



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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July 2024 Newsletter



Perfection of Truthfulness (saccā 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) discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter,
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī) discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter,
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter,
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī) discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter,
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī) discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter,
6. Patience (khanti pāramī) discussed in the June 2024 Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in this Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) will be discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) will be discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) will be discussed in the October 2024 Newsletter.

The Perfection of Truthfulness is honesty in thinking thoughts that are true, speaking true speech, and performing true actions.

True thoughts are aligned with:

- Right View (sammā-ditṭhi) and Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa), components of the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga). The Noble Eightfold Path is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter - The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.
- The understanding of the Three Characteristics of Existence (tilakkhaṇa):
 1. impermanence (anicca),
 2. suffering or unsatisfactoriness (dukkha), and
 3. not-self (anattā).

For a discussion of the Three Characteristics of Existence see the October 2023 Newsletter - Insight Meditation (vipassanā).

- The understanding of Dependent Origination (paṭicca samuppāda), discussed in the July 2023 Newsletter.

True thoughts arise from a mind that is wholesome (kusala vitakka), mindful (sati), concentrated (samādhi), and free from delusion (avijjā). Through the practice of meditation, the mind cultivates the ability to observe all thoughts without attachment or aversion and to see them as they truly are: impermanent, unsatisfactory, and not-self. True thoughts are those that are in harmony with the principles of wisdom (paññā), compassion (karuṇā), and non-attachment (virāga), leading to liberation from suffering and the realization of nibbāna.

The practice of truthfulness is particularly important in the context of Right Speech, a component of the Noble Eightfold Path. Right Speech is wholesome speech that is true, gentle, beneficial and encourages harmony; and the guidelines for the practice are the following:

1. abstain from false speech, lying (musāvāda veramaṇī),
2. abstain from malicious speech, slanderous speech, divisive tale-bearing speech that incites one against another (pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī),
3. abstain from harsh speech and rude talk (pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī), and

4. abstain from idle speech, useless chatter, foolish babble, vain talk and gossip (samphappalāpā veramaṇī).

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

141 Saccavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Truths

... 26. "And what, friends, is right speech? Abstaining from false speech, abstaining from malicious speech, abstaining from harsh speech, and abstaining from idle chatter — this is called right speech.

The First Discourse of the Buddha: Turning the Wheel of Dhamma by Dr. Rewata Dhamma; 1997; p. 35

"As one progressively attains the stages of sainthood, one gradually uproots mental defilements which are the cause of wrong speech. It is said that the first stage of sainthood (sotāpanna) dispels false speech or telling lies; the third stage of sainthood (anāgāmi) dispels slandering and abusive language; the fourth and final stage of sainthood (arahant) dispels frivolous talk or useless chatter."

The performance of true actions are in alignment with Right Action and Right Livelihood, components of the Noble Eightfold Path; and refers to moral behavior that are in alignment with the Five Precepts (pañca sīla), which are basic ethical guidelines. The Five Precepts are the following:

1. abstain from destroying living beings (pāṇātipātā veramaṇī),
2. abstain from stealing or taking that which is not freely given (adinnādānā veramaṇī),
3. abstain from sexual misconduct (kamesu micchacara veramaṇī),
4. abstain from false speech (musāvāda veramaṇī), and
5. abstain from intoxicants that cause carelessness and cloud the mind (surā meraya majja pamādatthāna veramaṇī).

Practicing true actions goes beyond just following these precepts; it also involves cultivating the virtues, such as loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karunā), generosity (dāna), service (atthacariyā or sevā) and mindfulness (sati) in daily life. By acting in accordance with the Five Precepts and virtues, the mind will reduce suffering for themselves and others and cultivate inner peace and wisdom.

The purification of mind, the removal of defilements (kilesa) that results in nibbāna, requires a commitment to truth; avoiding falsehood, deceit, and dishonesty. Living with, valuing and abiding by truth is a condition for success in purifying and training the mind. Dhamma is a synonym for truth and Dhamma practice is synonymous with living a life of truth.

Truth (saccā) and wisdom (paññā) are interconnected and are necessary on the path that results in liberation from suffering, nibbāna. The relationship between truth and wisdom is found in the Four Noble Truths (ariya catusacca) and the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga).

The Four Noble Truths are fundamental truths about the nature of existence and suffering. Recognizing and understanding these truths is required for developing wisdom. The Four Noble Truths are:

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (dukkha) acknowledges the existence of suffering, the reality of dissatisfaction and unsatisfactoriness in the cycle of birth, aging, sickness, death and rebirth (saṃsāra). This truth is discussed in the February 2023 Newsletter.
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (samudaya) is craving (taṇhā), attachment and identification with that which is impermanent. This truth is discussed in the March 2023 Newsletter.
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (nirodha) is the elimination of the causes for suffering and the result is nibbāna, the escape from saṃsāra. This truth is discussed in the April 2023 Newsletter.
4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (magga) is training in the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) that leads to nibbāna. This truth is discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter.

The Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga) is composed of eight factors:

1. Right View (sammā-diṭṭhi),

2. Right Intention (sammā-saṅkappa),
3. Right Speech (sammā-vācā),
4. Right Action (sammā-kammanta),
5. Right Livelihood (sammā-ājīva),
6. Right Effort (sammā-vāyāma),
7. Right Mindfulness (sammā-sati), and
8. Right Concentration (sammā-samādhi).

The Noble Eightfold Path is described in terms of three aspects:

1. Moral Conduct (sīla). The morality division includes the path factors Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood.
2. Meditation (samādhi). The meditation division includes the path factors Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.
3. Wisdom (paññā). The wisdom division includes the path factors Right View and Right Intention.

The following are examples on how the Perfection of Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections.

- The Perfection of Truthfulness is balanced by the Perfection of Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) as determination provides the strength and resolve to adhere to truthfulness even in challenging circumstances.
- The Perfection of Truthfulness is balanced by the Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī), which ensures that truthful behavior is performed with kindness and avoiding unnecessary harm to others.

The following sutta excerpts are teachings in cultivating truth.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

61 Ambalaṭṭhikārahulovāda Sutta: Advice to Rāhula at Ambalaṭṭhikā

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary.

2. Now on that occasion the venerable Rāhula was living at Ambalaṭṭhikā.⁶³⁷ Then, when it was evening, the Blessed One rose from meditation and went to the venerable Rāhula at Ambalaṭṭhikā. The venerable Rāhula saw the Blessed One coming in the distance and made a seat ready and set out water for washing the feet. The Blessed One sat down on the seat made ready and washed his feet. The venerable Rāhula paid homage to him and sat down at one side.

3. Then the Blessed One left a little water in the water vessel and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this little water left in the water vessel?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so little, Rāhula, is the recluseship of those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

4. Then the Blessed One threw away the little water that was left and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see that little water that was thrown away?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so, Rāhula, those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie have thrown away their recluseship."

5. Then the Blessed One turned the water vessel upside down and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this water vessel turned upside down?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so, Rāhula, those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie have turned their recluseship upside down."

6. Then the Blessed One turned the water vessel right way up again and asked the venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, do you see this hollow, empty water vessel?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Even so hollow and empty, Rāhula, is the recluseship of those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

7. "Suppose, Rāhula, there were a royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles, full-grown in stature, high-bred, and accustomed to battle. In battle he would perform his task with his forefeet and his hindfeet, with his forequarters and his hindquarters, with his head and his ears, with his tusks and his tail, yet he would keep back his trunk. Then his rider would think: 'This royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet... yet he keeps back his trunk. He has not yet given up his life.' But when the royal tusker elephant... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet, with his forequarters and his hindquarters, with his head and his ears, with his tusks and his tail, and also with his trunk, then his rider would think: 'This royal tusker elephant with tusks as long as chariot poles... performs his task in battle with his forefeet and his hindfeet... and also with his trunk. He has given up his life. Now there is nothing this royal tusker elephant would not do.' So too, Rāhula, **when one is not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie, there is no evil, I say, that one would not do. Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: 'I will not utter a falsehood even as a joke.'**

8. "What do you think, Rāhula? What is the purpose of a mirror?"

"For the purpose of reflection, venerable sir."

"So too, Rāhula, an action with the body should be done after repeated reflection; an action by speech should be done after repeated reflection; an action by mind should be done after repeated reflection."

9. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Would this action that I wish to do with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I wish to do with the body would lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you definitely should not do such an action with the body. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I wish to do with the body would not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, with pleasant results,’ then you may do such an action with the body.

10. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Does this action that I am doing with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I am doing with the body leads to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you should suspend such a bodily action. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I am doing with the body does not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it is a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, with pleasant results,’ then you may continue in such a bodily action.

11. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: ‘Did this action that I did with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Was it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?’ When you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I did with the body led to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it was an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results,’ then you should confess such a bodily action, reveal it, and lay it open to the Teacher or to your wise companions in the holy life. Having confessed it, revealed it, and laid it open, you should undertake restraint for the future. But when you reflect, if you know: ‘This action that I did with the body did not lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both; it was a wholesome bodily action with pleasant consequences, pleasant results,’ you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

12. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action by speech... (complete as in §9, substituting “speech” for “body”)... you may do such an action by speech.

13. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action by speech... (complete as in §10, substituting “speech” for “body”) ... you may continue in such an action by speech.

14. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action by speech... (complete as in §11, substituting “speech” for “body”)... you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

15. “Rāhula, when you wish to do an action by mind... (complete as in §9, substituting “mind” for “body”) ... you may do such an action by mind.

16. “Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action by mind... (complete as in §10, substituting “mind” for “body”)... you may continue in such a mental action.

17. “Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action by mind... (complete as in §11, substituting “mind” for “body”)... you can abide happy and glad, training day and night in wholesome states.

18. “Rāhula, whatever recluses and brahmins in the past purified their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all did so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the future will purify their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all will do so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the present are purifying their bodily action, their verbal action, and their mental action, all are doing so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: ‘We will purify our bodily action, our verbal action, and our mental action by repeatedly reflecting upon them.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Rāhula was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words. Notes 637: Rāhula was the only son of the Buddha, born on the day his father left the palace to seek enlightenment. At the age of seven he was ordained as a novice by Ven. Sāriputta on the occasion of the Buddha’s first return visit to Kapilavatthu after his enlightenment. The Buddha declared him the foremost disciple among those desirous of training. According to MA, this discourse was taught to Rāhula when he was seven years old, thus very shortly after his ordination. At MN 147 he attains arahantship after listening to a discourse by the Buddha on the development of insight.

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi 4.183 (3) Heard

... (1) “I do not say, brahmin, that everything seen should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing seen should be spoken about. (2) I do not say that everything heard should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing heard should be spoken about. (3) I do not say that everything sensed should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing sensed should be spoken about. (4) I do not say that everything cognized should be spoken about, nor do I say that nothing cognized should be spoken about.

(1) “For, brahmin, if, when one speaks about what one has seen, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has seen. But if, when one speaks about what one has seen, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has seen.

(2) “If, when one speaks about what one has heard, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has heard. But if, when one speaks about what one has heard, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has heard.

(3) “If, when one speaks about what one has sensed, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has sensed. But if, when one speaks about what one has sensed, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has sensed.

(4) “If, when one speaks about what one has cognized, unwholesome qualities increase and wholesome qualities decline, I say that one should not speak about what one has cognized. But if, when one speaks about what one has cognized, unwholesome qualities decline and wholesome qualities increase, I say that one should speak about what one has cognized.”

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. 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.

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 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 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 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. 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.
- 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 and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.