



## Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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### Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter: The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī),
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī),
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī),
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī),
5. Energy (vīrya pāramī),
6. Patience (khanti pāramī),
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī),
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī),
9. Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī), and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī).

The subject of this newsletter is on the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī). The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī) is discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter. The next eight newsletters will discuss the remaining perfections.

The meaning of the Pāli word "sīla" is morality or ethical conduct.

- Morality are the principles of what is right or wrong, good or bad, in human behavior. Morality is the code of conduct that result in wholesome actions (kamma) and behavior that avoids unwholesome actions.
- Ethics is a systematic way of examining and understanding moral principles. Ethics guides individuals in making decisions by evaluating what actions are morally right or wrong.
- Virtue are qualities or traits of character that are morally good or desirable, such as the ten perfections. The cultivation of virtues is the purpose for ethical behavior.

In this newsletter the terms 'ethics' and 'morality' are used interchangeably.

Therefore, "sīla pāramī" is the Perfection of Virtue that embodies ethical behavior. The development of moral conduct is the foundation and initial practice for developing self-control and restraint of the senses. Ethical behavior is the first and foremost among wholesome actions and is the bases for a calm quiet mind and concentration. The calm quiet concentrated mind is a condition for the development of wisdom (paññā) and compassion (karunā). The development of wisdom purifies the mind of defilements (kilesa) which in turn, liberates the mind from suffering (dukkha) and to realize nibbāna.

Training in moral conduct and moral restraint aids in the reduction of suffering, both for oneself and others, by not causing harm but instead, to have loving-kindness (mettā) and compassion (karunā).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi  
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MT: Non-cruelty, avihiṃsā which is a synonym for compassion [karunā] is the root of all virtues, especially the root-cause of morality.

The individual, relationships and society will suffer when moral principals are not followed. The following are some repercussions of not adhering to ethical conduct.

- Without a moral compass, the mind will be in conflict and emotional turmoil, experiencing guilt, remorse, shame, and a lack of peace.
- Neglecting morality could lead to actions that harm others physically, emotionally, or socially. The absence of the training in morality will have a negative impact on the community, there will be an erosion of cultural values, a decline in ethical standards that encourages a culture of dishonesty, corruption, and exploitation.
- Without honouring moral principles, relationships with others will be damaged by competitiveness, exploitation, and aggression. Lack of moral conduct will lead to dishonesty, betrayal, and harm, eroding trust and causing emotional distress in the individuals that form relationships.
- Not adhering to moral principles will result in a loss of respect from peers, family, and members of society. Others will perceive individuals without moral integrity as unreliable, untrustworthy, or unethical, which results in loss of reputation.
- Engaging in unethical behavior will lead to unwholesome kamma, resulting in future suffering and unfavorable circumstances.
- The mind would not be able to trust itself nor would others be able to have trust and respect in a person without moral scruples. Without trust, personal and professional relationships would be affected adversely, resulting in isolation or difficulties in collaboration.
- A lack of moral development will hinder the purification of mind and hinder progress towards nibbāna.
- Continual disregard for moral values will desensitize the mind to ethical concerns, resulting in a lack of loving-kindness, compassion, and a diminished sense of responsibility towards others.

Bhikkhu Bodhi defines virtue or moral discipline (sīla) in the following passage.

#### The Essential Meaning of Sila by Bhikkhu Bodhi

The Pali word for moral discipline, sila, has three levels of meaning: (1) inner virtue, i.e., endowment with such qualities as kindness, contentment, simplicity, truthfulness, patience, etc.; (2) virtuous actions of body and speech which express those inner virtues outwardly; and (3) rules of conduct governing actions of body and speech designed to bring them into accord with the ethical ideals. These three levels are closely intertwined and not always distinguishable in individual cases. But if we isolate them, sila as inner virtue can be called the aim of the training in moral discipline, sila as purified actions of body and speech the manifestation of that aim, and sila as rules of conduct the systematic means of actualizing the aim. Thus sila as inner virtue is established by bringing our bodily and verbal actions into accord with the ethical ideals, and this is done by following the rules of conduct intended to give these ideals concrete form.

Using Bhikkhu Bodhi's definition for moral discipline (sīla), the following is the threefold meaning.

1. Inner virtue is a mind endowed with the ten perfections (pāramī) which are a necessary condition for training the mind to realize nibbāna.
2. Wholesome kamma are virtuous actions of mind, body, and speech, and aides in purifying the mind of defilements (kilesa).
3. Training in the precepts (sikkhāpada) are the rules of conduct governing actions of body and speech that prevent unwholesome kamma from arising and actualize wholesome kamma. Each precept contains two aspects: a negative aspect, which is a rule of restraint, and a positive aspect, which is a virtue to be cultivated.

The precepts are principles of training the mind in ethical conduct (sīla) that are undertaken freely by the individual without coercion from a supernatural power or governing authority. The precepts assist in developing such mental faculties as energy (vīrya), mindfulness (sati), and concentration (samādhi), as well as the virtues of the Ten Perfections (dāna pāramī). There are Four Categories of Precepts (sikkhāpada).

- I. Five Precepts (pañcasīla) are the ethical guidelines for which lay disciples of the Buddha train their mind. These precepts are the bases from which the other categories of precepts are derived.
  1. Refrain from killing sentient beings.
    - This precept is about respect for all forms of life, recognizing and honoring the value of living beings. All sentient beings are to be protected because life is precious.
    - A being is a constantly changing combination of physical and mental elements that arise and cease due to causes and conditions, and are therefore, not separate from the world. As the physical and mental elements change, the being itself changes. Beings act as a condition that affect other beings, beings are interconnected, and do not exist independently or in isolation. Harming a being has an affect on other beings and the environment.
    - The protection of beings by not harming them produces wholesome qualities of mind, such as loving-kindness, compassion, sympathy and empathy.
    - The principle of non-violence (ahimsā) emphasizes the importance of causing no harm to any being. The principle of non-violence contributes to the mind's inner peace and health, in addition to allowing others the freedom to also be at peace, and free from worry and fear.
    - When the body does not engage in harming others, the mind does not experience guilt, remorse, and agitation, which results in a peaceful and calmer mind.
    - Wholesome kamma is produced with the intention to not cause harm and instead, to protect all forms of life. The wholesome kamma contributes to the mind's progress towards liberation from suffering and perfect peace.
    - Unwholesome kamma is not produced when there is no intention to cause harm. Unwholesome kamma results in unfortunate future states of existence.
    - Respecting the sacredness of life encourages a mindful attitude towards the environment and ecosystems, promoting a sense of responsibility towards preserving nature.
    - Practicing non-violence helps to achieve harmonious relationships in communities by promoting peaceful coexistence and reduction in conflicts, and contributes to a more compassionate and understanding society.
    - Refraining from killing living creatures is assisted by the Ten Perfections (pāramī) thereby, the perfections are further developed by exercising the virtues.
    - The training in this precept gives the assurance that sentient beings will not be intentionally harmed, living beings are safe and secure thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
  2. Refrain from taking that which is not given.
    - This precept is about respecting the possessions of others, and the value of what others own.
    - The precept also cultivates contentment and satisfaction with our own possessions, and reduces the unwholesome desire for what others possess.
    - Training in the precept develops honesty, a wholesome quality of mind.
    - Respect of ownership develops trust within communities. When people trust that their belongings won't be taken without permission, the result is a harmonious environment where individuals feel secure and respected.
    - Wholesome mental kamma is the intention to not take what is not freely given, thereby unwholesome kamma is avoided.
    - The mind trains in the wholesome practice of generosity which is produced from loving-kindness and compassion rather than the unwholesome activity of coercion or theft.
    - The training in this precept gives the assurance that the possessions of others will not be stolen, their belongings are safe, thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
  3. Refrain from sexual misconduct.

- This precept is about pursuing wholesome marital fidelity in order to maintain harmonious relations based on trust and mutual respect. Respect for the boundaries and well-being, autonomy and dignity of individuals in the relationship, will result in healthy and consensual relationships.
  - Discipline of restraining the appetite for multiple partners and practicing mindfulness in relationships, aides in developing a sense of responsibility and accountability.
  - Avoiding unwholesome actions that are harmful, such as infidelity or exploiting others for personal gain will result in a mind at peace. By abstaining from unwholesome actions that lead to suffering for oneself and others, the mind grows in stability and concentration.
  - The precept contributes to a harmonious society that encourages trust and stability within communities by promoting healthy relationships and by reducing conflicts arising from misconduct.
  - The training in this precept gives the assurance that there will be no transgression on the spouse or partner, personal relationships are safe and secure thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
4. Refrain from lying.
- This precept is about cultivating truthfulness, which has the affect that the mind can trust itself and others can trust you. The practice of speaking the truth develops integrity and trust in relationships, the environment thus created is harmonious and supportive.
  - Lying leads to a tangled web of deceit, causing mental stress and confusion. Honesty promotes a clear conscience and a peaceful state of mind which supports mental health and tranquility.
  - Upholding truthfulness demonstrates respect for others by honoring their right to know and understand reality as it is. Truthfulness promotes communication that is sincere and authentic, helpful for developing meaningful relationships.
  - Lying creates unwholesome kamma which causes suffering in this life and future lives.
  - Truthfulness produces wholesome kamma which results in the liberation from suffering. Truthfulness is an essential ingredient of the path to nibbāna because it conditions the development of wisdom.
  - The training in this precept gives the assurance that others are confident that they will hear the truth from the moral mind: the speech is trustworthy and reliable, thereby, the moral mind offers the gift of fearlessness to others.
5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. The actual translation of the training rule is to abstain from fermented and distilled intoxicants which are the basis for heedlessness.

An intoxicant is something that causes the mind to become excited or confused, and prevent mindfulness and control over speech and actions. The Vietnamese Zen Master, Thich Nhat Hanh taught this precept to include mindful consumption, that is, to abstain from unhealthy food, unhealthy entertainment and unhealthy conversations which are intoxicants to body and mind.

- This precept is about the avoidance of intoxicants in order to preserve the training in the above four precepts by maintaining mental clarity, heedfulness, mindfulness and awareness. The consumption of intoxicants may result in loss of wisdom and clarity of mind which will then result in disregarding the training in the above four precepts.
- Avoiding intoxicants results in clear-mindedness, which aids in understanding the mind's inner world and the external world, and results in making informed decisions with mindfulness in daily life.
- Intoxicants impair judgment and may lead to actions that cause harm or suffering. The avoidance of intoxicants will help prevent harm, both to oneself and to others, the clear and sharp mind promotes safety and peace.

- The avoidance of intoxicants will enable the mind to better focus on the training towards purification of mind. The precept supports the development of discipline and mindfulness, which are necessary conditions for the development of wisdom.
- Avoiding intoxicating substances will contribute to physical health. Substance abuse results in health issues, and by abstaining, the mind and body will experience a healthier life physically, mentally, and emotionally.
- This precept promotes responsible behavior and understanding of the consequences that unwholesome actions have on both the mind, relationships and the community. The practice of abstaining from intoxicants will produce a mind that is compassionate and responsible.
- The training in this precept gives the assurance that the crimes and transgressions that result from intoxication will not be committed by the moral mind, living beings are safe and secure, thereby, the gift of fearlessness is given to others.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

#### 8.39 (9) Streams

... “There are, bhikkhus, these five gifts, great gifts, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which are not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. What five?”

(4) “Here, a noble disciple, having abandoned the destruction of life, abstains from the destruction of life. By abstaining from the destruction of life, the noble disciple gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. He himself in turn enjoys immeasurable freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. This is the first gift, a great gift, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which is not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. This is the fourth stream of merit ... that leads to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.

(5)–(8) “Again, a noble disciple, having abandoned the taking of what is not given, abstains from taking what is not given ... abstains from sexual misconduct ... abstains from false speech ... abstains from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness. By abstaining from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness, the noble disciple gives to an immeasurable number of beings freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. He himself in turn enjoys immeasurable freedom from fear, enmity, and affliction. This is the fifth gift, a great gift, primal, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated and never before adulterated, which is not being adulterated and will not be adulterated, not repudiated by wise ascetics and brahmins. This is the eighth stream of merit ... that leads to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.

“These, bhikkhus, are the eight streams of merit, streams of the wholesome, nutriments of happiness—heavenly, ripening in happiness, conducive to heaven—that lead to what is wished for, desired, and agreeable, to one’s welfare and happiness.”

When an individual, for one reason or another, find it challenging to train in all of the above five precepts then that individual should train in the precepts that can be accomplished, and form the intention to train in the remaining precepts when circumstances permit.

- To train in the precepts, the mind must form the intention to follow the precepts. What matters most is the sincerity of the mind’s intention and the commitment to improve in the training.
- Awareness of thoughts, speech, and actions is the condition that results in conscious choices that are aligned with the precepts.
- Start training at the level the mind is at morally. Practice the precepts that can be accomplished and gradually progress to the more challenging precepts.
- Rather than aiming for perfection immediately, set realistic and achievable goals to improve the minds’ observance of the precepts.
- Seek support from a Buddhist community to maintain and improve upon the training.
- Recognize that everyone faces challenges, and the practice is about growth and understanding. Therefore, be compassionate towards oneself and others.
- Investigate past speech and past actions in order to learn if they were in alignment with the precepts. Regular introspection helps in understanding where improvements are required.
- If avoiding intoxicants is challenging, then focus on reducing their consumption. Moderation is a starting point towards eventual abstinence.

- II. Eight Precepts (aṭṭhasīla) are the ethical guidelines observed during special religious occasions or a commitment to a more ascetic lifestyle. These training precepts are observed by postulants who have aspirations to fully ordain in the monastic Saṅgha.
1. Refrain from killing living creatures. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  2. Refrain from taking that which is not given. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  3. Refrain from any intentional sexual activity.
    - Abstaining from all sexual activity will free up mental and emotional energy, allowing the mind to concentrate on cultivating wholesome kamma, the perfections, and purification of mind.
    - Abstinence helps to maintain emotional stability by avoiding the complexities or emotional entanglements that may arise from intimate relationships.
    - Practicing abstinence will develop self-control, and strengthen willpower in different aspects of life.
    - Choosing to abstain removes the pressure associated with dating or seeking sexual relationships, allowing the mind to focus on the cultivation of virtues and wholesome mental faculties without distractions or obstructions.
  4. Refrain from lying. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  6. Refrain from eating at inappropriate times.
    - Observing specific times for eating cultivates restraint, discipline and mindfulness. The mind cultivates mindfulness of actions, thoughts, and habits related to consumption, and a greater sense of self-control.
    - By eating at appropriate times, the mind trains in contentment and simplicity. This practice also encourages gratitude for the food, and reduces the tendency toward overindulgence or attachment and clinging to sensual pleasures. This training precept helps to cultivate the understanding of impermanence and non-attachment.
    - By refraining from eating at inappropriate times, there will be minimal disturbances to others who offer or prepare meals.
  7. Refrain from entertainment, beautification, and adornment.
    - This precept aides in cultivating renunciation (nekkhamma) and the pursuit of a simpler, and mindful way of life. The mind that is comfortable with simplicity will be peaceful and concentrated on purification in order to realize nibbāna.
    - Refraining from entertainment, beautification, and adornment encourages the mind to find contentment and happiness with refined states of mind rather than seeking external sources.
    - Avoiding engagement in entertainment, beautification, and adornment will help reduce attachment to material possessions and superficial desires. By letting go of these attachments, the mind will experience freedom and peace.
    - By abstaining from excessive attention on outward appearances or indulgence in entertainment, the mind will instead direct attention toward developing virtues, the ten perfections.
    - Avoiding entertainment and beautification will reduce distractions that can hinder progress in training the mind. The mind is then able to dedicate more time and energy to meditation, study, and contemplation.
    - Refraining from beautification and adornment promotes humility by letting go of the need to enhance the body's appearance for desires motivated by the selfish and conceited ego. The practice encourages acceptance of the body's appearance as it is in reality.
  8. Refrain from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place.
    - By choosing not to sleep on high or luxurious beds, the mind practices humility and renunciation, letting go of attachments to comfort and extravagance. The precept cultivates contentment with simple and modest living conditions.

- Refraining from luxurious sleeping places aides in reducing attachments to material possessions and comforts. The precept of letting go of attachments supports the development of inner virtues, the ten perfections. The precept also emphasizes moderation and simplicity, which results in contentment and tranquility.
  - Choosing simpler sleeping arrangements promotes a sense of equality among members of society. By forgoing opulent sleeping places, the mind accepts a lifestyle that is relatable to others, regardless of their social or economic status.
  - Sleeping on a less lavish bed encourages physical and mental restraint; the mind refrains from indulgence in physical comfort and supports a disciplined approach to daily living rooted in simplicity.
  - Sleeping on a modest bed encourages mindfulness and gratitude for basic necessities. The mind is aware of and grateful for the simple comforts that are available.
  - Renouncing luxurious sleeping arrangements allows the mind to concentrate on purification. The precept reduces distractions arising from concerns for physical comfort, enabling greater concentration during meditation and contemplation.
- III. Ten Precepts (dasasīla) are the ethical guidelines observed by novices who have aspirations to fully ordain in the monastic Saṅgha and are rooted in the monastic code known as the Vinaya. The Vinaya sets forth rules and guidelines for monastic conduct and is designed to support the training of mind and ethical behavior.
1. Refrain from killing living creatures. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  2. Refrain from taking that which is not given. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  3. Refrain from any intentional sexual activity. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
  4. Refrain from lying. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  5. Refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness. See the above Five Precepts for an explanation.
  6. Refrain from eating at inappropriate times. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
  7. Refrain from dancing, singing, music, and going to see entertainments. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
  8. Refrain from wearing garlands, using perfumes, and beautifying the body with cosmetics. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
  9. Refrain from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place. See the above Eight Precepts for an explanation.
  10. Refrain from accepting gold and silver (money).
    - Attachment to material possessions and wealth are obstacles to training the mind.
    - This precept is a training in renunciation and detachment. Monastics train to detach themselves from material possessions, which develops freedom from worldly desires.
    - By relying on basic necessities provided by the lay community (food, clothing, shelter, and medicine), monastics embrace simplicity in their lifestyle, reducing distractions in order to focus on the training of mind.
    - Not being tied to wealth helps in developing an attitude of equanimity, treating all offerings equally and avoiding favoritism or attachment to specific donors.
    - This precept strengthens the relationship between the monastic community and lay supporters, creating a sense of interdependence and encourages the practice of generosity among laypeople.
    - By relinquishing attachment to wealth and possessions, monastics direct their energy and time towards meditation, study, contemplation, and training the mind in cultivating the ten perfections, that assists in progressing on the path to nibbāna.
- IV. Monastic precepts are defined in the Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka). The Three Baskets (tripiṭaka) are the components of the Pāli Canon consisting of the following:
1. Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka),
  2. Basket of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka), and

### 3. Basket of Higher Doctrine (Abhidhamma Piṭaka).

The Basket of Discipline (Vinaya Piṭaka) outlines the rules and guidelines for monastics. The Vinaya Piṭaka consists of:

- Suttavibhaṅga: Pāṭimokkha and commentary.

The Pāṭimokkha defines 227 precepts held by fully ordained monks (bhikkhus) and 311 precepts held by fully ordained nuns (bhikkhunis). These rules cover various aspects of conduct, including rules regarding celibacy, proper speech, handling of material possessions, proper comportment, and regulations for communal living.

- Khandhaka: gives numerous supplementary rules on various topics.
- Parivāra: analyses of rules.

The Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Effort (vīrya pāramī), as it takes effort and diligence (appamāda) to maintain moral conduct consistently.

For example, a mind that abstains from unwholesome actions might encounter challenges or temptations that could compromise ethical behavior. The virtue of effort offers the determination needed to resist these temptations, thereby maintaining the integrity of virtuous conduct.

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī), as wisdom provides the understanding of the causes and consequences of actions, allowing for skillful application of virtue. Without wisdom, the training in virtue will become rigid and dogmatic, mere rule-following, devoid of insight and motivation. Wisdom illuminates the reasons behind ethical conduct, allowing the mind to cultivate genuine virtue.

There is a mutual relationship between wisdom and virtue. Where there is wisdom there is virtue and where there is virtue there is wisdom, wisdom purifies virtue and virtue purifies wisdom. In addition, virtue forms the foundation for mental development (bhāvanā) and insight (vipassanā).

- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Loving-kindness (mettā pāramī), as loving-kindness provides the emotional foundation for virtue. Loving-kindness cultivates compassion (karunā), understanding (paññā), and goodwill towards all beings, motivating the mind to act ethically out of a genuine concern for others' well-being; and prevents virtue from becoming self-righteous or judgmental. Loving-kindness also encourages the understanding of interconnectedness and reinforces the wholesome consequences of virtuous actions.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī), as equanimity maintains emotional balance in the face of life's inevitable challenges. Equanimity prevents virtue from becoming rigid or judgmental, allowing the mind to respond to situations with clarity and composure, even when faced with difficult choices or temptations. Equanimity also encourages a balanced and accepting attitude towards all experiences, preventing virtue from being swayed by attachment or aversion.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī), as patience is necessary for persevering on the path of virtue. Patience enables the mind to withstand obstacles, setbacks, and criticism without losing commitment to ethical conduct. Patience allows virtue to endure even in challenging circumstances, promoting unwavering dedication to moral principles.
- Perfection of Virtue is balanced by the Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī), as generosity complements virtue by encouraging the giving of one's time, resources, and skills in order to benefit others. This outward expression of virtue fosters interconnectedness and reinforces the wholesome kammic consequences of ethical actions. Generosity also helps cultivate detachment from material possessions, a key aspect of virtue.

Morality is part of the Threefold Training (sikkhā) and a division of the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) that aims at purifying the mind of defilements (kilesa) in order to realize nibbāna. The Threefold Training and the three divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path are:

1. morality (sīla),
2. concentration (samādhi), and
3. wisdom (paññā).



Ethical conduct may also be described as the training of body and mind in the Ten Courses of Wholesome Kamma (kusalakamma-patha), which are listed as follows:

#### Bodily Actions

1. abstain from killing living beings (pāṇātipātā veramaṇī);
2. abstain from taking what is not given (adinnādānā veramaṇī);
3. abstain from wrong conduct in regard to sense pleasures - sexual desires, intoxicants, gambling, etc. (kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī);

#### Verbal Actions

4. abstain from false speech (musāvādā veramaṇī);
5. abstain from slanderous, malicious, tale bearing speech (pisuṇāya vacāya veramaṇī);
6. abstain from harsh speech (pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī);
7. abstain from idle chatter, gossiping, useless speech (samphappalāpā veramaṇī);

#### Mental Actions

8. free from covetousness (anabhijjhā);
9. free from ill will (abyāpāda); and
10. hold right views, free from wrong views (sammāditṭhi).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

10.176 (10) Cunda

... "Impurity by body, Cunda, is threefold. Impurity by speech is fourfold. Impurity by mind is threefold.

"And how, Cunda, is impurity by body threefold?

(1) "Here, someone destroys life. He is murderous, bloody-handed, given to blows and violence, merciless to living beings.

(2) "He takes what is not given. He steals the wealth and property of others in the village or forest.

(3) "He engages in sexual misconduct. He has sexual relations with women who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives; who are protected by their Dhamma; who have a husband; whose violation entails a penalty; or even with one already engaged.<sup>2167</sup>

"It is in this way that impurity by body is threefold.

"And how, Cunda, is impurity by speech fourfold?

(4) "Here, someone speaks falsehood. If he is summoned to a council, to an assembly, to his relatives' presence, to his guild, or to the court, and questioned as a witness thus: 'So, good man, tell what you know,' then, not knowing, he says, 'I know,' or knowing, he says, 'I do not know'; not seeing, he says, 'I see,' or seeing, he says, 'I do not see.' Thus he consciously speaks falsehood for his own ends, or for another's ends, or for some trifling worldly end.

(5) "He speaks divisively. Having heard something here, he repeats it elsewhere in order to divide [those people] from these; or having heard something elsewhere, he repeats it to these people in order to divide [them] from those. Thus he is one who divides those who are united, a creator of divisions, one who enjoys factions, rejoices in factions, delights in factions, a speaker of words that create factions.

(6) "He speaks harshly. He utters such words as are rough, hard, hurtful to others, offensive to others, bordering on anger, un conducive to concentration.

(7) "He indulges in idle chatter. He speaks at an improper time, speaks falsely, speaks what is unbeneficial, speaks contrary to the Dhamma and the discipline; at an improper time he speaks such words as are worthless, unreasonable, rambling, and unbeneficial.

"It is in this way that impurity by speech is fourfold. "And how, Cunda, is impurity by mind threefold?

(8) "Here, someone is full of longing. He longs for the wealth and property of others thus: 'Oh, may what belongs to another be mine!'

(9) "He has a mind of ill will and intentions of hate thus: 'May these beings be slain, slaughtered, cut off, destroyed, or annihilated!'

(10) "He holds wrong view and has an incorrect perspective thus: 'There is nothing given, nothing sacrificed, nothing offered; there is no fruit or result of good and bad actions; there is no this world, no other world; there is no mother, no father; there are no beings spontaneously reborn; there are in the world no ascetics and brahmins of right conduct and right practice who, having realized this world and the other world for themselves by direct knowledge, make them known to others.'

"It is in this way that impurity by mind is threefold.

"These, Cunda, are the ten courses of unwholesome kamma.

Moral restraint is one of the Three Pillars of Dhamma, necessary practices which support the path to nibbāna. The Three Pillars of Dhamma or Grounds for Making Merit (puñña kiriya vatthu) are:

1. Generosity (dāna),

2. Moral restraint (sīla), and
3. Meditation (bhāvanā).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi  
8.36 (6) Activity

“Bhikkhus, there are these three bases of meritorious activity. What three? The basis of meritorious activity consisting in giving; the basis of meritorious activity consisting in virtuous behavior; and the basis of meritorious activity consisting in meditative development.

The Buddha frequently taught the Dhamma to lay people as a Gradual Discourse (anupubbikathā). Talk on virtue (sīla kathā) is the second subject of the instruction because it is a necessary condition for training the mind towards nibbāna. The Gradual Discourse is as follows:

1. talk on giving (dāna kathā),
2. talk on virtue (sīla kathā),
3. talk on heavenly pleasures (sagga kathā),
4. talk on the dangers of sensual pleasure (kāmānaṃ ādīnava kathā),
5. talk on the benefits of renunciation (nekkhamma kathā), and
6. talk on The Four Noble Truths (cattāri ariya-saccāni kathā).

A discussion on Progressive Instruction and Gradual Training is found in the June 2023 Newsletter.

In the political sphere, moral restraint occurs as the second item in a list of Ten Virtues of the Ruler (dasavidha-rājadhamma). The word ‘Ruler’ in The Ten Virtues of the Ruler is replaced today by the term ‘Government.’ The Ten Virtues of the Ruler, therefore apply today to all those in the government, such as the president, ministers, political leaders, legislative and administrative officers, etc. The Ten Virtues of the Ruler (dasavidha-rājadhamma) are:

1. generosity (dāna),
2. moral restraint (sīla),
3. altruism (pariccāga),
4. honesty (ājjava),
5. gentleness (maddava),
6. self control (tapa),
7. non-anger (akkodha),
8. non-violence (ahiṃsā),
9. patience (khanti), and
10. uprightness (avirodhana).

Moral restraint is the second item of the Seven Kinds of Wealth (satta dhana), indicating that people’s economic life ought to be based on morality. The Seven Kinds of Wealth (satta dhana) are:

- (1) faith (saddhā dhana),
- (2) virtuous behavior (sīla dhana),
- (3) moral shame (hiri dhana),
- (4) moral dread (ottappa dhana),
- (5) learning (suta dhana),
- (6) generosity (cāga dhana), and
- (7) wisdom (paññā dhana).

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi  
6 (6) Wealth in Detail

“Bhikkhus, there are these seven kinds of wealth. What seven? The wealth of faith, the wealth of virtuous behavior, the wealth of moral shame, the wealth of moral dread, the wealth of learning, the wealth of generosity, and the wealth of wisdom.

(1) “And what, bhikkhus, is the wealth of faith? Here, a noble disciple is endowed with faith. He places faith in the enlightenment of the Tathāgata thus: ‘The Blessed One is an arahant ... the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.’ This is called the wealth of faith.

(2) “And what is the wealth of virtuous behavior? Here, a noble disciple abstains from the destruction of life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from false speech, abstains from liquor, wine, and intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness. This is called the wealth of virtuous behavior.

(3) “And what is the wealth of moral shame? Here, a noble disciple has a sense of moral shame; he is ashamed of bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct; he is ashamed of acquiring bad, unwholesome qualities. This is called the wealth of moral shame.

(4) “And what is the wealth of moral dread? Here, a noble disciple dreads wrongdoing; he dreads bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct; he dreads acquiring bad, unwholesome qualities. This is called the wealth of moral dread.

(5) “And what is the wealth of learning? Here, a noble disciple has learned much, remembers what he has learned, and accumulates what he has learned. Those teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, which proclaim the perfectly complete and pure spiritual life—such teachings as these he has learned much of, retained in mind, recited verbally, mentally investigated, and penetrated well by view. This is called the wealth of learning.

(6) “And what is the wealth of generosity? Here, a noble disciple dwells at home with a heart devoid of the stain of miserliness, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in relinquishment, one devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing. This is called the wealth of generosity.

(7) “And what is the wealth of wisdom? Here, a noble disciple is wise; he possesses the wisdom that discerns arising and passing away, which is noble and penetrative and leads to the complete destruction of suffering. This is called the wealth of wisdom.

“These, bhikkhus, are the seven kinds of wealth.”

The following sutta excerpts are teachings that further illustrate the importance of virtuous behavior.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

10.1 (1) What Purpose?

- ... (1) “Bhante, what is the purpose and benefit of wholesome virtuous behavior?”  
(2) “Ānanda, the purpose and benefit of wholesome virtuous behavior is non-regret.”  
(3) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of non-regret?”  
“The purpose and benefit of non-regret is joy.”  
(4) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of joy?”  
“The purpose and benefit of joy is rapture.”  
(5) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of rapture?”  
“The purpose and benefit of rapture is tranquility.”  
(6) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of tranquility?”  
“The purpose and benefit of tranquility is pleasure.”  
(7) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of pleasure?”  
“The purpose and benefit of pleasure is concentration.”  
(8) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of concentration?”  
“The purpose and benefit of concentration is the knowledge and vision of things as they really are.”  
(9) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of the knowledge and vision of things as they really are?”  
“The purpose and benefit of the knowledge and vision of things as they really are is disenchantment and dispassion.”  
(10) “And what, Bhante, is the purpose and benefit of disenchantment and dispassion?”  
“The purpose and benefit of disenchantment and dispassion is the knowledge and vision of liberation.”  
“... Thus, Ānanda, wholesome virtuous behavior progressively leads to the foremost.”

The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Digha Nikaya translated by Maurice O’C. Walshe

16 Mahāparinibbāna Sutta: The Great Passing

1.24. ‘And, householders, there are these five advantages to one of good morality and of success in morality. What are they? In the first place, through careful attention to his affairs he gains much wealth. In the second place, he gets a good reputation for morality and good conduct. In the third place, whatever assembly he approaches, whether of Khattiyas, Brahmins, householders or ascetics, he does so with confidence and assurance. In the fourth place, he dies unconfused. In the fifth place, after death, at the breaking-up of the body, he arises in a good place, a heavenly world. These are the five advantages to one of good morality, and of success in morality.’

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

11.11 (1) Mahānāma (1)

... (9) “Again, Mahānāma, you should recollect your own virtuous behavior as unbroken, flawless, unblemished, unblotched, freeing, praised by the wise, ungrasped, leading to concentration. When a noble disciple recollects his virtuous behavior, on that occasion his mind is not obsessed by lust, hatred, or delusion; on that occasion his mind is simply straight, based on virtuous behavior. A noble disciple whose mind is straight gains inspiration in the meaning, gains inspiration in the Dhamma, gains joy connected with the Dhamma. When he is joyful, rapture arises. For one with

a rapturous mind, the body becomes tranquil. One tranquil in body feels pleasure. For one feeling pleasure, the mind becomes concentrated. This is called a noble disciple who dwells in balance amid an unbalanced population, who dwells unafflicted amid an afflicted population. As one who has entered the stream of the Dhamma, he develops recollection of virtuous behavior.

## Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at [www.MeetUp.com](http://www.MeetUp.com). Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps).

## Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com). We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

## Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its' mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.
- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website [www.mittameditation.com](http://www.mittameditation.com).

- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website [www.mittameditation.com](http://www.mittameditation.com) and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.