

THE WAY OF PRACTICE

CHAPTER ONE
THE WAY OF PURIFICATION

I
PURIFICATION OF THE MIND

1. People have worldly passions which lead them into delusions and sufferings. There are five ways to emancipate themselves from the bond of worldly passions.

First, they should have right ideas of things, ideas that are based on careful observation, and understand causes and effects and their significance correctly. Since the cause of suffering is rooted in the mind's desires and attachments, and since desire and attachment are related to mistaken observations by an ego-self, neglecting the significance of the law of cause and effect, and since it is from these wrong observations, there can be peace only if the mind can be rid of these worldly passions.

Second, people can get rid of these mistaken observations and resulting worldly passions by careful and patient mind-control. With efficient mind-control they can avoid desires arising from the stimulation of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and the subsequent mental processes and, by so doing, cut off the very root of all worldly passions.

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Third, they should have correct ideas with regard to the proper use of all things. That is, with regard to articles of food and clothing, they should not think of them in relation to comfort and pleasure, but only in their relation to the body's needs. Clothing is necessary to protect the body against extremes of heat and cold, and to conceal the shame of the body; food is necessary for the nourishment of the body while it is training for Enlightenment and Buddhahood. Worldly passions can not arise through such thinking.

Fourth, people should learn endurance; they should learn to endure the discomforts of heat and cold, hunger and thirst; they should learn to be patient when receiving abuse and scorn; for it is the practice of endurance that quenches the fire of worldly passions which is burning up their bodies.

Fifth, people should learn to see and so avoid all danger. Just as a wise man keeps away from wild horses or mad dogs, so one should not make friends with evil men, nor should one go to places that wise men avoid. If one practices caution and prudence, the fire of worldly passions which is burning in their vitals will die down.

2. There are five groups of desires in the world.

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Desires arising from the forms the eyes see; from the sounds the ears hear; from the fragrances the nose smells; from tastes pleasant to the tongue; from things that are agreeable to the sense of touch. From these five doors to desire come the body's love of comfort.

Most people, being influenced by the body's love of comfort, do not notice the evils that follow comfort, and they are caught in a devil's trap like a deer in the forest caught in a hunter's trap. Indeed, these five doors of desires arising from the senses are the most dangerous traps. When caught by them, people are entangled in worldly passions and suffer. They should know how to get rid of these traps.

3. There is no one way to get free from the trap of worldly passions. Suppose you caught a snake, a crocodile, a bird, a dog, a fox and a monkey, six creatures of very different natures, and you tie them together with a strong rope and let them go. Each of these six creatures will try to go back to its own lair by its own method: the snake will seek a covering of grass, the crocodile will seek water, the bird will want to fly in the air, the dog will seek a village, the fox will seek the solitary ledges, and the monkey will seek the trees of a forest. In the attempt of each to go its own way there will be a struggle, but, being tied together by a rope, the strongest at any one time will drag the rest.

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Like the creatures in this parable, people are tempted in different ways by the desires of their six senses, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch and mind, and is controlled by the predominant desire.

If the six creatures are all tied to a post, they will try to get free until they are tired out, and then will lie down by the post. Just like this, if people will train and control the mind there will be no further trouble from the other five senses. If the mind is under control people will have happiness both now and in the future.

4. People love their egoistic comfort, which is a love of fame and praise. But fame and praise are like incense that consumes itself and soon disappears. If people chase after honors and public acclaim and leave the way of truth, they are in serious danger and will soon have cause for regret.

A man who chases after fame and wealth and love affairs is like a child who licks honey from the blade of a knife. While he is tasting the sweetness of honey, he has to risk hurting his tongue. He is like a man who carries a torch against a strong wind; the flame will surely burn his hands and face.

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One must not trust his own mind that is filled with greed, anger and foolishness. One must not let one's mind run free, but must keep it under strict control.

5. To attain perfect mind-control is a most difficult thing. Those who seek Enlightenment must first rid themselves of the fire of all desires. Desire is a raging fire, and one seeking Enlightenment must avoid the fire of desire as a man carrying a load of hay avoids sparks.

But it would be foolish for a person to put out one's eyes for fear of being tempted by beautiful forms. The mind is master and if the mind is under control, the weaker desires will disappear.

It is difficult to follow the way to Enlightenment, but it is more difficult if people have no mind to seek such a way. Without Enlightenment, there is endless suffering in this world of life and death.

When a person seeks the way to Enlightenment, it is like an ox carrying a heavy load through a field of mud. If the ox tries to do its best without paying attention to other things, it can overcome the mud and take a rest. Just so, if the mind is controlled and kept on the right path, there will be no mud of greed to hinder it and all its suffering will disappear.

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6. Those who seek the path to Enlightenment must first remove all egoistic pride and be humbly willing to accept the light of Buddha's teachings. All the treasures of the world, all its gold and silver and honors, are not to be compared with wisdom and virtue.

To enjoy good health, to bring true happiness to one's family, to bring peace to all, one must first discipline and control one's own mind. If a man can control his mind he can find the way to Enlightenment, and all wisdom and virtue will naturally come to him.

Just as treasures are uncovered from the earth, so virtue appears from good deeds, and wisdom appears from a pure and peaceful mind. To walk safely through the maze of human life, one needs the light of wisdom and the guidance of virtue.

The Buddha's teaching, which tells people how to eliminate greed, anger and foolishness, is a good teaching and those who follow it attain the happiness of a good life.

7. Human beings tend to move in the direction of their thoughts. If they harbor greedy thoughts, they become more greedy; if they think angry thoughts, they become more angry; if they hold foolish thoughts, their feet move in that direction.

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At harvest time farmers keep their herds confined, lest they break through the fences into the field and give cause for complaint or for being killed; so people must closely guard their minds against dishonesty and misfortune. They must eliminate thoughts that stimulate greed, anger and foolishness, but encourage thoughts that stimulate charity and kindness.

When spring comes and the pastures have an abundance of green grass, farmers turn their cattle loose; but even then they keep a close watch over them. It is so with the minds of people: even under the best of conditions the mind will bear watching.

8. At one time Shakyamuni Buddha was staying in the town of Kausambi. In this town there was one who resented Him and who bribed wicked men to circulate false stories about Him. Under these circumstances it was difficult for His disciples to get sufficient food from their begging and there was much abuse in that town.

Ananda said to Shakyamuni: “We had better not stay in a town like this. There are other and better towns to go to. We had better leave this town.”

The Blessed One replied: “Suppose the next town is like this, what shall we do then?”

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“Then we move to another.”

The Blessed One said: “No, Ananda, there will be no end in that way. We had better remain here and bear the abuse patiently until it ceases, and then we move to another place.”

“There are profit and loss, slander and honor, praise and abuse, suffering and pleasure in this world; the Enlightened One is not controlled by these external things; they will cease as quickly as they come.”

II

THE GOOD WAY OF BEHAVIOR

1. Those who seek the way of Enlightenment must always bear in mind the necessity of constantly keeping their body, speech and mind pure. To keep the body pure one must not kill any living creature, one must not steal or commit adultery. To keep speech pure one must not lie, or abuse, or deceive, or indulge in idle talk. To keep the mind pure one must remove all greed, anger and false judgment.

If the mind becomes impure, for sure, one’s deeds will be impure; if the deeds are impure, there will be suffering. So it is of the greatest importance that the mind and the body be kept pure.

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2. Once there was a rich widow who had a reputation for kindness, modesty and courtesy. She had a housemaid who was wise and diligent.

One day the maid thought: “My mistress has a very good reputation; I wonder whether she is good by nature, or is good because of her surroundings. I will try her and find out.”

The following morning the maid did not appear before her mistress until nearly noon. The mistress was vexed and scolded her impatiently. The maid replied: “If I am lazy for only a day or two, you ought not to become impatient.” Then the mistress became angry.

The next day the maid got up late again. This made the mistress very angry and she struck the maid with a stick. This incident became widely known and the rich widow lost her good reputation.

3. Many people are like this woman. While their surroundings are satisfactory they are kind, modest and quiet, but it is questionable if they will behave likewise when the conditions change and become unsatisfactory.

It is only when a person maintains a pure and peaceful mind and continues to act with goodness when unpleasant words enter his ears, when others show ill-will

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toward him or when he lacks sufficient food, clothes and shelter, that we may call him good.

Therefore, those who do good deeds and maintain a peaceful mind only when their surroundings are satisfactory are not really good people. Only those who have received the Buddha's teachings and are training their minds and bodies by those teachings can be called truly good, modest and peaceful people.

4. As to the suitability of words to be used there are five pairs of antonyms: words that are suitable to their occasions and those not so suitable to theirs; words that fit the facts and those that don't fit; words that sound pleasant and those that sound rude; words that are beneficial and those that are harmful; and words that are sympathetic and those that are hateful.

Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill. If our minds are filled with sympathy and compassion, they will be resistant to the evil words we hear. We must not let wild words pass our lips lest they arouse feelings of anger and hatred. The words we speak should always be words of sympathy and wisdom.

Suppose there is a man who wants to remove all the

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dirt from the ground. He uses a spade and a winnow and works perseveringly scattering the dirt all about, but it is an impossible task. Like this foolish man we can not hope to eliminate all words. We must train our mind and fill our hearts with sympathy so that we will be undisturbed by the words spoken by others.

One might try to paint a picture with water colors on the blue sky, but it is impossible. And it is also impossible to dry up a great river by the heat of a torch made of hay, or to produce a crackling noise by rubbing together two pieces of well-tanned leather. Like these examples, people should train their minds so that they would not be disturbed by whatever kinds of words they might hear.

They should train their minds and keep them broad as the earth, unlimited as the sky, deep as a big river and soft as well-tanned leather.

Even if your enemy catches and tortures you, if you feel resentment, you are not following the Buddha's teachings. Under every circumstance you should learn to think: "My mind is unshakable. Words of hatred and anger shall not pass my lips. I will surround my enemy with thoughts of sympathy and pity that flow out from a mind filled with compassion for all sentient life."

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5. There is a fable told of a man who found an anthill which burned in the daytime and smoked at night. He went to a wise man and asked his advice as to what he should do about it. The wise man told him to dig into it with a sword. This the man did. He found in succession a gate-bar, some bubbles of water, a pitchfork, a box, a tortoise, a butcher-knife, a piece of meat and, finally, a dragon which came out. The man reported to the wise man what he had found. The wise man explained the significance of it and said, "Throw away everything but the dragon; leave the dragon alone and do not disturb him."

This is a fable in which "anthill" represents the human body. "Burned in the daytime" represents the fact that during the day people turn into acts the things they thought about the previous night. "Smoked at night" indicates the fact that people during the night recall with pleasure or regret the things they did the previous day.

In the same fable, "a man" means a person who seeks Enlightenment. "A wise man" means Buddha. "A sword" means pure wisdom. "Dig into it" refers to the effort he must make to gain Enlightenment.

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Further in the fable, “gate-bar” represents ignorance; “bubbles” are puffs of suffering and anger; “pitch-fork” suggests hesitation and uneasiness; “box” suggests the storage of greed, anger, laziness, fickleness, repentance and delusion; “tortoise” means the body and the mind; “butcher-knife” means the synthesis of the five sensory desires, and “a piece of meat” means the resulting desire that causes a man to covet after satisfaction. These things are all harmful to man and so Buddha said, “Throw away everything.”

Still further, “dragon” indicates a mind that has eliminated all worldly passions. If a man digs into the things about him with the sword of wisdom he will finally come to his dragon. “Leave the dragon alone and do not disturb him” means to go after and dig up a mind free of worldly desires.

6. Pindola, a disciple of Buddha, after gaining Enlightenment, returned to his native place of Kausambi to repay the people there for the kindness they had shown him. In so doing he prepared the field for the sowing of Buddha-seeds.

On the outskirts of Kausambi there is a small park that runs along the bank of the Ganges River shaded by endless rows of coconut trees and where a cool wind continually blows.

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One hot summer day, Pindola sat in meditation in the cool shade of a tree when King Udayana came to this park with his consorts for recreation and, after music and pleasure, he took a nap in the shade of another tree.

While their King was asleep, his wives and ladies-in-waiting took a walk and suddenly came upon Pindola sitting in meditation. They recognized him as a holy-man and asked him to teach them, and they listened to his sermon.

When the King awoke from his nap, he went in search of his ladies and found them surrounding this man and listening to his teaching. Being of a jealous and lascivious mind, the King became angry and abused Pindola, saying: "It is inexcusable that you, a holy-man, should be in the midst of women and enjoy idle talking with them." Pindola quietly closed his eyes and remained silent.

The angry King drew his sword and threatened Pindola, but the holy-man remained silent and was as firm as a rock. This made the King still more angry so he broke open an anthill and threw some of the ant-filled dirt upon him, but still Pindola remained sitting in meditation, quietly enduring the insult and pain.

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Thereupon, the King became ashamed of his ferocious conduct and begged Pindola's pardon. As a result of this incident, the Buddha's teaching found its way into the King's castle and from there it spread all over the country.

7. A few days later King Udayana visited Pindola in the forest retreat where he lived and asked him, "Honored teacher, how is it that the disciples of Buddha can keep their bodies and minds pure and untempted by lust, although they are mostly young men?"

Pindola replied: "Noble Lord, Buddha has taught us to respect all women. He has taught us to look upon all old women as our mothers, upon those of our own age as our sisters, and upon younger ones as our daughters. Because of this teaching the disciples of Buddha are able to keep their bodies and minds pure and untempted by lust although they are youthful."

"But, Honored teacher, one may have impure thoughts of a woman the age of a mother or a sister or a daughter. How do the disciples of Buddha control their desires?"

"Noble Lord, the Blessed One taught us to think of our bodies as secreting impurities of all kinds such as blood, pus, sweat and oils; by thinking thus, we, although

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young, are able to keep our minds pure.”

“Honored teacher,” still pressed the King. “It may be easy for you to do this for you have trained your body and mind, and polished your wisdom, but it would be difficult for those who have not yet had such training. They may try to remember the impurities but their eyes will follow beautiful forms. They may try to see the ugliness but they will be tempted by the beautiful figures just the same. There must be some other reason that the young men among the Buddha’s disciples are able to keep their actions pure.”

“Noble Lord,” replied Pindola, “the Blessed One teaches us to guard the doors of the five senses. When we see beautiful figures and colors with our eyes, when we hear pleasant sounds with our ears, when we smell fragrance with our nose, or when we taste sweet things with our tongue or touch soft things with our hands, we are not to become attached to these attractive things, neither are we to be repulsed by unattractive things. We are taught to carefully guard the doors of these five senses. It is by this teaching of the Blessed One that even young disciples are able to keep their minds and bodies pure.”

“The teaching of Buddha is truly marvelous. From my own experience I know that if I confront anything beautiful or pleasing, without being on my guard, I am

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disturbed by the sense impressions. It is of vital importance that we be on guard at the doors of the five senses, at all times to keep our deeds pure.”

8. Whenever a person expresses the thought of his mind in action there is always a reaction that follows. If one abuses you, there is a temptation to answer back, or to be revenged. One should be on guard against this natural reaction. It is like spitting against the wind, it harms no one but oneself. It is like sweeping dust against the wind, it does not get rid of the dust but defiles oneself. Misfortune always dogs the steps of one who gives way to the desire for revenge.

9. It is a very good deed to cast away greed and to cherish a mind of charity. It is still better to keep one's mind intent on respecting the Noble Path.

One should get rid of a selfish mind and replace it with a mind that is earnest to help others. An act to make another happy inspires the other to make still another happy, and so happiness is born from such an act.

Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.

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Those who seek Enlightenment must be careful of their each step. No matter how high one's aspiration may be, it must be attained step by step. The steps of the path to Enlightenment must be taken in our everyday life.

10. At the very beginning of the path to Enlightenment there are twenty difficulties for us to overcome in this world, and they are: 1. It is hard for a poor man to be generous. 2. It is hard for a proud man to learn the Way of Enlightenment. 3. It is hard to seek Enlightenment at the cost of self-sacrifice. 4. It is hard to be born while Buddha is in the world. 5. It is hard to hear the teaching of Buddha. 6. It is hard to keep the mind pure against the instincts of the body. 7. It is hard not to desire things that are beautiful and attractive. 8. It is hard for a strong man not to use his strength to satisfy his desires. 9. It is hard not to get angry when one is insulted. 10. It is hard to remain innocent when tempted by sudden circumstances. 11. It is hard to apply oneself to study widely and thoroughly. 12. It is hard not to despise a beginner. 13. It is hard to keep oneself humble. 14. It is hard to find good friends. 15. It is hard to endure the discipline that leads to Enlightenment. 16. It is hard not to be disturbed by external conditions and circumstances. 17. It is hard to teach others by knowing their abilities. 18. It is hard to maintain a peaceful mind.

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19. It is hard not to argue about right and wrong. 20. It is hard to find and learn a good method.

11. Good men and bad men differ from each other in their natures. Bad men do not recognize a sinful act as sinful; if its sinfulness is brought to their attention, they do not cease doing it and do not like to have anyone inform them of their sinful acts. Wise men are sensitive to right and wrong; they cease doing anything as soon as they see that it is wrong; they are grateful to anyone who calls their attention to such wrong acts.

Thus good men and bad men differ radically. Bad men never appreciate kindness shown them, but wise men appreciate and are grateful. Wise men try to express their appreciation and gratitude by some return of kindness, not only to their benefactor, but to everyone else.

III

TEACHING IN ANCIENT FABLES

1. Once upon a time there was a country which had the very peculiar custom of abandoning its aged people in remote and inaccessible mountains.

A certain minister of the State found it too difficult to follow this custom in the case of his own aged father,

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and so he built a secret underground cave where he hid his father and cared for him.

One day a god appeared before the king of that country and gave him a puzzling problem, saying that if he could not solve it satisfactorily, his country would be destroyed. The problem was: “Here are two serpents; tell me the sex of each.”

Neither the king nor anyone in the palace was able to solve the problem; so the king offered a great reward to anyone in his kingdom who could.

The minister went to his father’s hiding place and asked him for the answer to that problem. The old man said: “It is an easy solution. Place the two snakes on a soft carpet; the one that moves about is the male, and the other that keeps quiet is the female.” The minister carried the answer to the king and the problem was successfully solved.

Then the god asked other difficult questions which the king and his retainers were unable to answer, but which the minister, after consulting his aged father, could always solve.

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Here are some of the questions and their answers. “Who is the one who, being asleep, is called the awakened one, and, being awake, is called the sleeping one?” The answer is this: - It is the one who is under training for Enlightenment. He is awake when compared with those who are not interested in Enlightenment; he is asleep when compared with those who have already attained Enlightenment.

“How can you weigh a large elephant?” “Load it on a boat and draw a line to mark how deep the boat sinks into the water. Then take out the elephant and load the boat with stones until it sinks to the same depth, and then weigh the stones.”

What is the meaning of the saying, “A cupful of water is more than the water of an ocean?” This is the answer: “A cupful of water given in a pure and compassionate spirit to one’s parents or to a sick person has an eternal merit, but the water of an ocean will some day come to an end.”

Next the god made a starving man, reduced to skin and bones, complain, “Is there anyone in this world more hungry than I?” “The man who is so selfish and greedy that he does not believe in the Three Treasures of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Samgha, and who does not make offerings to his parents and teachers, is not only

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more hungry but he will fall into the world of hungry demons and there he will suffer from hunger forever.”

“Here is a plank of Chandana wood; which end was the bottom of the tree?” “Float the plank in water; the end that sinks a little deeper was the end nearest the root.”

“Here are two horses apparently of the same size and form; how can you tell the mother from the son?” “Feed them some hay; the mother horse will push the hay toward her son.”

Every answer to these difficult questions pleased the god as well as the king. The king was grateful to find out that the answers had come from the aged father whom the minister had hidden in the cave, and he withdrew the law of abandoning aged people in the mountains and ordered that they were to be treated kindly.

2. Queen of Videha in India once dreamed of a white elephant that had six ivory tusks. She coveted the tusks and besought the king to get them for her. Although the task seemed an impossible one, the king who loved the queen very much offered a reward to any hunter who would report if he found such an elephant.

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It happened that there was just such an elephant with six tusks in the Himalayan Mountains who was training for Buddhahood. The elephant once had saved a hunter's life in an emergency in the depths of the mountains and the hunter could go back safely to his country. The hunter, however, blinded by the great reward and forgetting the kindness the elephant had shown him, returned to the mountains to kill the elephant.

The hunter, knowing that the elephant was seeking Buddhahood, disguised himself in the robe of a Buddhist monk and, thus catching the elephant off guard, shot it with a poisoned arrow.

The elephant, knowing that its end was near and that the hunter had been overcome by the worldly desire for the reward, had compassion upon him and sheltered him in its limbs to protect the hunter from the fury of the other revengeful elephants. Then the elephant asked the hunter why he had done such a foolish thing. The hunter told of the reward and confessed that he coveted its six tusks. The elephant immediately broke off the tusks by hitting them against a tree and gave them to the hunter saying: – “By this offering I have completed my training for Buddhahood and will be reborn in the Pure Land. When I become a Buddha, I will help you to get rid of your three poisonous arrows of greed, anger and foolishness.”

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3. In a thicket at the foot of the Himalayan Mountains there once lived a parrot together with many other animals and birds. One day a fire started in the thicket from the friction of bamboos in a strong wind and the birds and animals were in frightened confusion. The parrot, feeling compassion for their fright and suffering, and wishing to repay the kindness he had received in the bamboo thicket where he could shelter himself, tried to do all he could to save them. He dipped himself in a pond nearby and flew over the fire and shook off the drops of water to extinguish the fire. He repeated this diligently with a heart of compassion out of gratitude to the thicket.

This spirit of kindness and self-sacrifice was noticed by a heavenly god who came down from the sky and said to the parrot: – “You have a gallant mind, but what good do you expect to accomplish by a few drops of water against this great fire?” The parrot answered: – “There is nothing that can not be accomplished by the spirit of gratitude and self-sacrifice. I will try over and over again and then over in the next life.” The great god was impressed by the parrot’s spirit and together they extinguished the fire.

4. At one time there lived in the Himalayas a bird with one body and two heads. Once one of the heads noticed the other head eating some sweet fruit and felt jealous and said to itself: – “I will then eat poison fruit.” So it ate

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poison and the whole bird died.

5. At one time the tail and the head of a snake quarreled as to which should be the front. The tail said to the head:— “You are always taking the lead; it is not fair, you ought to let me lead sometimes.” The head answered;— “It is the law of our nature that I should be the head; I can not change places with you.”

But the quarrel went on and one day the tail fastened itself to a tree and thus prevented the head from proceeding. When the head became tired with the struggle the tail had its own way, with the result that the snake fell into a pit of fire and perished.

In the world of nature there always exists an appropriate order and everything has its own function. If this order is disturbed, the functioning is interrupted and the whole order will go to ruin.

6. There was a man who was easily angered. One day two men were talking in front of the house about the man who lived there. One said to the other: — “He is a nice man but is very impatient; he has a hot temper and gets angry quickly.” The man overheard the remark, rushed out of the house and attacked the two men, striking and kicking and wounding them.

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When a wise man is advised of his errors, he will reflect on them and improve his conduct. When his misconduct is pointed out, a foolish man will not only disregard the advice but rather repeat the same error.

7. Once there was a wealthy but foolish man. When he saw the beautiful three-storied house of another man, he envied it and made up his mind to have one built just like it, thinking he was himself just as wealthy. He called a carpenter and ordered him to build it. The carpenter consented and immediately began to construct the foundation, the first story, the second story, and then the third story. The wealthy man noticed this with irritation and said: – “I don’t want a foundation or a first story or a second story; I just want the beautiful third story. Build it quickly.”

A foolish man always thinks only of the results, and is impatient without the effort that is necessary to get good results. No good can be attained without proper effort, just as there can be no third story without the foundation and the first and the second stories.

8. A foolish man was once boiling honey. His friend suddenly appeared and the foolish man wanted to offer him some honey, but it was too hot, and so without removing it from the fire he fanned it to make it cool. In like manner, it is impossible to get the honey of cool

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wisdom without first removing it from the fire of worldly passions.

9. Once there were two demons who spent a whole day arguing and quarreling about a box, a cane and a pair of shoes. A man, passing by, inquired, “Why are you arguing about these things? What magical power have they that you should be quarreling about possessing them?”

The demons explained to him that from the box they could get anything they desired—food, clothing or treasure; with the cane they could subdue all their enemies; and with the pair of shoes they could travel through the air.

Upon hearing this, the man said: “Why quarrel? If you will go away for a few minutes, I can think of a fair division of the things between you.” So the two demons retired and as soon as they were gone, the man put on the shoes, seized the box and the cane and was off through the air.

The “demons” represent men of heathen beliefs. “A box” means the gifts that are made in charity; they do not realize how many treasures can be produced from charity. “A cane” means the practice of concentration of the mind. Men do not realize that by the practice of

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spiritual concentration of mind, they can subdue all worldly desires. “A pair of shoes” means the pure disciplines of thought and conduct, that will carry them beyond all desires and arguments. Without knowing these, they quarrel and argue about a box, a cane and a pair of shoes.

10. Once upon a time a man was traveling alone. He came to a vacant house toward the evening and decided to spend the night there. About midnight a demon brought in a corpse and left it on the floor. Shortly, another demon appeared and claimed the corpse as his and they quarreled over it.

Then the first demon said it was useless to argue about it further and proposed that they refer it to a judge to decide the possessor. The other demon agreed to this and, seeing the man cowering in the corner, asked him to decide the ownership. The man was terribly frightened, for he well knew that whatever decision he might make would anger the demon that lost and that the losing demon would seek revenge and kill him, but he decided to tell truthfully just what he had witnessed.

As he expected, this angered the second demon who grabbed one of the man’s arms and tore it off, but the first demon replaced the arm with one taken from the corpse. The angry demon tore away the man’s other arm,

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but the first demon immediately replaced that with the other arm of the corpse. And so it went on until both arms, both legs, the head and the body had been successively torn away and replaced with the corresponding parts of the corpse. Then the two demons, seeing the parts of the man scattered about on the floor, picked them up and devoured them and went away chuckling.

The poor man who had taken refuge in the deserted house was very much upset by his misfortunes. The parts of his body which the demons had eaten were the parts his parents had given him, and the parts that he now had belonged to the corpse. Who was he, anyway? Realizing all the facts, he was unable to figure it out and, becoming crazy, he wandered out of the house. Coming to a temple, he went in and told his troubles to the monks. People could see the true meaning of selflessness in his story.

11. Once a beautiful and well-dressed woman visited a house. The master of the house asked her who she was; and she replied that she was the goddess of wealth. The master of the house was delighted and so treated her nicely.

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Soon after another woman appeared who was ugly looking and poorly dressed. The master asked who she was and the woman replied that she was the goddess of poverty. The master was frightened and tried to drive her out of the house, but the woman refused to depart, saying, "The goddess of wealth is my sister. There is an agreement between us that we are never to live separately; if you chase me out, she is to go with me." Sure enough, as soon as the ugly woman went out, the other woman disappeared.

Birth goes with death. Fortune goes with misfortune. Bad things follow good things. People should realize this. Foolish people dread misfortune and strive after good fortune, but those who seek Enlightenment must transcend both of them and be free of worldly attachments.

12. Once there lived a poor artist who left his home, leaving his wife, to seek his fortune. After three years of hard struggles he had saved three hundred pieces of gold and decided to return to his home. On his way he came to a great temple in which a grand ceremony of offering was in progress. He was greatly impressed by it and thought to himself: "Hitherto, I have thought only of the present; I have never considered my future happiness. It is a part of my good fortune that I have come to this place; I must take advantage of it to plant seeds of

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merit.” Thinking thus, he gratefully donated all his savings to the temple and returned to his home penniless.

When he reached home, his wife reproached him for not bringing her some money for her support. The poor artist replied that he had earned some money but had put it where it would be safe. When she pressed him to tell where he had hidden it, he confessed that he had given it to the monks at a certain temple.

This made the wife angry and she scolded her husband and finally carried the matter to the local judge. When the judge asked the artist for his defence, the artist said that he had not acted foolishly, for he had earned the money during long and hard struggles and wanted to use it as seed for future good fortune. When he came to the temple it seemed to him that there was the field where he should plant his gold as seed for good fortune. Then he added: “When I gave the monks the gold, it seemed that I was throwing away all greed and stinginess from my mind, and I have realized that real wealth is not gold but mind.”

The judge praised the artist’s spirit, and those who heard of this manifested their approval by helping him in various ways. Thus the artist and his wife entered into permanent good fortune.

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13. A man living near a cemetery heard one night a voice calling him from a grave. He was too timid to investigate it himself but the next day he mentioned it to a brave friend, who made up his mind to trace the place whence the voice came the following night.

While the timid man was trembling with fear, his friend went to the cemetery and, sure enough, the same voice was heard coming from a grave. The friend asked who it was and what it wanted. The voice from under the ground replied: "I am a hidden treasure that has decided to give myself to someone. I offered it to a man last night but he was too timid to come after it, so I will give it to you who are worthy of it. Tomorrow morning I will come to your house with my seven followers."

The friend said: "I will be waiting for you, but please tell me how I am to treat you." The voice replied: "We will come in monk's robes. Have a room ready for us with water; wash your body and clean the room, and have seats for us and eight bowls of rice-porridge. After the meal, you are to lead us one by one into a closed room in which we will transform ourselves into crocks of gold."

The next morning this man washed his body and cleaned the room just as he had been told and waited for

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the eight monks to appear. In due time they appeared and he received them courteously. After they had eaten the food he led them one by one into the closed room, where each monk turned himself into a crock full of gold.

There was a very greedy man in the same village who learned of the incident and wanted the crocks of gold. He invited eight monks to his house. After their meal he led them into a closed room, but instead of turning themselves into crocks of gold, they became angry and rough and reported the greedy man to the police who eventually arrested him.

As for the timid man, when he heard that the voice from the grave had brought wealth to the brave man, he went to the house of the brave man and greedily demanded the gold, insisting that it was his, because the voice first addressed him. When the timid man tried to take the crocks away he found lots of snakes inside raising their heads ready to attack him.

The king heard about this and ruled that the crocks belonged to the brave man and uttered the following observation: "Everything in the world goes like this. Foolish people are avaricious for good results only, but are too timid to go after them and, therefore, are continually failing. They have neither faith nor courage to face the internal struggles of the mind by which alone true

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peace and harmony can be attained.”

CHAPTER TWO
**THE WAY OF PRACTICAL
ATTAINMENT**

I
SEARCH FOR TRUTH

1. In the search for truth there are certain questions that are unimportant. Of what material is the universe constructed? Is the universe eternal? Are there limits or not to the universe? In what way is this human society put together? What is the ideal form of organization for human society? If a man were to postpone his searching and practicing for Enlightenment until such questions were solved, he would die before he found the path.

Suppose a man were pierced by a poisoned arrow, and his relatives and friends got together to call a surgeon to have the arrow pulled out and the wound treated.

If the wounded man objects, saying, "Wait a little. Before you pull it out, I want to know who shot this arrow. Was it a man or a woman? Was it someone of noble birth, or was it a peasant? What was the bow made of? Was it a big bow, or a small bow, that shot the arrow? Was it made of wood or bamboo? What was the bow-

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string made of? Was it made of fiber, or of gut? Was the arrow made of rattan, or of reed? What feathers were used? Before you extract the arrow, I want to know all about these things.” Then what will happen?

Before all this information can be secured, no doubt, the poison will have time to circulate all through the system and the man may die. The first duty is to remove the arrow, and prevent its poison from spreading.

When a fire of passion is endangering the world, the composition of the universe matters little; what is the ideal form for the human community is not so important to deal with.

The question of whether the universe has limits or is eternal can wait until some way is found to extinguish the fires of birth, old age, sickness and death; in the presence of misery, sorrow, suffering and agony, one should first search for a way to solve these problems and devote oneself to the practice of that way.

The Buddha’s teaching contains what is important to know and not what is unimportant. That is, it teaches

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people that they must learn what they should learn, remove what they should remove, train for what they should become enlightened about.

Therefore, people should first discern what is the most important, what problem should be solved first and what is the most pressing issue for them. To do all this, they must first undertake to train their minds; that is, they must first seek mind-control.

2. Suppose a man goes to the forest to get some of the pith that grows in the center of a tree and returns with a burden of branches and leaves, thinking that he has secured what he went after; would he not be foolish, if he is satisfied with the bark, wood for the pith which he was after? But that is what many people are doing.

A person seeks a path that will lead him away from birth, old age, sickness and death, or from misery, sorrow, suffering and agony; and yet, he follows the path a little way, notices some little advance, and immediately becomes proud and conceited and domineering. He is like the man who sought pith and went away satisfied with a burden of branches and leaves.

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Another man becoming satisfied with the progress he has made by a little effort, relaxes his effort and becomes proud and conceited; he is carrying away only a load of branches instead of the pith he was seeking.

Still another man finding that his mind is becoming calmer and his thoughts clearer, he, too, relaxes his effort and becomes proud and conceited; he has a burden of the bark instead of the pith he was looking for.

Then again, another man becomes proud and conceited because he notices that he has gained a measure of intuitive insight; he has a load of the woody fiber of the tree instead of the pith. All of these seekers, who become easily satisfied by their insufficient effort and become proud and over-bearing, relax their efforts and easily fall into idleness. All these people will inevitably face suffering again.

Those who seek the true path to Enlightenment must not expect any offer of respect, honor or devotion. And further, they must not aim with a slight effort, at a trifling advance in calmness or knowledge or insight.

First of all, one should get clearly in mind the basic and essential nature of this world of life and death.

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3. The world has no substance of its own. It is simply a vast concordance of causes and conditions that have had their origin, solely and exclusively, in the activities of the mind that has been stimulated by ignorance, false imagination, desires and infatuation. It is not something external about which the mind has false conceptions; it has no substance whatever. It has come into appearance by the processes of the mind itself, manifesting its own delusions. It is founded and built up out of the desires of the mind, out of its sufferings and struggles incidental to the pain caused by its own greed, anger and foolishness. Men who seek the way to Enlightenment should be ready to fight such a mind to attain their goal.

4. “Oh my mind! Why do you hover so restlessly over the changing circumstances of life? Why do you make me so confused and restless? Why do you urge me to collect so many things? You are like a plow that breaks in pieces before beginning to plow; you are like a rudder that is dismantled just as you are venturing out on the sea of life and death. Of what use are many rebirths if we do not make good use of this life?”

“Oh my mind! Once you caused me to be born as a king, and then you caused me to be born as an outcast and to beg for my food. Sometimes you cause me to be born in heavenly mansions of the gods and to dwell in luxury and in ecstasy; then you plunge me into the

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flames of hell.”

“Oh, my foolish, foolish mind! Thus you have led me along different paths and I have been obedient to you and docile. But now that I have heard the Buddha’s teaching, do not disturb me any more or cause me further sufferings, but let us seek Enlightenment together, humbly and patiently.”

“Oh, my mind! If you could only learn that everything is non-substantial and transitory; if you could only learn not to grasp after things, not to covet things, not to give way to greed, anger and foolishness; then we might journey in quietness. Then, by severing the bond of desires with the sword of wisdom, being undisturbed by changing circumstances - advantage or disadvantage, good or bad, loss or gain, praise or abuse - we might dwell in peace.”

“Oh, my dear mind! It was you who first awakened faith in us; it was you who suggested our seeking Enlightenment. Why do you give way so easily to greed, love of comfort and pleasant excitement again?”

“Oh, my mind! Why do you rush hither and thither with no definite purpose? Let us cross this wild sea of delusion. Hitherto I have acted as you wished, but now you must act as I wish and, together, we will follow the

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Buddha's teaching.”

“Oh, my dear mind! These mountains, rivers and seas are changeable and pain-producing. Where in this world of delusion shall we seek quietness? Let us follow the Buddha's teaching and cross over to the other shore of Enlightenment.”

5. Thus, those who really seek the path to Enlightenment dictate terms to their mind. Then they proceed with strong determination. Even though they are abused by some and scorned by others, they go forward undisturbed. They do not become angry if they are beaten by fists, or hit by stones, or gashed by swords.

Even if enemies cut their head from the body, the mind must not be disturbed. If they let their mind become darkened by the things they suffer, they are not following the teaching of Buddha. They must be determined, no matter what happens to them, to remain steadfast, unmovable, ever radiating thoughts of compassion and good-will. Let abuse come, let misfortune come, and yet one should resolve to remain unmoved and tranquil in mind, filled with Buddha's teaching.

For the sake of attaining Enlightenment, one should try to accomplish the impossible and one should endure

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the unendurable. One must give what he has to the last of it. If he is told that to gain Enlightenment he must limit his food to a single grain of rice a day, he will eat only that. If the path to Enlightenment leads him through fire, he will go forward.

But one must not do these things for any ulterior purpose. One should do them because it is the wise thing, the right thing, to do. One should do them out of a spirit of compassion, as a mother does things for her little child, for her sick child, with no thought of her own strength or comfort.

6. Once there was a king who loved his people and his country and ruled them with wisdom and kindness and, because of it his country was prosperous and peaceful. He was always seeking for greater wisdom and enlightenment; he even offered rewards to anyone who could lead him to worthy teachings.

His devotion and wisdom finally came to the attention of the gods, but they determined to test him. A god in disguise as a demon appeared before the gates of the king's palace and asked to be brought before the king as he had a holy teaching for him.

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The king who was pleased to hear the message courteously received him and asked for instruction. The demon took on a dreadful form and demanded food, saying that he could not teach until he had the food he liked. Choice food was offered the demon, but he insisted that he must have warm human flesh and blood. The crown-prince gave his body and the queen also gave her body, but still the demon was unsatisfied and so demanded the body of the king.

The king expressed his willingness to give his body, but asked that he might first hear the teaching before he would offer his body.

The god uttered the following wise teaching: "Misery rises from lust and fear rises from lust. Those who remove lust have no misery or fear." Suddenly the god resumed his true form and the prince and the queen also reappeared in their original bodies.

7. Once there was a person who sought the True Path in the Himalayas. He cared nothing for all the treasures of the earth or even for all the delights of heaven, but he sought the teaching that would remove all mental delusions.

The gods were impressed by the man's earnestness and sincerity and decided to test his mind. So one of the gods disguised himself as a demon and appeared in the

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Himalayas, singing: "Everything changes, everything appears and disappears."

The seeker heard this song which pleased him very much. He was as delighted as if he had found a spring of cool water for his thirst or as if a slave had been unexpectedly set free. He said to himself, "At last I have found the true teaching that I have sought for so long." He followed the voice and at last came upon the frightful demon. With an uneasy mind he approached the demon and said: "Was it you who sang the holy song that I have just heard? If it was you, please sing more of it."

The demon replied: "Yes, it was my song, but I can not sing more of it until I have had something to eat; I am starving."

The man begged him very earnestly to sing more of it, saying: "It has a sacred meaning to me and I have sought its teaching for a long time. I have only heard a part of it; please let me hear more."

The demon said again: "I am starving, but if I can taste the warm flesh and blood of a man, I will finish the song."

The man, in his eagerness to hear the teaching, promised the demon that he could have his body after he

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had heard the teaching. Then the demon sang the complete song.

Everything changes,
Everything appears and disappears,
There is perfect tranquility
When one transcends both life and extinction.

Hearing this, the man, after he wrote the poem on rocks and trees around, quietly climbed a tree and hurled himself to the feet of the demon, but the demon had disappeared and, instead, a radiant god received the body of the man unharmed.

8. Once upon a time there was an earnest seeker of the true path named Sadaprarudita. He cast aside every temptation for profit or honor and sought the path at the risk of his life. One day a voice from heaven came to him, saying, "Sadaprarudita! Go straight toward the east. Do not think of either heat or cold, pay no attention to worldly praise or scorn, do not be bothered by discriminations of good or evil, but just keep on going east. In the far east you will find a true teacher and will gain Enlightenment."

Sadaprarudita was very pleased to get this definite instruction and immediately started on his journey eastward. Sometimes he slept where night found him in a

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lonely field or in the wild mountains.

Being a stranger in foreign lands, he suffered many humiliations; once he sold himself into slavery, selling his own flesh out of hunger, but at last he found the true teacher and asked for his instruction.

There is a saying, “Good things are costly,” and Sadaprarudita found it true in his case, for he had many difficulties on his journey in search of the path. He had no money to buy some flowers and incense to offer the teacher. He tried to sell his services but could find no one to hire him. There seemed to be an evil spirit hindering him every way he turned. The path to Enlightenment is a hard one and it may cost a man his life.

At last Sadaprarudita reached the presence of the teacher himself and then he had a new difficulty. He had no paper on which to take notes and no brush or ink to write with. Then he pricked his wrist with a dagger and took notes in his own blood. In this way he secured the precious Truth.

9. Once there was a boy named Sudhana who also wished for Enlightenment and earnestly sought the way. From a fisherman he learned the lore of the sea. From a doctor he learned compassion toward sick people in their suffering. From a wealthy man he learned that saving pennies was the secret of his fortune and thought how

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necessary it was to conserve every trifling gained on the path to Enlightenment.

From a meditating monk he learned that the pure and peaceful mind had a miraculous power to purify and tranquilize other minds. Once he met a woman of exceptional personality and was impressed by her benevolent spirit, and from her he learned a lesson that charity was the fruit of wisdom. Once he met an aged wanderer who told him that to reach a certain place he had to scale a mountain of swords and pass through a valley of fire. Thus Sudhana learned from his experiences that there was true teaching to be gained from everything he saw or heard.

He learned patience from a poor, crippled woman; he learned a lesson of simple happiness from watching children playing in the street; and from some gentle and humble people, who never thought of wanting anything that anybody else wanted, he learned the secret of living at peace with all the world.

He learned a lesson of harmony from watching the blending of the elements of incense, and a lesson of thanksgiving from the arrangement of flowers. One day, passing through a forest, he took a rest under a noble tree and noticed a tiny seedling growing near by out of a fallen and decaying tree and it taught him a lesson of the

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uncertainty of life.

Sunlight by day and the twinkling stars by night constantly refreshed his spirit. Thus Sudhana profited by the experiences of his long journey.

Indeed, those who seek for Enlightenment must think of their minds as castles and decorate them. They must open wide the gates of their minds for Buddha, and respectfully and humbly invite Him to enter the inmost chamber, there to offer Him the fragrant incense of faith and the flowers of gratitude and gladness.

II THE WAYS OF PRACTICE

1. For those who seek Enlightenment there are three ways of practice that must be understood and followed: First, disciplines for practical behavior; second, right concentration of mind; and third, wisdom.

What are disciplines? Everyone, whether a person is a common person or a way-seeker, should follow the precepts for good behavior. One should control both the mind and body, and guard the gates of one's five senses. One should be afraid of even a trifling evil and, from moment to moment, should endeavor to practice only good deeds.

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What is meant by the concentration of mind? It means to get quickly away from greedy and evil desires as they arise and to hold the mind pure and tranquil.

What is wisdom? It is the ability to perfectly understand and to patiently accept the Fourfold Noble Truth, to know the fact of suffering and its nature; to know the source of suffering, to know what constitutes the end of suffering, and to know the Noble Path that leads to the end of suffering.

Those who earnestly follow these three ways of practice may rightly be called the disciples of Buddha.

Suppose a donkey, that has no nice shape, no voice and no horns like those of the cow, was following a herd of cows and proclaiming, "Look, I am also a cow." Would any one believe him? It is just as foolish when a person does not follow the three ways of practice but boasts that he is a way-seeker or a disciple of Buddha.

Before a farmer gathers a harvest in the fall, he must first plow the ground, sow the seed, irrigate, and remove the weeds as they come up in the springtime. Likewise, the seeker of Enlightenment must follow the three ways of practice. A farmer can not expect to see the

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buds today, to see the plants tomorrow, and to gather the harvest the day after. So a person who seeks Enlightenment can not expect to remove worldly desires today, to remove attachments and evil desires tomorrow, and to get Enlightenment the day after.

Just as plants receive the patient care of the farmer after the seed has been sown and during the changes of climate and during the growth from plant to fruit, so the seeker of Enlightenment must patiently and perseveringly cultivate the soil of Enlightenment by following the three ways of practice.

2. It is difficult to advance along the path that leads to Enlightenment so long as one is covetous of comforts and luxuries and his mind disturbed by the desires of the senses. There is a wide difference between the enjoyment of life and the enjoyment of the True Path.

As already explained, the mind is the source of all things. If the mind enjoys worldly affairs, illusions and suffering will inevitably follow, but if the mind enjoys the True Path, happiness, contentment and enlightenment will just as surely follow.

Therefore, those who are seeking Enlightenment should keep their minds pure, and patiently keep and

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practice the three ways. If they keep the precepts they will naturally obtain concentration of mind; and if they obtain concentration of the mind it will be just as natural for them to grasp wisdom, and wisdom will lead them to Enlightenment.

Indeed, these three ways (keeping the precepts, practicing concentration of mind and always acting wisely) are the true path to Enlightenment.

By not following them, people have for a long time accumulated mental delusions. They must not argue with worldly people, but must patiently meditate in their inner world of a pure mind in order to attain Enlightenment.

3. If the three ways of practice are analyzed, they will reveal the eightfold noble path, the four viewpoints to be considered, the four right procedures, the five faculties of power to be employed, and the perfection of six practices.

The Noble Eightfold Path refers to Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Behavior, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

Right View means to thoroughly understand the Fourfold Truth, to believe in the law of cause and effect

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and not to be deceived by appearances and desires.

Right Thought means the resolution not to cherish, desires, not to be greedy, not to be angry, and not to do any harmful deed.

Right Speech means the avoidance of lying words, idle words, abusive words, and double-tongues.

Right Behavior means not to destroy any life, not to steal, or not to commit adultery.

Right Livelihood means to avoid any life that would bring shame.

Right Effort means to try to do one's best diligently toward the right direction.

Right Mindfulness means to maintain a pure and thoughtful mind.

Right Concentration means to keep the mind right and tranquil for its concentration, seeking to realize the mind's pure essence.

4. The Four View-points to be considered are: First, to consider the body impure, seeking to remove all attachment to it, second, to consider the senses as a source of

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suffering, whatever their feelings of pain or pleasure may be; third, to consider the mind to be in a constant state of flux, and fourth, to consider everything in the world as being a consequence of causes and conditions and that nothing remains unchanged forever.

5. The Four Right Procedures are: First, to prevent any evil from starting; second, to remove any evil as soon as it starts; third, to induce the doing of good deeds; and fourth, to encourage the growth and continuance of good deeds that have already started. One must endeavor to keep these four procedures.

6. The Five Faculties of Power are: First, the faith to believe; second, the will to make the endeavor; third, the faculty of alertness; fourth, the ability to concentrate one's mind; and fifth, the ability to maintain clear wisdom. These five faculties are necessary powers to attain Enlightenment.

7. The Perfection of Six Practices for reaching the other shore of Enlightenment are: the path of Offering, the path of Keeping Precepts, the path of Endurance, the path of Endeavor, the path of Concentration of mind, and the path of Wisdom. By following these paths, one can

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surely pass from the shore of delusion over to the shore of Enlightenment.

The practice of Offering gets rid of selfishness; the practice of Precepts keeps one thoughtful of the rights and comforts of others; the practice of Endurance helps one to control a fearful or angry mind; the practice of Endeavor helps one to be diligent and faithful; the practice of Concentration helps one to control a wandering and futile mind; and the practice of Wisdom changes a dark and confused mind into a clear and penetrating insight.

Offering and Keeping Precepts make the foundation necessary to build a great castle on. Endurance and Endeavor are the walls of the castle that protect it against enemies from outside. Concentration and Wisdom are the personal armor that protects one against the assaults of life and death.

If one gives away a gift only when convenient, or because it is easier to give than not to give, it is an offering, of course, but it is not a True Offering. A True Offering comes from a sympathetic heart before any request is made, and a True Offering is the one that gives not occasionally but constantly.

Neither is it a True Offering if after the act there are

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feelings of regret or of self-praise; a True Offering is one that is given with pleasure, forgetting oneself as the giver, the one who receives it and the gift itself.

True Offering springs spontaneously from one's pure compassionate heart with no thought of any return, wishing to enter into a life of Enlightenment together.

There are seven kinds of offering which can be practiced by even those who are not wealthy. The first is the physical offering. This is to offer service by one's labor. The highest type of this offering is to offer one's own life as is shown in the following story. The second is the spiritual offering. This is to offer a compassionate heart to others. The third is the offering of eyes. This is to offer a warm glance to others which will give them tranquility. The fourth is the offering of countenance. This is to offer a soft countenance with smile to others. The fifth is the oral offering. This is to offer kind and warm words to others. The sixth is the seat offering. This is to offer one's seat to others. The seventh is the offering of shelter. This is to let others spend the night at one's home. These kinds of offering can be practiced by anyone in everyday life.

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8. Once there was a prince named Sattva. One day he and his two elder brothers went to a forest to play. There they saw a famished tigress which was evidently tempted to devour her own seven cubs to satisfy her hunger.

The elder brothers ran away in fear but Sattva climbed up a cliff and threw himself over it to the tigress in order to save the lives of the baby tigers.

Prince Sattva did this charitable act spontaneously but within his mind he was thinking: "This body is changing and impermanent; I have loved this body with no thought of throwing it away, but now I make it an offering to this tigress so that I may gain Enlightenment." This thought of Prince Sattva shows the true determination to gain Enlightenment.

9. There are Four Unlimited States of Mind that the seeker of Enlightenment should cherish. They are Compassion, Tenderness, Gladness and Equanimity. One can remove greed by cherishing Compassion; one can remove anger by Tenderness; one can remove suffering by Gladness, and one can remove the habit of discrimination of enemies and friends by cherishing an Equitable mind.

It is a great compassion that makes people happy and contented; it is a great tenderness that removes

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everything that does not make people happy and contented; it is a great gladness that makes everyone happy and contented with a mind of joy; there is a great peacefulness when everyone is happy and contented, and then one can have equal feelings toward everybody.

With care one may cherish these Four Unlimited States of Mind and may get rid of greed, anger, suffering, and the minds of love-hate, but it is not an easy thing to do. An evil mind is as hard to get rid of as a watchdog, and a right mind is as easy to lose as a deer in a forest; or an evil mind is as hard to remove as letters carved in stone, and a right mind is as easy to lose as words written in water. Indeed, it is the most difficult thing in life to train oneself for Enlightenment.

10. There was a young man named Srona who was born in a wealthy family but was of delicate health. He was very earnest to gain Enlightenment and became a disciple of the Blessed One. On the path to Enlightenment, he tried so hard that finally his feet bled.

The Blessed One pitied him and said, “Srona my boy, did you ever study the harp at your home? You know that a harp does not make music if the strings are stretched too tight or too loose. It makes music only when the strings are stretched just right.

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“The training for Enlightenment is just like adjusting the harp strings. You can not attain Enlightenment if you stretch the strings of your mind too loosely or too tightly. You must be considerate and act wisely.”

Srona found these words very profitable and finally gained what he sought.

11. Once there was a prince who was skillful in the use of the five weapons. One day he was returning home from his practice and met a monster whose skin was invulnerable.

The monster started for him but nothing daunted the prince. He shot an arrow at him which fell harmless. Then he threw his spear which failed to penetrate the thick skin. Then he threw a bar and a javelin but they failed to hurt the monster. Then he used his sword but the sword broke. The prince attacked the monster with his fists and feet but to no purpose, for the monster clutched him in his giant arms and held him fast. Then the prince tried to use his head as a weapon but in vain.

The monster said, “It is useless for you to resist; I am going to devour you.” But the prince answered, “You may think that I have used all my weapons and am helpless, but I still have one weapon left. If you devour me, I will destroy you from the inside of your stomach.”

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The courage of the prince disturbed the monster and he asked, "How can you do that?" The prince replied, "By the power of the Truth."

Then the monster released him and begged for his instruction in the Truth.

The teaching of this fable is to encourage disciples to persevere in their efforts and to be undaunted in the face of many set backs.

12. Both odious self-assertion and shamelessness offend mankind, but dishonor and shame protect human beings. People respect their parents, elders, brothers and sisters because they are sensitive to dishonor and shame. After self-reflection it is meritorious to withhold honor from one's self and to feel ashamed by observing other people.

If a person possesses a repentant spirit one's sins will disappear, but if one has an unrepentant spirit one's sins will continue and condemn that person forever.

It is only the one who hears the true teaching rightly and realizes its meaning and relation to oneself who can receive and profit by it.

If a person merely hears the true teaching but does not acquire it, one will fail in one's search for Enlightenment.

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Faith, modesty, humbleness, endeavor and wisdom are the great sources of strength to him who is seeking Enlightenment. Among these, wisdom is the greatest of all and the rest are but the aspects of wisdom. If a man, while in his training, loves worldly affairs, enjoys idle talk or falls asleep, he will be retired from the path to Enlightenment.

13. In training for Enlightenment, some may succeed quicker than others. Therefore, one should not be discouraged to see others becoming enlightened first.

When a man is practicing archery, he does not expect quick success but knows that if he practices patiently, he will become more and more accurate. A river begins as a brook but grows ever larger until it flows into the great ocean.

Like these examples, if a person trains with patience and perseverance, one will surely gain Enlightenment.

As already explained, if one keeps one's eyes open, he will see the teaching everywhere, and so his opportunities for Enlightenment are endless.

Once there was a man who was burning incense. He noticed that the fragrance was neither coming nor going; it neither appeared nor disappeared. This trifle incident led him to gain Enlightenment.

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Once there was a man who got a thorn stuck in his foot. He felt the sharp pain and a thought came to him, that pain was only a reaction of the mind. From this incident a deeper thought followed that the mind may get out of hand if one fails to control it, or it may become pure if one succeeds. From these thoughts, a little later, Enlightenment came to him.

There was another man who was very avaricious. One day he was thinking of his greedy mind when he realized that greedy thoughts were but shavings and kindlings that wisdom could burn and consume. That was the beginning of his Enlightenment.

There is an old saying: “Keep your mind level. If the mind is level, the whole world will be level.” Consider these words. Realize that all the distinctions of the world are caused by the discriminating views of the mind. There is a path to Enlightenment in those very words. Indeed, the ways to Enlightenment are unlimited.

III THE WAY OF FAITH

1. Those who take refuge in the Three Treasures, the Buddha, the Dharma and the Samgha, are called the disciples of Buddha. The disciples of Buddha observe (the

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four parts of mind-control) the precepts, faith, offering and wisdom.

The disciples of Buddha practice the Five Precepts: not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to lie, and not to take intoxicants of any kind.

The disciples of Buddha have faith in the Buddha's perfect wisdom. They try to keep away from greediness and selfishness and to practice offering. They understand the law of cause and effect, keeping in mind the transiency of life and conform to the norm of wisdom.

A tree leaning toward the east will naturally fall eastward and so those who listen to the Buddha's teaching and maintain faith in it will surely be born in the Buddha's Pure Land.

2. It has rightly been said that those who believe in the Three Treasures of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Samgha are called the disciples of Buddha.

The Buddha is the one who attained perfect Enlightenment and used His attainment to emancipate and bless all mankind. The Dharma is the truth, the spirit of Enlightenment and the teaching that explains it. The Samgha is the perfect brotherhood of believers in the Buddha and Dharma.

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We speak of Buddhahood, the Dharma and the Brotherhood as though they are three different things, but they are really only one. Buddha is manifested in His Dharma and is realized by the Brotherhood. Therefore, to believe in the Dharma and to cherish the Brotherhood is to have faith in the Buddha, and to have faith in the Buddha means to believe in the Dharma and to cherish the Brotherhood.

Therefore, people are emancipated and enlightened simply by having faith in the Buddha. Buddha is the perfectly Enlightened One and He loves everyone as though each were His only child. So if anyone regards Buddha as his own parent, he identifies himself with Buddha and attains Enlightenment.

Those who thus regard Buddha will be supported by His wisdom and perfumed by His grace.

3. Nothing in the world brings greater benefit than to believe in Buddha. Just hearing Buddha's name, believing and being pleased even for a moment, is incomparably rewarding.

Therefore, one must please oneself by seeking the teaching of Buddha in spite of the conflagration that fills all the world.

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It will be hard to meet a teacher who can explain the Dharma; it will be harder to meet a Buddha; but it will be hardest to believe in His teaching.

But now that you have met the Buddha, who is hard to meet, and have had it explained to you what is hard to hear, you ought to rejoice and believe and have faith in Buddha.

4. On the long journey of human life, faith is the best of companions; it is the best refreshment on the journey; and it is the greatest possession.

Faith is the hand that receives the Dharma; it is the pure hand that receives all the virtues. Faith is the fire that consumes all the impurities of worldly desires, it removes the burden, and it is the guide that leads one's way.

Faith removes greed, fear and pride; it teaches courtesy and to respect others; it frees one from the bondage of circumstances; it gives one courage to meet hardship; it gives one power to overcome temptations; it enables one to keep one's deeds bright and pure; and it enriches the mind with wisdom.

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Faith is the encouragement when one's way is long and wearisome, and it leads to Enlightenment.

Faith makes us feel that we are in the presence of Buddha and it brings us to where Buddha's arm supports us. Faith softens our hard and selfish minds and gives us a friendly spirit and a mind of understanding sympathy.

5. Those who have faith gain the wisdom to recognize the Buddha's teaching in whatever they hear. Those who have faith gain the wisdom to see that everything is but the appearance that arises from the law of causes and conditions, and then faith gives them the grace of patient acceptance and the ability to conform to their conditions peacefully.

Faith gives them the wisdom to recognize the transiency of life and the grace not to be surprised or grieved at whatever comes to them or with the passing of life itself, knowing that, however conditions and appearances may change, the truth of life remains always unchanged.

Faith has three significant aspects: repentance, a rejoicing and sincere respect for the virtues of others, and a grateful acceptance of Buddha's appearance.

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People should cultivate these aspects of faith; they should be sensitive to their failings and impurities; they should be ashamed of them and confess them; they should diligently practice the recognition of the good traits and good deeds of others and praise them for their sake; and they should habitually desire to act with Buddha and to live with Buddha.

The mind of faith is the mind of sincerity; it is a deep mind, a mind that is sincerely glad to be led to Buddha's Pure Land by His power.

Therefore, Buddha gives a power to faith that leads people to the Pure Land, a power that purifies them, a power that protects them from self-delusion. Even if they have faith only for a moment, when they hear Buddha's name praised all over the world, they will be led to His Pure Land.

6. Faith is not something that is added to the worldly mind – it is the manifestation of the mind's Buddha-nature. One who understands Buddha is a Buddha himself; one who has faith in Buddha is a Buddha himself.

But it is difficult to uncover and recover one's Buddha nature; it is difficult to maintain a pure mind in the constant rise and fall of greed, anger and worldly passion; yet faith enables one to do it.

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Within the forest of the poisonous Eranda trees only Eranda trees are said to grow, but not the fragrant Chandana. It is a miracle if a Chandana tree grows in an Eranda forest. Likewise, it is often a miracle that faith in Buddha grows in the heart of the people.

Therefore, the faith to believe in Buddha is called a “rootless” faith. That is, it has no root by which it can grow in the human mind, but it has a root to grow in the compassionate mind of Buddha.

7. Thus faith is fruitful and sacred. But faith is hard to awaken in an idle mind. In particular, there are five doubts that lurk in the shadows of the human mind and tend to discourage faith.

First, there is doubt in the Buddha’s wisdom; second, there is doubt in the Buddha’s teaching; third, there is doubt in the person who explains the Buddha’s teachings; fourth, there is doubt as to whether the ways and methods suggested for following the Noble Path are reliable; and fifth, there is a person who, because of his arrogant and impatient mind, may doubt the sincerity of others who understand and follow the Buddha’s teachings.

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Indeed, there is nothing more dreadful than doubt. Doubt separates people. It is a poison that disintegrates friendships and breaks up pleasant relations. It is a thorn that irritates and hurts; it is a sword that kills.

The beginnings of faith were long ago planted by the compassion of Buddha. When one has faith, one should realize this fact and be very grateful to Buddha for His goodness.

One should never forget that it is not because of one's own compassion that one has awakened faith, but because of the Buddha's compassion which long ago threw its pure light of faith into human minds and dispelled the darkness of their ignorance. He who enjoys the present faith has entered into their heritage.

Even living an ordinary life, one can be born in the Pure Land, if he awakens faith through the Buddha's long continued compassion.

It is, indeed, hard to be born in this world. It is hard to hear the Dharma; it is harder to awaken faith; therefore, everyone should try one's best to hear the Buddha's teachings.

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IV SACRED SAYINGS

1. “He abused me, he laughed at me, he struck me.” Thus one thinks and so long as one retains such thoughts one’s anger continues.

Anger will never disappear so long as there are thoughts of resentment in the mind. Anger will disappear just as soon as thoughts of resentment are forgotten.

If a roof is improperly made or in disrepair, rain will leak into the house; so greed enters the mind that is improperly trained or out of control.

To be idle is a short road to death and to be diligent is a way of life; foolish people are idle, wise people are diligent.

An arrow-maker tries to make his arrows straight; so a wise man tries to keep his mind straight.

A disturbed mind is forever active, jumping hither and thither, and is hard to control; but a tranquil mind is peaceful; therefore, it is wise to keep the mind under control.

It is a man’s own mind, not his enemy or foe, that lures him into evil ways.

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The one who protects his mind from greed, anger and foolishness, is the one who enjoys real and lasting peace.

2. To utter pleasant words without practicing them is like a fine flower without fragrance.

The fragrance of a flower does not float against the wind; but the honor of a good man goes even against the wind into the world.

A night seems long to a sleepless person and a journey seems long to a weary traveler; so the time of delusion and suffering seems long to a person who does not know the right teaching.

On a trip a man should travel with a companion of equal mind or one who has a better mind; one had better travel alone than to travel with a fool.

An insincere and evil friend is more to be feared than a wild beast; a wild beast may wound your body, but an evil friend will wound your mind.

So long as a man can not control his own mind, how can he get any satisfaction from thinking such thoughts as, "This is my son" or "This is my treasure"? A foolish

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man suffers from such thoughts.

To be foolish and to recognize that one is a fool, is better than to be foolish and imagine that one is wise.

A spoon cannot taste of the food it carries. Likewise, a foolish man cannot understand the wise man's wisdom even if he associates with a sage.

Fresh milk is often slow to curdle; so sinful actions do not always bring immediate results. Sinful actions are more like coals of fire that are hidden in the ashes and keep on smoldering, finally causing a greater fire.

A person is foolish to desire privileges, promotion, profits, or honor, for such desires can never bring happiness but will bring suffering instead.

A good friend who points out mistakes and imperfections and rebukes evil is to be respected as if he reveals the secret of some hidden treasure.

3. A person who is pleased when one receives good instruction will sleep peacefully, because one's mind is thereby cleansed.

A carpenter seeks to make his beam straight; an arrow-maker seeks to make his arrows well-balanced; the

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digger of an irrigation ditch seeks to make the water run smoothly; so a wise person seeks to control one's mind so that it will function smoothly and truly.

A great rock is not disturbed by the wind; the mind of a wise person is not disturbed by either honor or abuse.

To conquer oneself is a greater victory than to conquer thousands in a battle.

To live a single day and hear a good teaching is better than to live a hundred years without knowing such teaching.

Those who respect themselves must be on constant guard lest they yield to evil desires. Once in a lifetime, at least, they should awaken faith, either in their youth, or in middle age, or even in old age.

The world is always burning, burning with the fires of greed, anger and foolishness; one should flee from such dangers as soon as possible.

The world is like a bubble, it is like the gossamer web of a spider, it is like the defilement in a dirty jar; one should constantly protect the purity of one's mind.

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4. To avoid any evil, to seek the good, to keep the mind pure: this is the essence of Buddha's teaching.

Endurance is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is to him who endures that the final victory comes.

One must remove resentment when he is feeling resentful; one must remove sorrow while he is in the midst of sorrow; one must remove greediness while he is steeped in greed. To live a pure unselfish life, one must count nothing as one's own in the midst of abundance.

To be healthy is a great advantage; to be contented with what one has is better than the possession of great wealth; to be considered reliable is the truest mark of friendliness; to attain Enlightenment is the highest happiness.

When one has the feeling of dislike for evil, when one feels tranquil, when one finds pleasure in listening to good teachings, when one has these feelings and appreciates them, one is free of fear.

Do not become attached to the things you like, do not maintain aversion to the things you dislike. Sorrow, fear and bondage come from one's likes and dislikes.

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5. Rust grows from iron and destroys it; so evil grows from the mind of human and destroys him.

A scripture that is not read with sincerity soon becomes covered with dust; a house that is not fixed when it needs repairing becomes filthy; so an idle person soon becomes defiled.

Impure acts defile a person; stinginess defiles an offering; so evil acts defile not only this life but also the following lives.

But the defilement to be most dreaded is the defilement of ignorance. A person can not hope to purify either one's body or mind until ignorance is removed.

It is easy to slip into shamelessness, to be pert and bold like a crow, to hurt others without any feeling of regret for such action.

It is hard, indeed, to feel humble, to know respect and honor, to get rid of all attachments, to keep pure in thought and deed, and to become wise.

It is easy to point out the mistakes of others, while it is hard to admit one's own mistakes. A person broadcasts the sins of others without thinking, but one hides one's own sins as a gambler hides his extra dice.

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The sky holds no trace of bird or smoke or storm; an evil teaching carries no Enlightenment; nothing in this world is stable; but an Enlightened mind is undisturbed.

6. As a knight guards his castle gate, so one must guard one's mind from dangers outside and dangers inside; one must not neglect it for a moment.

Everyone is the master of oneself, one is the oasis he can depend on; therefore, everyone should control himself above all.

The first steps toward spiritual freedom from the worldly bonds and fetters are to control one's mind, to stop idle talk, and to be somewhat pensive.

The sun makes the day bright, the moon makes the night beautiful, discipline adds to the dignity of a warrior; so quiet meditation distinguishes the seeker for Enlightenment.

One who is unable to guard one's five senses of eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, and becomes tempted by one's surroundings, is not the one who can train for Enlightenment. One who firmly guards the gateways of one's five senses and keeps one's mind under control is the one who can successfully train for Enlightenment.

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7. One who is influenced by one's likes and dislikes can not rightly understand the significance of circumstances and tends to be overcome by them; one who is free from attachments rightly understands circumstances and to one's all things become new and significant.

Happiness follows sorrow, sorrow follows happiness, but when one no longer discriminates between happiness and sorrow, a good deed and a bad deed, one is able to realize freedom.

To worry in anticipation or to cherish regret for the past is like the reeds that are cut and wither away.

The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, not to worry about the future, or not to anticipate troubles, but to live wisely and earnestly for the present.

Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.

It is worthy to perform the present duty well and without failure; do not seek to avoid or postpone it till tomorrow. By acting now, one can live a good day.

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Wisdom is the best guide and faith is the best companion. One must try to escape from the darkness of ignorance and suffering, and seek the light of Enlightenment.

If a person's body and mind are under control one should give evidence of it in virtuous deeds. This is a sacred duty. Faith will then be his wealth, sincerity will give his life a sweet savor, and to accumulate virtues will be his sacred task.

On life's journey faith is nourishment, virtuous deeds are a shelter, wisdom is the light by day and right mindfulness is the protection by night. If a person lives a pure life nothing can destroy that person; if one has conquered greed nothing can limit one's freedom.

One should forget oneself for the sake of one's family; one should forget one's family for the sake of one's village; one should forget one's village for the sake of the nation; and one should forget everything for the sake of Enlightenment.

Everything is changeable, everything appears and disappears; there is no blissful peace until one passes beyond the agony of life and death.