.

In the MN.16, The Buddha states; ‘These five fold personality factors have desire (chanda) as a root, and whatever is desire (chanda) and passion (raga) towards these fivefold personality factors is the attachment to them.

When these five fold personality factors are objects of attachment and product of attachment then they are dukkha.’ The Buddha sums up dukkha as ‘In short attachment to the fivefold personality factors is dukkha.’

The main purpose of analyzing the personality into the

fivefold mode or the khandha analysis is to show the non-self nature of the empiric individuality. So that any notion of ‘I’, ‘Mine’, or ‘Myself’ will not enter into what is otherwise an impersonal, egoless flow of mental and physical phenomena.

In the Anatta-Lakkhana – Sutta or the Characteristics of Selflessness Discourse, the second Discourse of the Buddha to the group of five, He shows that none of the khandhas belongs to ‘me’ ( n’etat mama), they do not correspond to ‘I’ (n’eso hamasmi), nor are they ‘myself’ (n’eso me atta).

### **RUPASKHANDHA OR MATERIAL FORM PERSONALITY FACTOR:**

This is made up of the four primary elements – earth, water, fire & air and their derivatives which according to the Abhidhamma analysis consist of twenty four, making up of a total of twenty eight factors.

### **VEDANNASKHANDHA OR FEELING – PERSONALITY FACTOR:**

This is made up of bundles of feeling, sensation or emotion. The main function is to experience or enjoy the flavor of the object. It is vedanna that judges the object as like, dislike or neutral. Vedanna is analyzed into different kinds but the most fundamental is the three fold division ie. Pleasant, unpleasant or neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Feeling is conditioned by contact with the external world through the sense bases. If one pays wise consideration (yoniso manasikara) one will notice that all feelings, whether pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent are suffering. Pleasant feelings, if one does not pay wise consideration will lead to attachment; unpleasant feelings to repulsion and neutral feelings to ignorance.

### **SANNASKHANDHA OR PERCEPTION – PERSONALITY FACTOR:**

The main function of this factor is to perceive or cognize something as its object. Because of its awareness of distinctive features of an object, it enables us to recognize the object that is previously perceived. Like vedanna , sanna too can be analyzed into different kinds. Sanna is used as a way of contemplation for getting free from sickness and bondage. There is a detailed tenfold perception as contemplation taught by the Buddha to Ananda who in turn recited to the sick bhikkhu ven Girimanda.

### **SANKHARASKHANDHA OR FORMATIONS – PERSONALITY FACTOR:**

It is this factor that gives one’s personal color as it were to the functions of the rest of the other aggregates. There are two main classifications of sankhara, one is three fold and the other is six fold.

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The three fold classification includes in the wholesome, the unwholesome and the neutral, while the six fold in the sights, sounds, smells, taste, touch and mental images. Apart from this in the Abhidhamma classification there are fifty two different sankharas.

**VINNANASKHANDA OR CONSCIOUSNESS – PERSONALITY FACTOR:**

Consciousness is not an entity but an act of being conscious or aware of something. Consciousness is divided into six kinds according to the way and conditions through which it arises.

The six are;

1. eye and visual objects – eye consciousness
2. ear and sounds – ear consciousness
3. nose and smell – nose consciousness
4. tongue and tastes – tongue consciousness
5. body and tangible objects – body consciousness
6. mind and mind objects – mind consciousness.

According to its moral evaluation consciousness is of three kinds; wholesome, unwholesome and neutral.

All five personality factors are conditioned processes. The human personality is like a flowing river in continuous flux, never the same, not stopping for a moment and is impermanent. Hence there is no permanent self or soul.

**3. THE SIX DHATUS:**

The Buddha analyses the human existence or personality into six elements to show that there is no ego or self as a permanent entity.

The six dhatu are;

earth element or pathavi dhatu

water element or apo dhatu

heat element or tejo dhatu

air element or vauo dhato

space element or akasa dhatu

Consciousness element or vinnana dhatu.

**EARTH ELEMENT OR PATHAVI DHATU**

It is this element that represents the fact of extension, rigidity or hardness of matter; or the experience of roughness or solidity of matter either internal or external. It is due to its characteristic of extension that this element acts as the ground or support for the other three primary elements. Without this element objects cannot occupy space.

**WATER ELEMENT OR APO DHATU**

It is due to this element that the experience of cohesion or the binding of the scattered atoms which gives us the idea of body is formed. It is the internal or

external element that represents fluidity. This element is intangible.

**FIRE ELEMENT OR TEJO DHATU**

It is due to this element that both heat and cold is known. The tejo element is that which vitalizes and also matures or causes the decaying of the body. It is both internal and external and found in all matter.

**AIR ELEMENT OR VAYO DHATU**

It is this element that causes movement of the body, inside the body and outside the body. Its characteristic is motion and distention. It is this element that gives strength to the body and also the smooth mobility to living beings.

**SPACE ELEMENT OR AKASA DHATU**

This is the fact of delimited space. They are the open spaces in between objects or the lack of rupas. They are the ear, nose, mouth openings, the bowels, intestines etc. In the external world it is both delimited space, empty or open space. According to Buddhism space is NOT unconditioned and absolute. The Buddha recognizes the conditionality of space. The experience of space is dependent on the experience of material bodies.

**CONSCIOUSNESS ELEMENT OR VINNANA DHATU**

While the other five elements are inanimate, this element is the psychological functioning of sentient beings. It is due to this element that man is able to think, discriminate values and facts and feels. This element is made up of four psychological personality factors. They are; feeling, perception, formations and the sixfold perceptual consciousness.

Of these six elements the first five forms the material body of living beings and the material world and the consciousness element forms the mentality or the psychic component of the being. For all beings the consciousness element is the most important factor as it is by this that a being is differentiated as a conscious being.

‘In the same manner, O Prince, when this body is associated with vitality, heat and consciousness, it can perform the action of walking, standing, sitting, lying down, seeing the visible with eyes, hearing sounds with ears, smelling smells with noses, tasting flavors with tongue, touching the tangible with body and knowing objects and ideas with mind (Mano) { D}.

In the process of rebirth, it is these six psycho-physical factors that serve as the ground for conception. According to the Anguttara Nikaya, ‘based on these six elements, there is descent into the womb. This descent taking place, psycho-physical personality (nama-rupa) comes to pass. Conditioned by psycho-physical personality is the six sense organs. Conditioned by six sense organs is contact. Conditioned by contact is feeling.....’

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According to the teachings of the Buddha each of these elements should be seen as they really are; 'this is not mine, this I am not and this is not myself.'

#### **4. TWELVE AYATANAS – AVENUES OF SENSE – PERCEPTION AND MENTAL COGNITION:**

Taken directly from 'A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma by Bhikkhu Bodhi pg. 286-287.

The twelve sense – bases are:

- the eye base
- the ear base
- the nose base
- the tongue base
- the body base
- the mind base
- the visible forms base
- the sound base
- the smell base
- the taste base
- the tangible base
- the mental-object base

The twelve sense bases offer another perspective on the whole. From this perspective the totality of concrete entities is viewed by way of the doors and objects of consciousness. The first five are the five sense organs and the seven to eleven are their respective objective fields. The sixth, the mind base has a wider range than the mind door. It is identified with the aggregate of consciousness in its totality. The mental – object base does not completely coincide with mental objects, but includes only those entities not found among the other bases. The mental-object base comprises the fifty two mental factors, the sixteen kinds of subtle matter, and Nibbana. In the Visuddhi Magga it states; 'the twelve bases are simply mentality-materiality because the mind base and one part of the mental-data base are included in mentality, and the rest of the bases in materiality.'

#### **5. THE EIGHTEEN DHATU OR ELEMENTS:**

The eighteen elements are the same as the twelve bases plus the six types of consciousness. These are called elements because they bear their own intrinsic natures.  
(if anyone is interested in a detailed description of the elements please refer Visuddhi Magga ch. xv)

From 'The Dhamma Theory' Philosophical Cornerstone of Abhidhamma by Prof. Dr. Y Karunadasa

Wheel Publication Nos. 412/413.  
From 'The Dhamma Theory' Philosophical Cornerstone of Abhidhamma by Prof. Dr. Y Karunadasa  
Wheel Publication Nos. 412/413.

'The Abhidhamma resorts to two complementary methods: that of analysis (bheda) and that of synthesis (sangaha). The combined use of these two methods shows that, "a complete description of a thing requires, besides its analysis, also a statement of its relations to certain other things," Thus if analysis plays an important role in the Abhidhamma's methodology, no less a important role is played by synthesis. Analysis shows that the world of experience is resolvable into a plurality of factors; synthesis shows that these factors are not discrete entities existing in themselves but interconnected and interdependent nodes in a complex web of relationships. It is only for the purpose of definition and description that things are artificially dissected.

If analysis shows that composite things cannot be considered as ultimate unites, synthesis shows that the factors into which the apparently composite things are analyzed are not discrete entities.'

We as humans are unable to see and to experience this due to our delusion. But yet this is something that we need to experience by ourselves. No one else can do it for us. The analysis of empirical existence can be done only through deep understanding of our own mind by us. Therefore the Buddha's Teachings of sila, Samadhi and panna is what has to be followed.

In short we can say that empirical existence is not something that really is there, it is only a conceptual reality. It is like 'information'. One cannot say that 'information' exists or does not exist until it is used.

References:

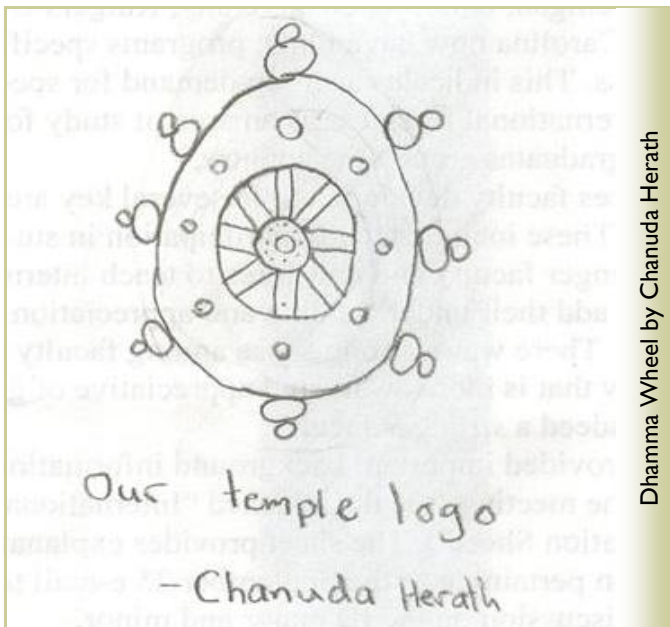
- Majjhima Nikaya
- Samutta Nikaya
- Visuddhi Magga
- The Dhamma Theory  
*by Prof. Dr. Y. Karunadasa*
- Personality as an Aggregate of Fivefold Factors  
*By Bhikkhu Thich Nhat hanh*
- A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma  
*By Bhikkhu Bodhi*
- Human Existence in Terms of Six Elements  
*by Bhikkhu Thich Nhat hanh*



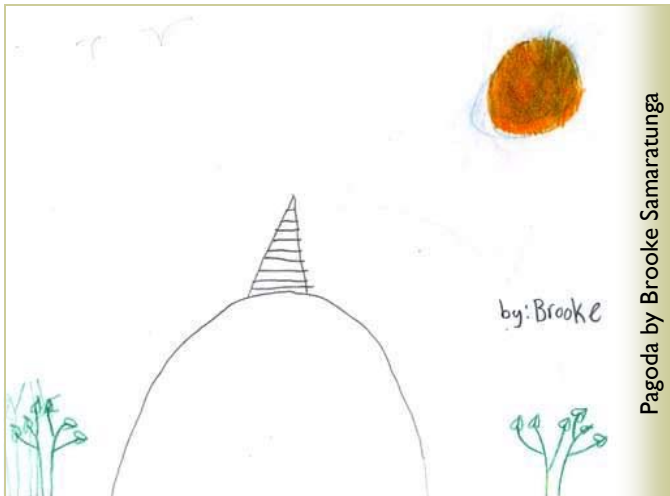
# MBV Dhamma School Kids' Creations



Two monks by Melinda Samaratunga



Dhamma Wheel by Chanuda Herath



Pagoda by Brooke Samaratunga

## Samma Vaca – Right Speech

The 4<sup>th</sup> Truth out of the Four Noble Truths says that there is a path that leads to the end of Dukkha. That path is called the Noble Eightfold Path. One of the Noble Eightfold Path is called the Right Speech. The way to practice this is by:

1. Not lying
2. Not to use divisive words
3. Not to be using abusive words
4. Not to say Idle/nonsense words

1. Do not lie means to not have any fake or false speech. If we lie we will lose the good will and the trust of our friends and relatives. Lying brings us consequences such as when lying no one believes in you and if there is an emergency no one pays attention to you and you lose the trustworthiness of the family or friends.

2. To be divisive is meaning to break a friendly relationship with others. When we are divisive to some group of friends, sooner or later the friends will find out and we are hated very badly. If the friendship was too strong we could get into a brawl. Consequences may be physical and probably mental. There might be a certain feeling where we feel sad and ashamed at what we had done. To prevent this from happening we can help the friends from bad obstacles. Not only will we feel good but we may be rewarded.

3. To be abusive means to cause a threat or scare someone. To use abusive words is say something inappropriate, mean and/or 'not to be used' words. Saying these is kind of like saying an insult. If we use calm words and nice words we feel special and grateful. People shall honor us more and we will be respected. This way we can avoid any of these words I have mentioned that are bad and 'unusable'.

4. If you were to Idle you were to say nonsense. Say nonsense is using unusable words with no particular meaning. But to say nonsense words is completely useless. This can be in the form of a group after activities or school to share info or to email. To speak useful words is to say things that mean something important and can be of useful to others or us.

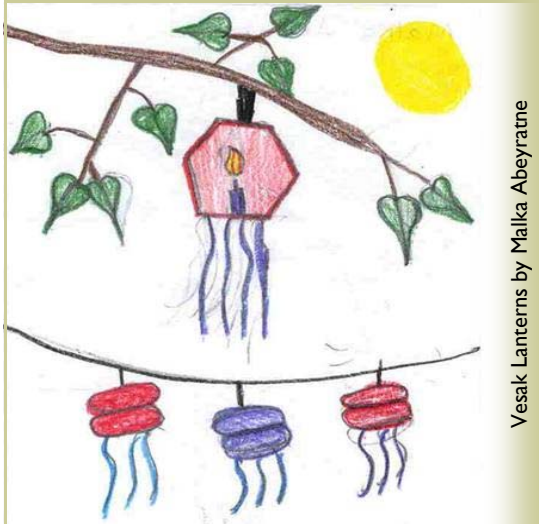
This is what Right Speech means.

By Kasun Ranatunga

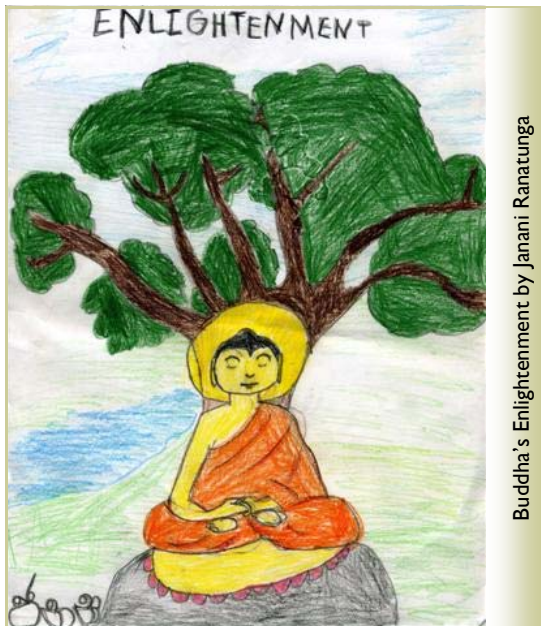
## ANICCA VATA SANKHARA

No one knows when death will come,  
It's good to be prepared.  
And so I say to my friend  
Don't be sad, don't be scared.

By Sami Gunaratne



Vesak Lanterns by Malka Abeyratne



Buddha's Enlightenment by Janani Ranatunga

### Five Precepts

At the temple, I learn new things each time. We learned about the importance of the five precepts; no killings, no stealing, no abusing the five sensors, no lying, and no taking intoxications. If we follow these precepts, everyone can benefit from them. I, with my family repeat this vow every morning at the beginning of day.

By Shanudi Herath

### MBV Major Events-- June-November 2008

June 2, 2008	Religious Service with Chinese devotees
June 9, 2008	Religious Service with Mexican devotees
July 12, 2008	Dragon Festival Opening Blessings
July 12, 2008	Rainy Season Retreat Invitation (Vas Aradhana)
July 19, 2008	Completed MBV Sign - By Gihan Gunaratne Eagle's Scout Project
Aug. 16, 2008	Pindapatha at Downtown Minneapolis in the memory of Victims of 35 W Bridge Collapse
Aug. 23, 2008	Summer Art Class Started
Aug. 30, 2008	Religious Event at Brenard
Sept. 7, 2008	Out Door Mediation facility Project - 25 seats completed at Meditation Retreat Center (MRC)
Sept. 13, 2008	Autumn Get Together—Annual Community gathering
Sept. 14, 2008	Special Religious Service for St. Cloud State University Students
Sept. 27, 2008	MRC Outdoor meditation Session
Oct. 4, 2008	MRC Outdoor meditation Session
Oct. 18, 2008	Summer Art Class Concluded
Oct. 31, 2008	Dhamma talk and meditation session at St. Cloud State University
Nov. 1, 2008	Annual (Kathina) Robe-Offering Ceremony
Nov. 2, 2008	Full Day Meditation Retreat at MRC
Nov. 5, 2008	Buddhist Event at North Dakota State University

# Photos of MIBV Activities



Wesak Full Moon Poya Day Walking meditation



MBV Sign - Gihan Gunaratne Eagle's Scout Project completed on July 19, 2008



Wesak Bethi Gee (spiritual songs)



Summer Art Class - 2008

## Contributions

The objective of MN Buddhist Vihara provides Spiritual, Cultural, Scientific, and Educational activities of the Community.

*The Minnesota Buddhist Vihara is a 501 C (3) charity registered with the State of Minnesota since March 30, 2004.*

Development of the Vihara and its activities depend solely on your support. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.

All your donations are Federal and State tax deductible. The MN Buddhist Vihara will issue receipts for all your donations at the end of year.

## **You can join to our:**

- Dhamma School
- Diploma in Buddhism
- Abhidhamma, Pali & Dhammapada class
- Weekly meditation group
- Monthly Sil Observance
- Volunteer activities

Autumn Get Together – 2008



MODERN DAY REPLICA  
GYPSY WAGON



Children feeding a Norwegian horse



Members playing a game of Carom-board



Face painting by Sumitra Wanduragala



Adults playing volleyball on the front lawn



Brother & Sister Playing Connection