

# Meditation

## Part 3 of 6

### The Buddha and His Teachings

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# Session #3 Agenda

Today's topic: Buddha's Teachings

- History of the Buddha
- The Buddha's Teachings
- Meditation Practice
- Q&A



# History of The Buddha

- The Buddha was a real person, and his story is well documented
  - He lived in Northern India in 500 BCE.
  - His name was Siddhartha Guatama.
  - He grew up as a wealthy Prince and heir to a throne.
  - He led a completely sheltered life.
  - And, he had a wife and baby child.
- At age 30, he saw suffering for the first time
  - Shocked, he dedicated life to easing human suffering.
  - He renounced his wealth and left his family on this quest.

# History of The Buddha (continued)

- For 20 years, he sought a way to end suffering and achieve awakening through asceticism
  - He wandered across India and lived the life of an ascetic.
  - He tried many very demanding ascetic regimens, and
  - Studied under a number of well-known gurus (teachers).
- At 50 years of age, he gave up on asceticism
  - He stopped searching and decided to sit, and meditate, until he received enlightenment.
  - Famously, he achieved awakening sitting under a Bodi tree.

# History of The Buddha (continued)

- Having achieved enlightenment, he dedicated the next 30 years his life to teaching
  - When he died, at 80, he left a large body of knowledge and a well-trained and dedicated cadre of followers.
- Buddha's teachings were not written down until about 200 years after his death
  - Written in Pali, known as the *Tipitaka* (or Pali Canon)
  - Their content forms the doctrinal foundation of Theravada Buddhism
    - In Pali, "thera" = “elders” + "vada" = “word, doctrine” translates to the “Doctrine of the Elders”)

# Our Normal State Is Awake

- The Buddha described our *normal state* as:
  - “A crystal clear, mountain lake of still water, in which we can see easily, all the way to the bottom.”
- But, our lake can be disturbed by:
  - **Suffering** – like debris, flowing into the lake after a storm.
    - clouds the water
  - **Wanting** - like ripples, disturbing the surface of the lake.
    - makes the surface opaque
  - **Judging** – like muck, being stirred up from the bottom.
    - muddies the water
- Suffering, wanting, and judging are *conditioned* responses.

# Buddha's Lists

- **The Buddha's teachings are contained in a number of lists. Here are a few ...**
  - Five Things that Lead to Awakening
  - The Four Foundations of Mindfulness
  - The Four Noble Truths
  - The Eightfold Path
  - The Three Characteristics of Conditioned Existence
- **The most commonly referenced are the:**
  - *Four Noble Truths and*
  - *The Eightfold Path*

<http://www.insightmeditationcenter.org/books-articles/dhamma-lists/>

# The Four Noble Truths

1. ***Dukkha* exists** – suffering, discontent, stress, and unsatisfactoriness are real.
  - Prescription: **Suffering must be observed, investigated**
2. ***Dukkha* is caused** - wanting, craving, and clinging are the conditions which are the cause of unsatisfactoriness.
  - Prescription: **Causes must be understood**
3. ***Dukkha* ceases when the *conditions* are removed** - the suffering stops, when the causes are removed
  - Prescription: **Remove the causes and suffering will cease.**
4. **Following the Eightfold Path** is the way to remove the causes of *Dukkha*.
  - Prescription: **Follow the Eightfold Path**

<http://preachingsofbuddha.blogspot.com/#uds-search-results>



# The Eightfold Path (Part 1)

- **Wisdom/Discernment (*pañña*)**
  1. Wise or Right **View/Understanding** (*samma-ditthi*) – Knowledge of the Four Noble Truths
  2. Wise or Right **Intention/Resolve** (*sammá-sankappa*) – Renunciation, Loving-kindness, Harmlessness
- **Virtue (*sila*)**
  3. Wise or Right **Speech** (*sammá-vácá*) – abstaining from lying, malicious or divisive speech, abusive or harsh speech, and idle chatter
  4. Wise or Right **Action** (*sammá-kammanta*) – abstaining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct
  5. Wise or Right **Livelihood** (*sammá-ájíva*) – abstaining from dishonest and harmful means of livelihood

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# The Eightfold Path (Part 2)

- **Concentration/Meditation (*samadhi*)**

6. Wise or Right **Effort** (*samma-vayama*) – the effort of avoiding and overcoming unskillful qualities, and of developing and maintaining skillful qualities

7. Wise or Right **Mindfulness** (*samma-sati*) –

- The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

8. Wise or Right **Concentration** (*samma-samadhi*) –

- The Four Form Jhanas

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# The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

- **The Four Foundations of Mindfulness:**
  1. Mindfulness of the **body** (*kaya*)
  2. Mindfulness of **feeling** (*vedana*)-pleasant, unpleasant, neutral; initial reactions to sensory input
  3. Mindfulness of **mind/consciousness** (*citta*), of the mind-states, moods (greed, aversion, delusion and their opposites)
  4. Mindfulness of **mind objects-mental events** (*dhammas*);
    - Five categories of dhammas (i.e. teachings):
      1. Five hindrances,
      2. Five aggregates,
      3. Six sense bases,
      4. Seven factors of enlightenment,
      5. Four Noble Truths

# Frequency Bands and Jhanas

Wave	Frequency	Mental State	Meditation State
Beta - high	31-38 Hz	Aroused mind – anxiety, panic	none
Beta - medium	15-30 Hz	Active mind – normal waking state: working, socializing, etc.	none
Beta - low	13-14 Hz	Focused mind –attentive state, “flow”	Release senses, quiet interruptions, <b>1<sup>st</sup> Jhana</b>
Alpha	9-12 Hz	Relaxed mind – passive, pleasant, calm	Release thoughts, achieve "rapture", <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Jhana</b>
Theta	4-8 Hz	Creative subconscious mind – visualizing, resolving <i>Asleep: Dreaming, REM</i>	Engage dreams & creativity, achieve "bliss", <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Jhana</b>
Delta	0-3 Hz	Resting mind – sensing, healing <i>Asleep: Deep Sleep</i>	Sense oneness & equanimity, achieve awakening, <b>4<sup>th</sup> Jhana</b>

# Wisdom of the Ancients

## The Four Jhanas

- The Four Jhanas, describe 2,500 years ago, are a continuum of four states of the mind achieved through meditation:
  1. **First Jhana:** excluding the senses.
    - Has five jhanic factors:
      1. applied thought (*vittaka*),
      2. sustained thought (*vicara*),
      3. joy (*piti*),
      4. happiness (*sukha*).
      5. one-pointedness (*ekaggata*).
    - Quiets interruptions, senses are calmed

# The Four Jhanas (continued)

## 2. **Second Jhana:** excluding thoughts, “achieves rapture”.

- Has 3 factors:
  1. joy (*piti*),
  2. happiness (*sukha*)
  3. one-pointedness (*ekagata*).
- The 1st Jhana *senses* now seem coarse, not fine enough

## 3. **Third Jhana:** taking refuge in contentment, “bliss”.

- Has 2 factors:
  1. contentment
  2. one-pointedness (*ekagata*)
- The 2nd Jhana *rapture* now seems coarse, not delicate enough

# The Four Jhanas

## 4. **Forth Jhana:** taking refuge in equanimity and stillness.

- Has only 1 factor:
  1. one-pointedness (*ekkgata*)

The 3rd Jhana *contentment* now seems coarse and unrefined

- This is the Jhana where enlightenment is achieved,
  - However, enlightenment is not guaranteed
  - Other criteria are required for enlightenment
    - (see the Buddha's Characteristics of Existence).

# Characteristics of Existence for Enlightenment

The Buddha articulated three characteristics of existence in the way of achieving awakening and enlightenment:

**1. Unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) must be removed**

- We are conditioned to discontent, stress, and suffering, and unsatisfactoriness, but it does not exist.

**2. Impermanence (*anicca*) must be accepted**

- We are also conditioned to permanence, to believe that things are real and lasting, but everything is only temporary.

**3. Not-self (*anatta*) must be accepted**

- We are conditioned to believe we exist, but we have no inherent existence - neither “me”, “myself”, nor “what I am”



# Meditation Practice

- We will meditate for 6 minutes
- The meditation will be silent
- 3 gongs will signal the end of the meditation

# How We Will Meditate

- Align your posture and sit comfortably relaxed
- Breathe through your nose
- Use diaphragmatic breathing (Belly out with inhale / belly in with exhale)
- Observe only the present moment (Not the past, not the future)
- Focus on your breathing
  - Observe your breathing: air in/out, shallow/deep, belly out/in, fast/slow, etc.
- When thoughts jump into your mind:
  1. Name them silently (acknowledge they exist)
  2. Let them go (release them from your thinking)
  3. Return your focus to your breath
- This means:
  - Do not hold onto *any* thought (positive or negative)
  - Do not value or judge any thought
  - Do not judge your meditation practice or yourself



# Five things that lead to awakening:

## Five things that lead to awakening:

1. Admirable friends
2. Morality, virtue (*Sila*)
3. Hearing the teaching (*dharma*)
4. Exertion.
  - Effort in abandoning unskillful qualities and cultivating skillful ones (including meditation practice)
5. Awareness of impermanence (*anicca*) - insight into impermanence

<http://www.insightmeditationcenter.org/books-articles/dhamma-lists/#foundations>

# Thank you for joining me in this dharma practice of meditation



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