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Meditation on Loving-Kindness

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana

Sometimes the practice of Insight meditation may be interpreted to be a kind of practice which makes the meditator a heartless or indifferent being, like a vegetable without any love and compassion for other living beings. We must remember, however, that the Buddha has strongly advised us to cultivate four sublime states of mind: loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), appreciative joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). The first of these four is so important that the Buddha said that one who depends entirely upon people for one's living (i.e. a monk or nun) can repay one's indebtedness to lay supporters if one practises loving kindness towards all living beings even for such a short time as a fraction of a second each day.

In the Karaṇīyametta Sutta the Buddha says: "One should develop this mindfulness which is called divine behaviour." Mindfulness is one of the most important factors in the entire teaching of the Buddha. From the day he attained enlightenment until he passed away at the age of eighty, he stressed mindfulness in almost every Dhamma talk. When he equates the practice of loving-kindness with that of mindfulness, we can understand the significance of the practice of loving-kindness in the Buddha's teaching. The Buddha perfected it for the attainment of Enlightenment and balanced it with wisdom. Even after the attainment of Enlightenment, the very first thing he did every day was to enter into the attainment of Great Compassion, which is an outcome of the practice of loving-kindness. Then he surveyed the world to see if there were any beings whom he could help to understand Dhamma.

These four sublime states of mind are called Brahma Vihāra: best behaviour or best attitude. The first three of these are strong enough to attain the first three jhānas, and the last to attain the fourth jhāna. They are so important in the practice of Vipassanā meditation that they are included in the second step of the Noble Eightfold Path. In fact, no concentration is possible without these sublime states of mind because in their absence the mind would be filled with hatred, rigidity, worry, fear, tension and restlessness.

Preliminary to the practice of these noble states of mind is overcoming our hatred, which is a thoughtless

way of wasting one's energy. Hate is compared to boiling water when it is active, or jaundice when it is unexpressed. It can destroy your meditation practice and moral training. The hateful person is compared to a half-burned log of wood left in a funeral pyre. Both ends of this log are burned and turned to charcoal and the middle is covered with filth. Nobody would like to pick it up for firewood or for any other purpose because it can dirty the hand of the person who handles it. Similarly the hateful person will be avoided by all means, if possible, by everybody.

We must start the practice of loving-kindness with ourselves first. Sometimes some of you may wonder why we have to love ourselves first. Wouldn't that amount to self love and lead to selfishness? When you investigate your own mind very carefully, however, you will be convinced that there is no one in the whole universe that you love more than yourself. The Buddha said, "Investigating the whole world with my mind never did I find anyone dearer than oneself. Since oneself is dearer than others, one who loves oneself should never harm others" One who does not love oneself can never love another at all. By the same token one who loves oneself will feel the impact of loving-kindness and then can understand how beautiful it is if every heart in the whole world is filled with the same feeling of loving-kindness.

The loving-kindness that we want to cultivate is not an ordinary love as it is understood in everyday application. When you say, "I love such-and-such a person" or "such-and-such a thing," for instance, what you really mean is that you desire that particular person's appearance, behaviour, ideas, voice or overall attitude, either towards you in particular or towards life in general. If that person changes the things you like in him or her, you may decide that you do not love him or her. If your tastes, whims and fancies or those of the other person change, then you would not say "I love so-and-so." In this love-hate duality you love one and hate another. You love now and hate later. You love when you wish and hate when you wish. You love when everything is smooth and rosy and hate when anything goes wrong with the relationship between you and the

other person or thing. If your love changes from time to time, place to place and situation to situation in this fashion then what you call “love” is not true loving-kindness but lust, greed, or desire—not love by any means.

The kind of loving-kindness that we want to cultivate through meditation does not have its opposite or an ulterior motive. Therefore, the love-hate dichotomy does not apply to loving-kindness cultivated through wisdom or mindfulness, for it will never change into hate as circumstantial changes take place. True loving-kindness is a natural faculty concealed under the heap of greed, hatred and ignorance. Nobody can give it to us. We must find it out within ourselves and cultivate it mindfully. Mindfulness discovers it, cultivates it and maintains it. “I” consciousness (*ahaṃkāra*) dissolves in mindfulness and its place will be taken by loving-kindness free from selfishness.

Because of our selfishness we hate some people. We want to live in certain ways, do certain things in certain ways, perceive things in certain ways and not in any other way. If others do not agree with our views, our ways and our styles, we not only hate them but become entirely so irrational and blind due to lack of mindfulness that we might even deprive them of their lives.

When you practice loving-kindness, you do not get angry if you do not receive any form of favour in return from persons and beings to whom you radiate your loving-kindness, because you have no ulterior motive when you radiate loving-kindness towards them. In this net of loving-kindness not only do you include all beings as they are, but you wish all of them, without any discrimination, to be happy-minded. You continue to behave gently and kindly towards all beings, speaking gently and kindly about them in their presence as well as in their absence.

When we meditate, our minds and bodies become naturally relaxed. Our hindrances dissolve. Our sleepiness and drowsiness, for instance, are replaced by alertness. Doubt is replaced by confidence, hatred by joy, restlessness and worry by happiness. As our resentment is replaced by joy, loving-kindness hidden in our subconscious mind expresses itself, making us more peaceful and happy. In this state of meditation we gain concentration and overcome our greed. We can see how meditation destroys hatred and cultivates loving-kindness, which in turn supports our practice of meditation. Together these two operate in unison, culminating in concentration and insightfulness. Therefore, to pick up one’s own mind-wave of loving-kindness one must fine tune oneself through the practice of mindfulness meditation.

Mindful observation of our own individual mental states can make us aware of how some thought-

waves are harmful, destructive and painful. Others are peaceful and joyful. Then our mind rejects that which is harmful and cultivates that which is peaceful and joyful. We don’t learn this from books or teachers or friends or enemies, but from our own practice and experience. When harmful thoughts arise we learn not to entertain them and when peaceful thoughts arise we let them grow and stay in the mind much longer. This way we learn from our own experience how to think more healthily. This practice conditions our minds to grow loving-kindness. This means that peaceful thought-waves appearing in our mind by themselves can be generated at will later on.

This practice helps us to comprehend that loving-kindness does grow in the backyard of our own mind. Environmental or circumstantial factors play an important role to cultivate it. No human being could be totally devoid of loving-kindness, no matter how cruel he or she may appear to us. The loving-kindness, concealed in each person’s subconscious mind, should be brought out through the skill of mindfulness.

“Mitra” in Vedic literature and “Mitta” in Pali literature means the sun. The nature of the sun can be called “Maitri” or “Mettā.” Maitri or Mettā also means friendliness or loving-kindness. Perhaps the reason why loving-kindness is called so is that it generates very warm feeling towards all beings. Like warmth comes from the sun, one who has loving-kindness has a warm heart towards others. Just as the sun shines indiscriminately on any object in the world, “Mettā” or “Maitri” pervades all beings without any discrimination. Just as the sun dispels darkness, loving-kindness destroys the darkness of hatred. Just like some objects absorb sun more than others, some living beings absorb loving-kindness better than others. Those beings who absorb more loving-kindness are the ones who learn to relax because of their *Kamma*.

The Buddha had cultivated such a powerful loving-kindness that he loved his bitterest enemy, Devadatta, who tried many times to kill him. He loved the highway robber and murderer, Aṅgulimāla, who also came to kill him. He loved Nālāgiri Dhanapāla, an elephant that came to kill him. He loved all of them just the same way he loved his own son, Rāhula. When Devadatta died on the way going to see the Buddha, monks asked the Buddha what his future would be. The Buddha said that he would become a silent Buddha in future. That is the kind of loving-kindness, guided by mindfulness, that allows us to live in peace and harmony.

Loving-kindness or Metta cannot be cultivated by mere repetition of words of loving-kindness. Repetition of such a formula is very much like repeating a prescription to a patient in a hospital or a menu to a hungry person in a restaurant. Repeating a list of things

will never produce the tangible result of the words in the list. Loving-kindness is something we have to cultivate intentionally in our own minds by ourselves.

Loving-kindness develops through meditation. When the mind is relaxed the meditator is able to forgive and forget any offence committed against him. One can practice *Mettā* through tranquillity (*samatha*) meditation. But that is not perpetual because tranquillity achievement can be only temporary. Friendliness cultivated through *Vipassanā*, on the other hand, is perpetual because the effect of *Vipassanā* meditation takes deep root in one's mind. *Vipassanā* meditation softens the mind, and friendliness, cultivated along with the softening of the mind, will take deep root in the mind.

Vipassanā meditators see the impermanence in their forms, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness. They can compare the changes of these aggregates with those of others. Then they do not see any person or thing to hate. If they ask themselves whom they hate, they may not find any individual to hate. By the same token, they may not find any being towards whom they can cultivate loving-kindness either. All they perceive is the phenomena of continuous flux of events that take place every moment in their own states of affairs and that of others. This enables them to forgive and forget the offences that other aggregates have committed against them or their friends or relatives. Loving-kindness meditation genuinely develops our noble qualities which promote our peace and happiness. We cannot inculcate loving-kindness in others' minds. Nor can others give theirs to us. You cannot inculcate loving-kindness in me by force if my *Kamma* prevents my mind from accepting it. Each one of us must prepare the ground for loving-kindness to grow within our own minds.

Also you must have it within yourself before you teach it to others, just like you cannot teach someone a subject if you do not know it yourself first. Suppose you try to teach a subject to others without a having any knowledge of it. You make a fool of yourself. The better you know your subject the better you can teach others. Similarly, the better you train your mind in the discipline of loving-kindness the better you can teach others how to cultivate it.

Of course, you don't have to wait until all your training and learning are complete to start your teaching. While practising loving-kindness by yourself you can gain practical experience. You can't practise it in a vacuum; there should be other living beings for you to work with or work for in order to gain experience. So while practising and receiving your own training in practice of loving-kindness you can train others to practise it. While teaching, you can learn. While learning, you can teach.

Even the *Bodhisattas*, while working hard for their own salvation, help the world. Their practice helps them to attain enlightenment first so they are able to help the world reach the same goal. If they teach others to practise loving-kindness without practising it by themselves, they would not attain enlightenment, nor would they be able to help others to practise loving-kindness.

Each and every one of us must cultivate it by ourselves and for ourselves. You cannot cultivate it for others. Nor can others cultivate it for you. If I practise loving-kindness towards you by myself and if you do not practise it yourself then only I alone will free my mind from ill-will; I cannot free your mind from those negative states. By the same token, if you cultivate loving-kindness for me and I cultivate it for you, then both of us are practising it and will gain benefit.

I should not wait for you to cultivate loving-kindness for me. Neither should you wait for me to cultivate it for you. If you say "Don't practise loving-kindness by yourself; I will do it for you," it does not work.

Don't say "How can I cultivate loving-kindness towards someone who hates me?" If you hate someone who hates you, both of you are equal in doing evil. By asking this question, you are saying, "How can I be good if others are evil?" or "How can I avoid committing crimes when others commit crimes?" You practise loving-kindness not because others cultivate it. You cultivate it for the reason that others do not cultivate it.

In the final analysis the practice of loving-kindness depends on an individual's spiritual development and *Kamma*. Some people's minds are kammically so unfortunate that they find it almost impossible even to dream of the effectiveness of loving-kindness, let alone practicing it, for their *Kamma* prevents them from seeing the benefit of loving-kindness. If you teach a class you will notice that each and every student's performance is not equal. Even identical twins can have different performances. Individuality is the way of expressing one's own emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual development conditioned by one's own *Kamma*. We are not created equal, but born different from one another according to our *Kamma*.

Not even the Buddha can intervene in somebody's *Kamma*. If you do some good *Kamma* and enjoy its result, I cannot steal or take it away from you by force or by friendly means.

If I practise loving-kindness for all beings, I can clear my mind from hatred. Thus my practice of loving-kindness manifests in my behaviour. Beginning the practice of loving-kindness is the beginning of the practice of good *Kamma*, for no good *Kamma* can be

practised without loving-kindness. Introducing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, therefore, the Buddha asked meditators to overcome covetousness and hatred because during the practice of mindfulness the meditator will encounter many problems with both covetousness and hatred.

More often than not, people ask, “Can we eliminate other people’s pain, suffering and hatred by cultivating loving-kindness within ourselves?” Even the Buddha is unable to eradicate other people’s pain and suffering by wishing peace and happiness. The Buddha said: “You must work out your own salvation. The Buddhas are teachers.” As individuals have their share of Kamma, each and every one has to work for their own salvation. If we could eliminate others’ suffering by wishing them to be free from their pain and suffering, then bringing peace and happiness to the whole world would be very easy. If this were possible, by the same token, it would also be possible for a vindictive person to destroy all their enemies by wishing, “Let them be ugly, let them lie in pain, let them have no prosperity, let them not be rich, let them not be famous, let them have no friends and let them, after death, be born in woeful states of existence.” In reality those who make these types of unwholesome wishes themselves can be ugly, in pain, have no prosperity, not be rich, not be famous, have no friends and after death be born in woeful state of existence, because they commit evil Kamma in their own minds by making a wish full of hatred.

Nonetheless, evil thoughts have the power of making others ill and good thoughts have the power of making others well. You may have wondered, “If there are no beings in the ultimate sense, or no self in any sense, or if there are beings in conditional sense, and if my practice of loving-kindness does not annihilate their pain and suffering because of their own Kamma, why should I cultivate loving-kindness?” You should remember that when your mind is full of evil thoughts or angry thoughts, for instance, you speak very roughly in filthy language, cursing language, slanderous language and falsehood. You talk maliciously. When your mind is full of hatred, whatever you see brings you pain; whatever you hear is painful; whatever you smell is unpleasant to you; whatever you eat makes you sick, whatever you touch is unpleasant to your body; and whatever you think is painful. You become vindictive. You always speak ill of others, never see any good in others. You become very critical. You always find faults in others. You never appreciate any good things others do. You can be very jealous all the time. You become very arrogant, ungrateful, mean, very wicked minded. You always think of doing harm to others. You enjoy seeing others in pain, in trouble, in difficulties. You will be very happy to see others fail in their lives.

If your behaviour is very offensive to others, you can easily make others sick. All who are around you will feel sick and not want to work with you. They get headaches and stomach-aches. They become very nervous to be around you. This is how your unwholesome thought affects others.

On the other hand, if your mind is full of loving-kindness you will speak gently, kindly, in friendly language. Whatever you see will be a source of happiness to you; whatever you hear is pleasing to your ears. You can taste your food better. Whatever you touch makes you glad. Whatever you smell will be pleasing to your nose. Whatever you think will be very pleasant and peaceful. You will go out of your way to be very helpful to people. You would become very considerate and understanding. You would have great patience. You would be accommodating. You would always speak the truth. You would always wish to please others. You would be ready to forget and forgive people who wronged you. You would always be relaxed. You would not have an unnecessary and nervous giggle, but would have a friendly smile on your face.

People would love to work with you. They would feel comfortable around you. Their minds also would be very soft and gentle towards you. They would be protective of you. They would not speak ill of you behind your back, but would speak well of you. Their productivity level would increase. Your reputation would increase.

Moreover, you may ask, “What is the use of practising loving-kindness for all living beings by saying: ‘May all beings be happy and secure! May all beings have happy minds! Whatever living beings there may be, without exception—weak or strong, long, large, middling or short, subtle or gross, visible or invisible, living near or far, born or coming to birth—may all beings have happy minds!’ Why should one wish, ‘Let no one deceive another nor despise anyone anywhere. Neither in anger nor ill-will should anyone wish harm to another. As a mother would risk her own life to protect her only child, even so towards all living beings one should cultivate a boundless heart.’ Why should ‘one cultivate for all the world a heart of boundless loving-kindness, above, below, and across, unobstructed, without hate or enmity. Whether standing, sitting, walking or lying down one should cultivate this mindfulness?’”

Likewise, sometimes you may wonder how can we wish our enemies well-being: “May my enemy be well, happy and peaceful. May no harm come to them; may no difficulty come to them; may no problem come to them; may they always meet with success. May they also have patience, courage, understanding and determination to meet and overcome inevitable

difficulties, problems and failures in life?”

We must remember that we practise loving-kindness for the purification of our own minds, just as we practise meditation for our own attainment of enlightenment. As I practise loving-kindness within myself, I can behave in a most friendly manner without biases, prejudices, discrimination or hate. My noble behaviour helps me to help the other conditional beings in a most practical manner to reduce their pain and suffering. It is the compassionate people who behave very gently and kindly to make people around them feel comfortable. Compassion is a manifestation of loving-kindness in action, for one who does not have loving-kindness cannot help others.

Noble behaviour means behaving in a most friendly and most cordial manner. Behaviour consists of our thought, speech and action. If this triple mode of expression is not congruent and our behaviour is contradictory, then something is wrong. Contradictory behaviour cannot be noble behaviour. If someone speaks of loving-kindness and behaves in a most unkind manner, he/she is hypocritical, not honest. On the other hand, pragmatically speaking, it is much better to cultivate the noble thought, “May all beings be happy minded” than the thought “I hate him.” The noble thought will definitely express itself in our noble behaviour and our spiteful thought will express itself in our evil behaviour.

We must remember that our thoughts precede speech and action and are transformed into speech and action in order to bring the expected result. Intention or thought translated into action is capable of producing a positive hormone in our brain. This positive hormone acts as a nutrient and nourishes and strengthens our nerves. When our nerves are charged with this positive

hormone they become strong. This positive hormone will also be transported throughout our bodies by blood circulation, making our cells very healthy. Healthy nerve cells and body cells make our body and mind strong and healthy.

We should always speak and do things with mindfulness of loving-kindness. While speaking of loving-kindness, if you act or speak in a diametrically opposite way you will be reproached by the wise. As mindfulness of loving-kindness develops, our thoughts, words and deeds become gentle, pleasant, meaningful, truthful and beneficial to us as well to others. If our thoughts, words or deeds cause harm to us, to others or to both, then we must ask ourselves whether we are really mindful of loving-kindness.

For all practical purposes, if all of your enemies are well, happy and peaceful, they would not be your enemies. If they are free from problems, pain, suffering, affliction, neurosis, psychosis, psychosomatic paranoia, fear, tension, anxiety, etc., they would not be your enemies any more. Your practical solution to them being your enemies is to help them to overcome their problems, so you can live in peace and happiness. In fact, if you can, you should fill the minds of all your enemies with loving-kindness and make all of them realize Nibbāna, so you can live in peace and happiness. The more they are in neurosis, psychosis, fear, tension, anxiety, etc. the more trouble, pain and suffering they can bring to the world. If you can convert a vicious and wicked person into a holy and saintly person then you perform a miracle that the Buddha permitted us to perform. Let us cultivate adequate wisdom and loving-kindness within ourselves to convert evil minds to saintly minds.

Buddhist Global Relief

For many years Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi was the President and English editor of the Buddhist Publication Society. After resigning from the BPS and returning to the USA due to health reasons, Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi continued working on translations of scriptures of the Pali Canon, but also developed a strong interest in helping those in need and therefore founded the aid organisation Buddhist Global Relief (BGR). The following information about BGR is gleaned from its website (www.buddhistglobalrelief.org).

History

In 2007 Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi wrote an essay in which he called attention to the narrowly inward focus of American Buddhism, which has been pursued to the neglect of the active dimension of Buddhist compassion expressed through programs of social engagement. Several of Ven. Bodhi's students who read the essay felt a desire to follow up on his suggestions. After a few rounds of discussions, they resolved to form

a Buddhist relief organization dedicated to alleviating the suffering of the poor and disadvantaged in the developing world. At the initial meetings, seeking a point of focus, they decided to direct their relief efforts at the problem of global hunger, especially by supporting local efforts by those in developing countries to achieve self-sufficiency through improved food productivity. Contacts were made with leaders and members of other Buddhist communities in the greater New York area, and before long Buddhist Global Relief

emerged as an inter-denominational organization comprising people of different Buddhist groups who share the vision of a Buddhism actively committed to the task of alleviating social and economic suffering.

Vision and Mission

BGR is inspired by the vision of a world in which debilitating poverty has finally been banished; a world in which all can avail themselves of the basic material supports of a meaningful life—food, clothing, housing, and health care; a world in which everyone can achieve a satisfactory level of education and freely pursue that which gives their life value and purpose; a world in which all people dwell in peace and harmony with one another and with the natural environment.

The primary mission of the BGR is to combat chronic hunger and malnutrition. Bearing in mind the Buddha's statements that "hunger is the worst kind of illness" and "the gift of food is the gift of life," BGR sponsors projects that promote hunger relief for poor communities around the world. Its pursue its mission by providing direct food aid to people afflicted by hunger and malnutrition; helping develop better long-term methods of sustainable food production and management appropriate to the cultures and traditions of the beneficiaries; promoting the education of girls and women, so essential in the struggle against poverty and malnutrition; and giving women an opportunity to start right livelihood projects to support their families. BGR also seeks to raise awareness of global hunger and advocate for an international food system that exemplifies social justice and conduces to ecological sustainability.

For close to a billion people around the world, hunger is a real, terrible, and ever-present fate that hounds their every step. According to the World Food Program, each year ten million people, many of them children, die of hunger and hunger-related diseases. Each day over a hundred million people wonder where their next meal will come from. Because it is so commonplace, chronic hunger seldom makes the headlines, seldom whips up massive waves of public sympathy. Its victims suffer in silence, almost forgotten by those with assured livelihoods and comfortably filled stomachs.

The Buddha, however, clearly recognized the frightful toll that hunger takes on human life. In the Dhammapada, he said "Hunger is the worst illness." When people go hungry each day, for months and years on end, every aspect of their life is degraded. The body loses mass and withers away; the pangs of hunger remain constant; one thinks only about food, dreams only about food. And the ultimate prognosis for chronic hunger is grim: debilitating illness, perhaps an early death.

Buddhism teaches that hunger is a source of acute pain and a barrier to spiritual growth. BGR seeks to remove that barrier and thereby give others the chance to live healthy lives of dignity and purpose. Recognizing that all human beings share a common desire for happiness, it lends a helping hand to unseen brothers and sisters across the globe, enabling them to fulfill great dreams and tap unrealized potentials.

It is in response to the cries of those afflicted with chronic hunger that Buddhist Global Relief came into being, and it is to redress this condition that its programs are formulated. It addresses its efforts both to assist victims of sudden disaster who need emergency food aid, and to enable those crippled by chronic food shortages to develop stable, long-term strategies of improved food security. Its endeavor is to ensure that the world's poorest people are provided with adequate nutrition, and provided with it long into the future. When their nutritional needs are met, they will be able to unfold and actualize their fullest potential for goodness and meaning in their lives.

Programs

BGR fights hunger and poverty in the developing world. BGR raises funds for food relief from both private donors and philanthropic organizations. It provides grants to relief organizations, primarily local ones, working in third world communities to provide emergency food relief and to meet the need for clean water, education, and supporting infrastructure.

BGR seeks to develop local capacity and works in partnership with agencies, temples, and relief organizations already operating on the ground to provide the needed relief to victims of natural disaster, violent conflict, and drought. It also supports projects aimed at developing better long-term methods of food production and management in countries stricken by poverty and under-development. In each instance, its goal is to enable local communities to develop long-term sustainable solutions to the problem of hunger.

BGR does not proselytize. Its guiding purpose is to provide aid, not to convert others to Buddhism. Although its initial projects are being launched in countries with largely Buddhist populations, it does not restrict its aid to Buddhists or expect those who receive aid from us to embrace Buddhism. BGR respects the religious beliefs and practices of the people whom it serves and seeks to work in harmony with those of all faiths to alleviate the plight of the poor.

BGR seeks to educate and involve fellow Buddhists and other Buddhist groups in the effort to eliminate hunger. BGR seeks to make the elimination of hunger an integral part of contemporary Buddhist identity. It

brings Buddhist perspectives to bear on many dimensions of global poverty through teaching and publishing materials from its Buddhist tradition that are responsive to the unique challenges of the 21st century.

As a newly established organization with limited means, BGR is focusing initially upon countries in Asia with predominantly Buddhist populations. As resources and abilities grow, it will expand its work to include other people in other lands who suffer due to malnourishment and starvation.

BGR projects are designed both to provide emergency food aid and to promote greater food productivity at the grass-roots level. It partners with organizations that are already operating on the ground in areas of interest. In addition to providing its partners with financial support in the form of grants, it collaborates closely with them and helps to shape their projects.

BGR partners include major international relief agencies, such as Save the Children and the Red Cross; country-based relief groups with an established reputation for effectiveness, such as the Sarvodaya Women's Movement in Sri Lanka; and smaller or emerging agencies that focus on a more local level or address very specific needs, such as Lotus Outreach International.

Past and present projects:

Cambodia: Provide rice support to at-risk and exploited girl students and their families. Provide cash crop seeds

and farming tools to help poor families generate income. Provide education and job training to enable women to escape the sex trade.

India: Provide support for the education of 200 children, mostly girls in the Dalit community in Nagpur, India.

Sri Lanka: Provide support for education and skills training for girls in low income families to allow them to move out of poverty and hunger.

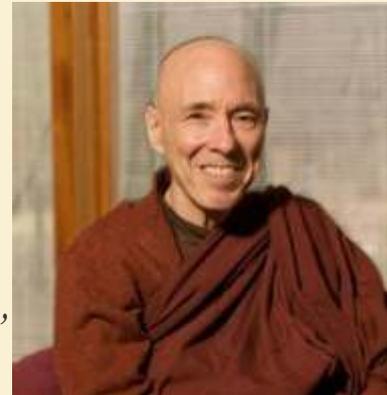
Kenya: Provide training in sustainable agriculture program with a long-term strategy for increased food production and income.

Haiti: Provide support for food and supplies to feed hungry children.

Vietnam: Help poor children to attend primary and secondary school. Provide meals for hospital patients who are not fed. Provide support for rice intensification program for rural farmers.

United States of America: Support local farms that grow fresh produce for soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and other emergency food agencies that feed thousands of hungry people in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

More information about the BGR and how one can contribute can be found at its website at www.buddhistglobalrelief.org. The mailing address is:
Buddhist Global Relief
PO Box 1611, Sparta,
NJ 07871, USA



“In giving food, one gives five things to the recipients: one gives life, beauty, happiness, strength, and mental clarity.

In giving these five things, one in turn partakes of life, beauty, happiness, strength, and mental clarity, whether in this world or in the heavenly realm.”

The Buddha, Anguttara Nikāya 5:37

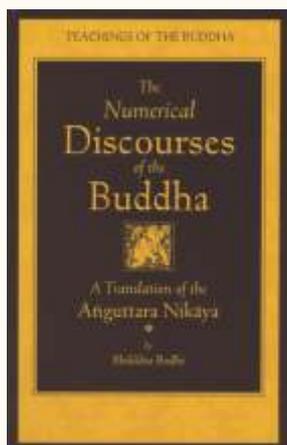


Membership Fees Raise for Sri Lanka Members

Due to the sharp increase in postal rates, the BPS has to raise the membership fees for Sri Lanka members. The new membership fee will be Rs. 1200,- a year for members who receive both Sinhala and English publications. The ten-year membership now costs Rs. 10000. The increase will take effect 1 January, 2014.

	Sinhala & English (both)
Normal	Rs. 1200.00
Retired	Rs. 1000.00
10 Years	Rs. 10000.00

Numerical Discourses of the Buddha



The long awaited new translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi of the complete *Anguttara Nikāya*, called *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, is now available in Sri Lanka. It is distributed by the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, as an inexpensive, Rs. 2200, Sri Lanka/South Asia only edition in cooperation with Wisdom Publications, USA.

The *Anguttara Nikāya* or *Collection of Numerical Discourses* is the fourth of the major collections (*nikāya*) of discourses (*suttas*) of the Buddha, the first part of the Pali Buddhist Canon, the *Tiṭṭaka*. In this *Numerical Discourses*, the discourses are systematically arranged according to the number of topics they contain, which run from one to eleven, that is, the first book, the book of ones, only contains discourses with one topic, while the discourses in the book of elevens contain eleven topics.

The topics are wide-ranging, from basic morality and family life, to the different stages of enlightenment, and the highest attainments of concentration and insight meditation.

The *Anguttara Nikāya* is distinctive in that many of the discourses deal with the different kinds of persons—good and bad, wise and unwise—and in that many discourses are addressed to laypeople. An example of both is the discourse on the seven different kinds of wives, by which the Buddha disciplined Sujātā, Anāthapiṇḍika's rowdy daughter-in-law. The *Anguttara Nikāya* discourses also contain many wonderful similes that elucidate the teachings, such as the simile of the goldsmith, in which the purification of mind is likened to gold smith purifying gold so that it become malleable and bright.

As the *Anguttara Nikāya* contains more than 2300 discourses, which are not thematically arranged, it can be difficult to find one's way in the collection. Fortunately, accessibility is made easy by the detailed thematic outline, extensive introduction, notes, and indices that Bhikkhu Bodhi meticulously prepared.

The translator, Bhikkhu Bodhi, is an American Buddhist monk. He was editor and president of the Buddhist Publication Society for many years and has many publications to his credit, either as translator, editor or contributor. He is the founder and chairperson of Buddhist Global Relief.

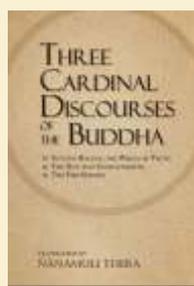
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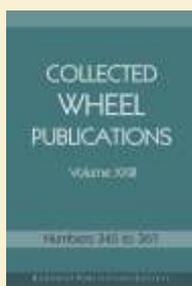


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