

# Introduction to Buddhism

BSTC1004:  
Lesson VII

Buddhists Vehicles	<u>Aspiration</u>	<u>Related Teachings and practices</u>	<u>Attainment</u>
<i>Human and Celestial Vehicle</i>	To attain happiness in heaven and earth	- The Law and Cause and effect  - Taking refuge in the Triple Gems and practice the five precepts.	Happiness in heaven and earth
<i>Sound- hearing (Sravaka) Vehicle</i>	To eliminate all suffering, especially the endless bondage of life and death	- See life as impermanent and full of suffering. Diligently practice the Three Trainings  -Four Noble Truths.	Ending the bondage of reincarnation and attaining Arhart
<i>Bodhisattva Vehicle</i>	To attain the ultimate enlightenment and deliver all beings from suffering	With <i>bodhicitta</i> as the cause, compassion as the source and <i>prajna</i> as skillful means. Practices the six <i>pramitas</i> and the four all-embracing virtues.	Ultimate enlightenment and Buddhahood

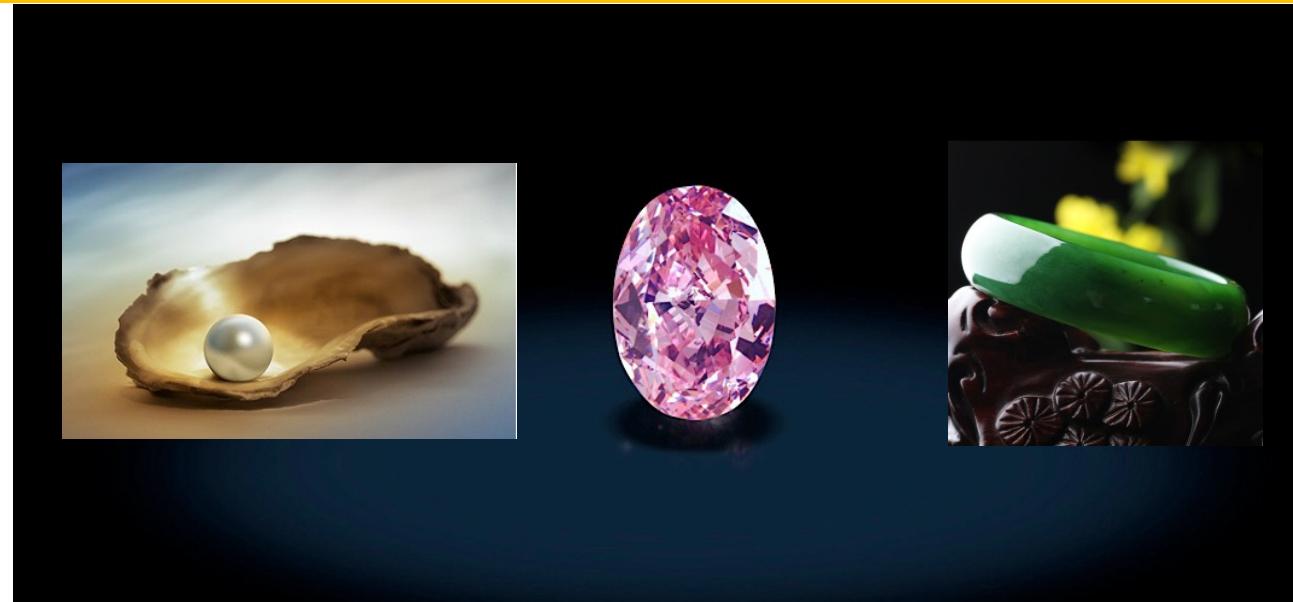
# SEEKING REFUGE

尋求依怙

- The Sea of Existence has no boundaries;
- the world is full of worry and suffering,
- Flowing and turning, rising and falling,
- Is there no place of refuge and support?
- 有海無邊際 世間多憂苦
- 流轉起還沒 何處是依怙



# The Three Treasures



- **Buddha:** the Enlightened One, the Teacher
- **Dharma:** the Teaching, the Law of Dependent-Arising
- **Sangha:** The Community of enlightened Buddhist practitioners



# The Buddha

- "Buddha, the Enlightened One is
  - an Arahant, the "perfected person"
  - perfectly enlightened,
  - accomplished in true knowledge and conduct,
  - Fortunate and auspicious, bring goodness and happiness
  - knower of the world,
  - unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed,
  - teacher of devas and humans,
  - the Blessed One, worthy of deep reverence or respect."

# The Dharma, the Teachings





# The Six Qualities of Dharma

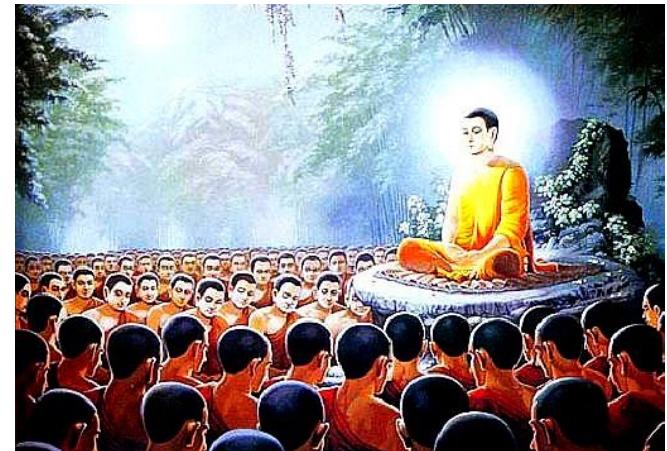
1. Well expounded by the Blessed One: The Dhamma is not a speculative philosophy, but the Universal Law found through enlightenment and articulated clearly, precisely, and logically.
2. Directly visible: The truths and benefits of the teachings can be directly experienced and observed by practitioners in their own lives.
3. Timeless: The Dhamma is timeless and not bound to any particular era or culture. It is always relevant and applicable, regardless of the time period in which it is practiced.
4. Encouraging Investigation: The teachings invite individuals to come and see for themselves.
5. Applicable (Leading Inwards): The teachings guide practitioners towards inner transformation and self-realization.
6. To be personally experienced by the wise: The ultimate truths of the teachings can be fully understood only through personal experience and realization by those who are wise and diligent in their practice.

# The Sangha, the Holy Community



- "The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples is:
  - practising the good way,
  - practising the straight way,
  - practising the true way,
  - practising the proper way

- The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples is:
- worthy of gifts,
- worthy of hospitality,
- worthy of offerings,
- worthy of respect,
- the unsurpassed field of merit for the world."

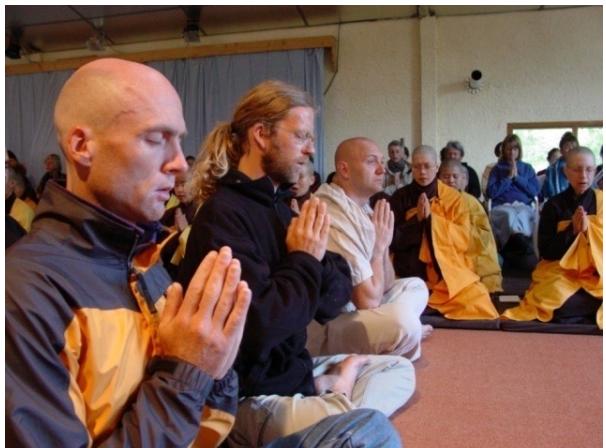


# Taking Refuge in The Triple Gems



- “ During my whole life, I vow
  - To take refuge in the Buddha,  
Dharma, and Sangha,
  - With utmost sincerity to make  
offerings, And to be mindful of all  
the extraordinary benefits.”
- 
- 自誓盡形壽 歸依佛法僧
  - 至心修供養 時念諸勝利

# THE ESSENCE OF TAKING REFUGE



- "What is called taking refuge—  
Faith and vow are its essence.  
To turn to and rely upon the Three Jewels—  
By this, one attains liberation."
- 所說歸依者 信願以為體
- 歸彼及向彼 依彼得救濟



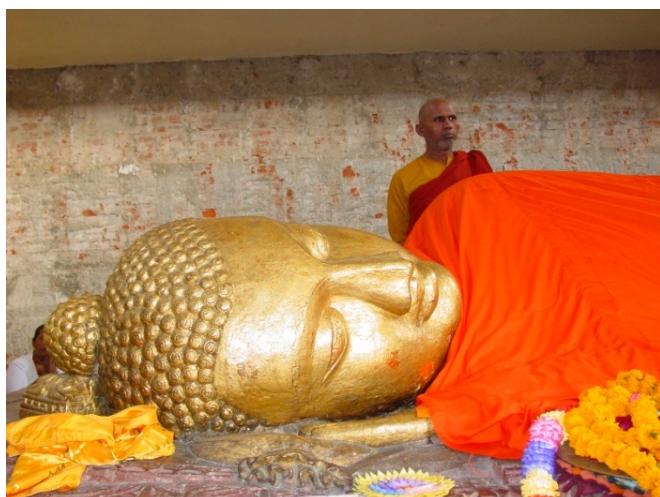
- If one vows to devote one's life to them,
- Through self-reliance and self-cultivation,
- One can be unified with
- The real meaning of taking refuge.
- If a person takes refuge in themselves
- And relies on their own strength,
- That person will truly realize
- The authentic meaning of refuge.



- 若人自歸命 自力自依止
- 是人則能契 歸依真實義



- In the Nirvana Assembly, the Buddha gave his final teaching to his disciples: “Rely on yourself, rely on the Dharma, but do not rely on others



# The Five Mindfulness Training

- The five mindfulness trainings of being aware of the suffering cause by:
  - The destruction of life
  - Exploitation, social injustice, stealing, and oppression
  - Sexual misconduct
  - Unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others
  - Unmindful consumption

<u>Type of Buddhists</u>	<u>Their Wishes</u>	<u>Teachings and practices</u>
<b>Human and Celestial Vehicle</b>	To attain worldly happiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taking refuge in the Triple Gems and practice the five precepts.</li> <li>- The Law and Cause and effect</li> </ul>
<b>Sound-hearing Vehicle</b>	To eliminate all worry and suffering and attain the ultimate peace of mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Four Noble Truths.</li> <li>- See life as impermanent and full of suffering.</li> <li>-Diligently practice the Three Trainings</li> </ul>
<b>Bodhisattva Vehicle</b>	To attain the ultimate enlightenment and deliver all beings from suffering	With <i>bodhicitta</i> as the cause, compassion as the source and <i>prajna</i> as skillful means. Practices the six <i>pramitas</i> and the four all-embracing virtues.

# What did the Buddha Taught?

*Suffering is optional! There is a Way out of it!*

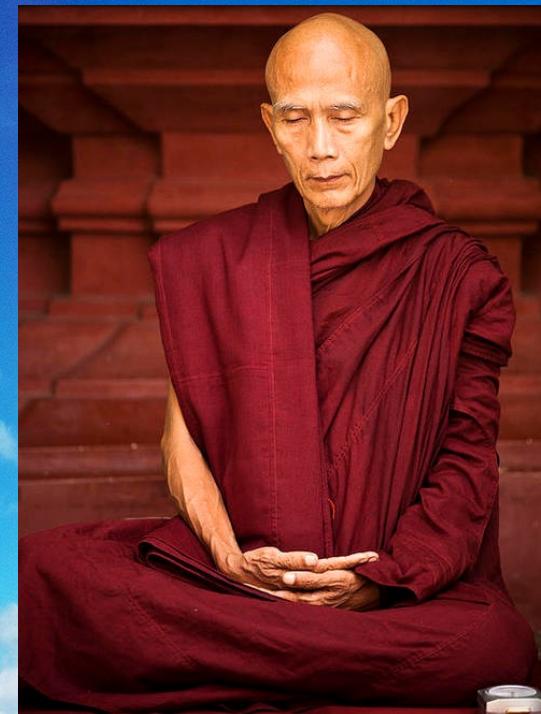


## *Buddhists Vehicles*

*Sound-hearing (Sravaka)  
Vehicle*

## *Aspiration*

To eliminate all suffering, especially  
the endless bondage of life and death

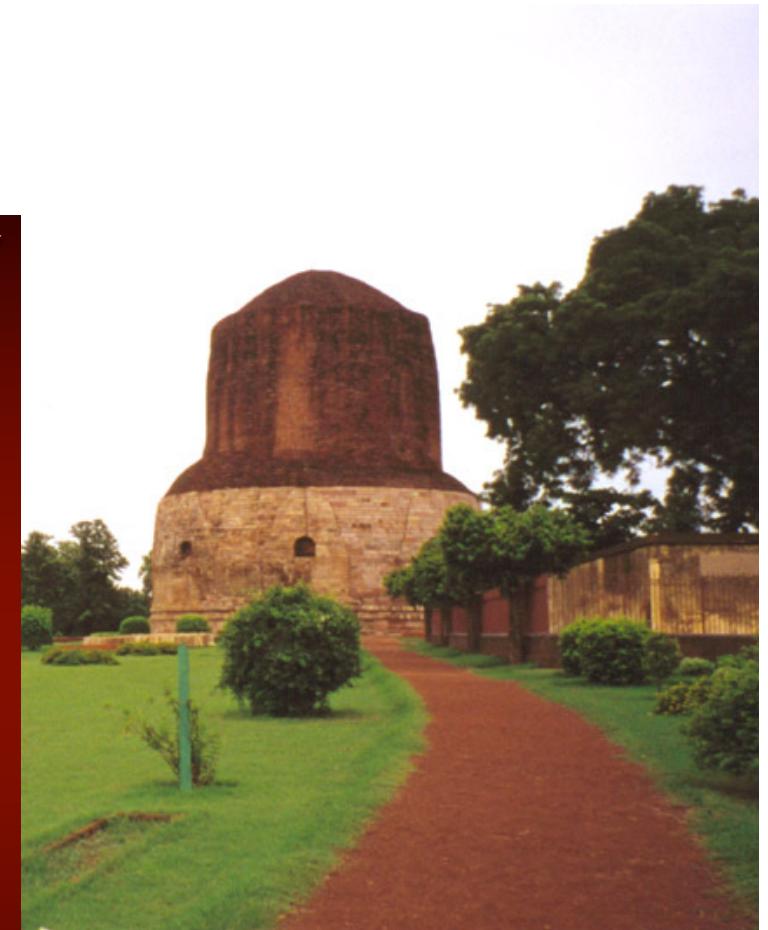




# *The Buddha said:*



1. *There is suffering, and it is part of life. You should be aware of this reality.*
2. *Ignorance and craving are **the causes of suffering.** You should stop the accumulation of the causes that brings suffering.*
3. *Cessation of suffering is possible. You should attain this ultimate peace and freedom.*
4. *There is this **Path** that leads to the cessation of suffering. You should take this path.*





## 1. Suffering: *dukkha*

- There is no single English word that satisfactorily captures the meaning of "dukkha." It has been variously translated as suffering, unsatisfactoriness, frustration, unhappiness, anguish, and dis-ease (不安). Its opposite is "sukha," which means ease or well-being.

# Eight Type of Sufferings

1. The suffering of *birth*.
2. The suffering of *old age*.
3. The suffering of *illness*.
4. The suffering of *death*.
5. The suffering of encountering what is *unpleasant*.
6. The suffering of *separation from what is pleasant*.
7. The suffering of *not getting what one wants*.
8. The suffering of the *five appropriated aggregates*.



# The suffering of *birth*.

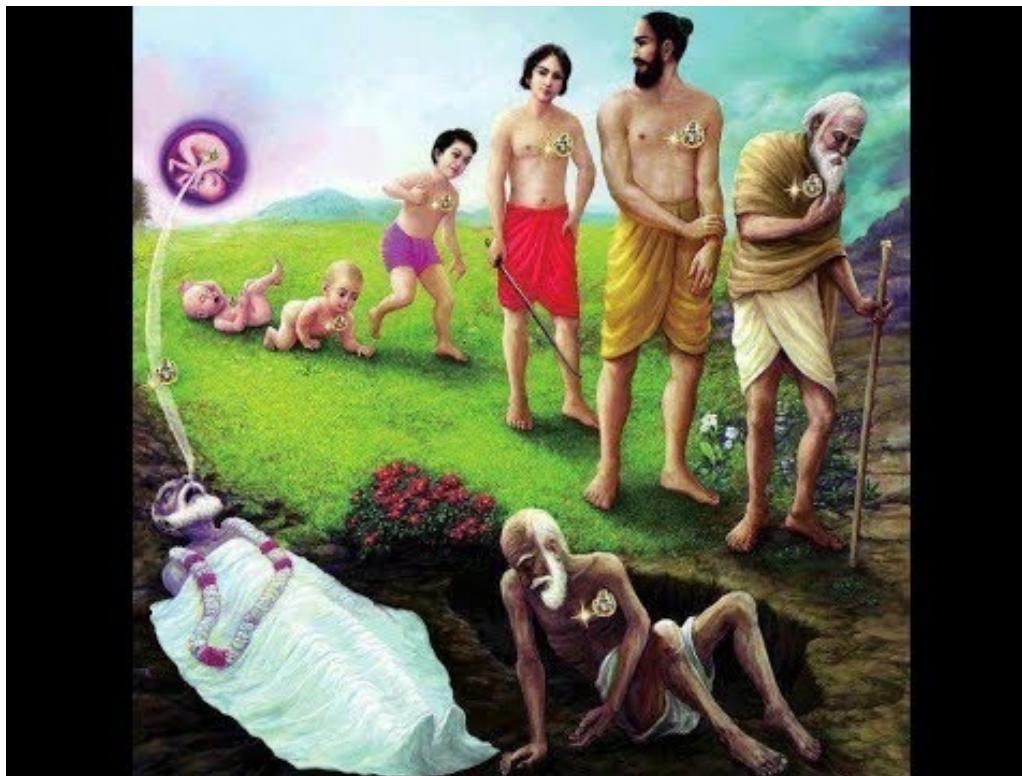


IMAGE BANK  
IMAGE BANK

# Birth: Rarity and Opportunity

## Buddha's Teaching:

- Buddha tells Ananda about a blind turtle that surfaces from the ocean only once every 100 years.
- A piece of wood with a hole floats in the sea.
- Buddha asks if the turtle could get its head through the hole.
- Ananda says it's impossible.
- Buddha explains that while difficult, it is not impossible—just as being born human is an extraordinary rarity!



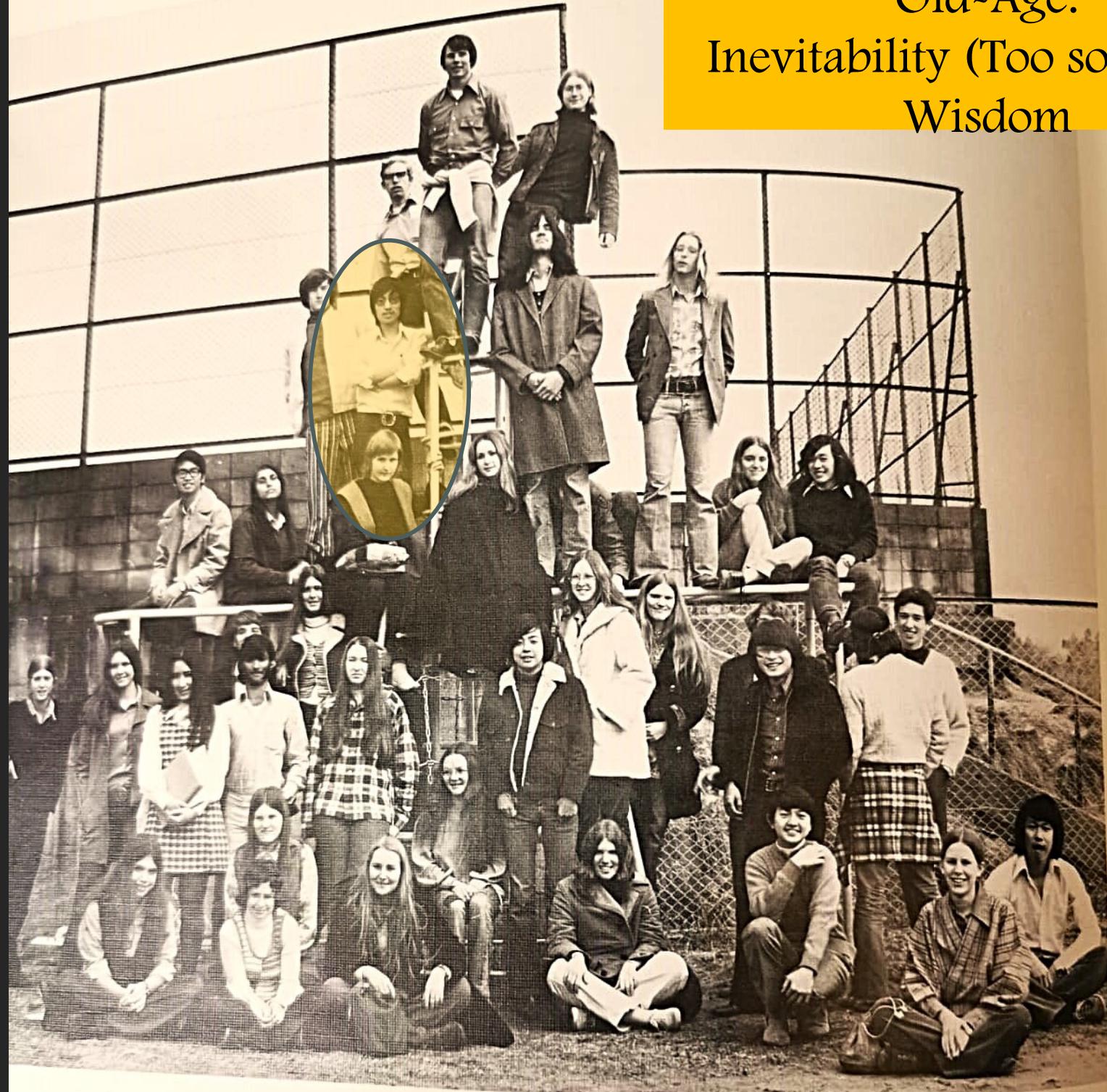
## Key Insight:

- Human birth is a rare and precious opportunity.
- It offers immense potential to:
  - Experience
  - Learning
  - Growth
  - Transformation
  - Spirituality

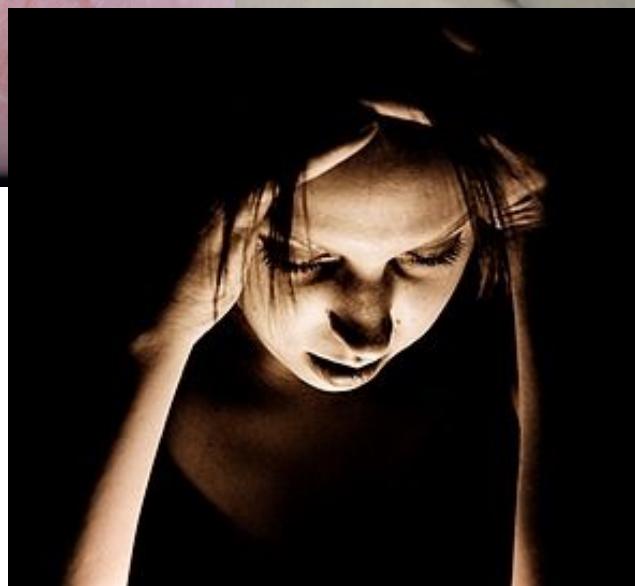
## 2. The suffering of *old age*.



Old-Age:  
Inevitability (Too soon) and  
Wisdom



### 3. The suffering of *illness*.



# Sickness: Disruption and Vigilance



## 4. The suffering of *death*.



- "My friend Enkidu, whom I loved so dear, who with me went through every danger, the doom of mortals overtook him.
- Six days I wept for him and seven nights: I did not surrender his body for burial until a maggot dropped from his nostril. Then I was afraid that I, too, would die. I grew fearful of death, so I wandered the wild.
- ...How can I keep silent? How can I stay quiet? My friend, whom I loved, has turned to clay. My friend Enkidu, whom I loved, has turned to clay. Shall I not be like him and also lie down, never to rise again, through all eternity?"

An excerpt from The Epic of Gilgamesh

# Death: Certainty and Liberation



## 5. The suffering of encountering what is unpleasant.

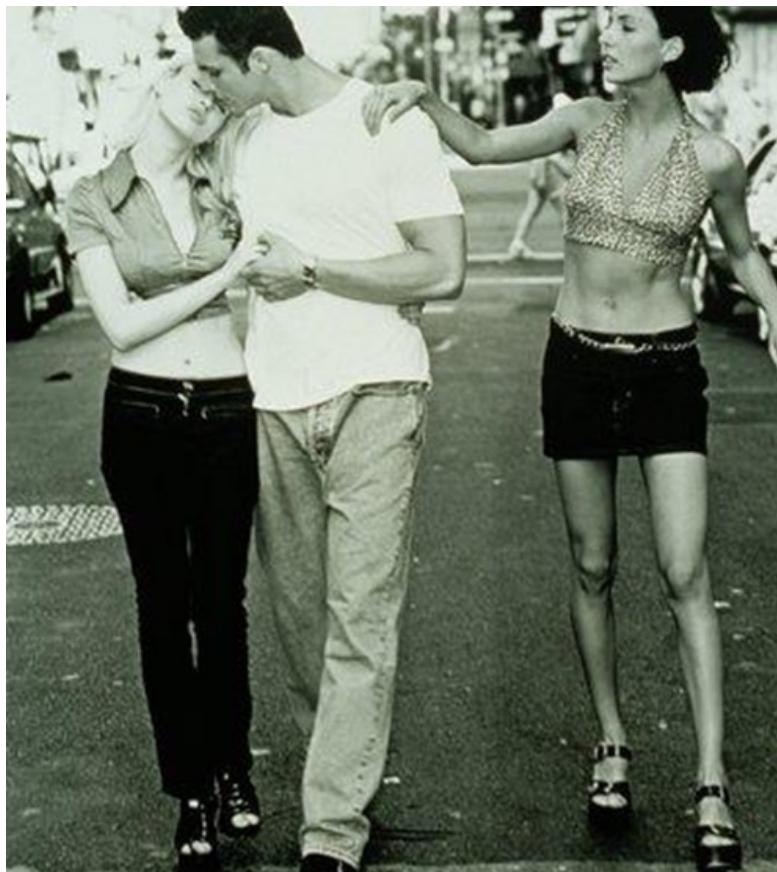


## 6. The suffering of *separation from what is pleasant.*

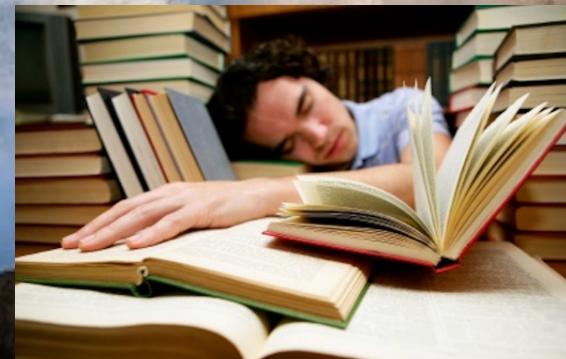
A young girl  
in an orphanage



## 7. The suffering of *not getting what one wants.*



# 8. The Suffering of Clinging to the Five Aggregates



# Three Levels of Suffering



- Pains as suffering
- Perishing as suffering
- Instability of conditioned phenomena as suffering

# I. Pains as Suffering



Birth



Old age

## II. Perishing as Suffering

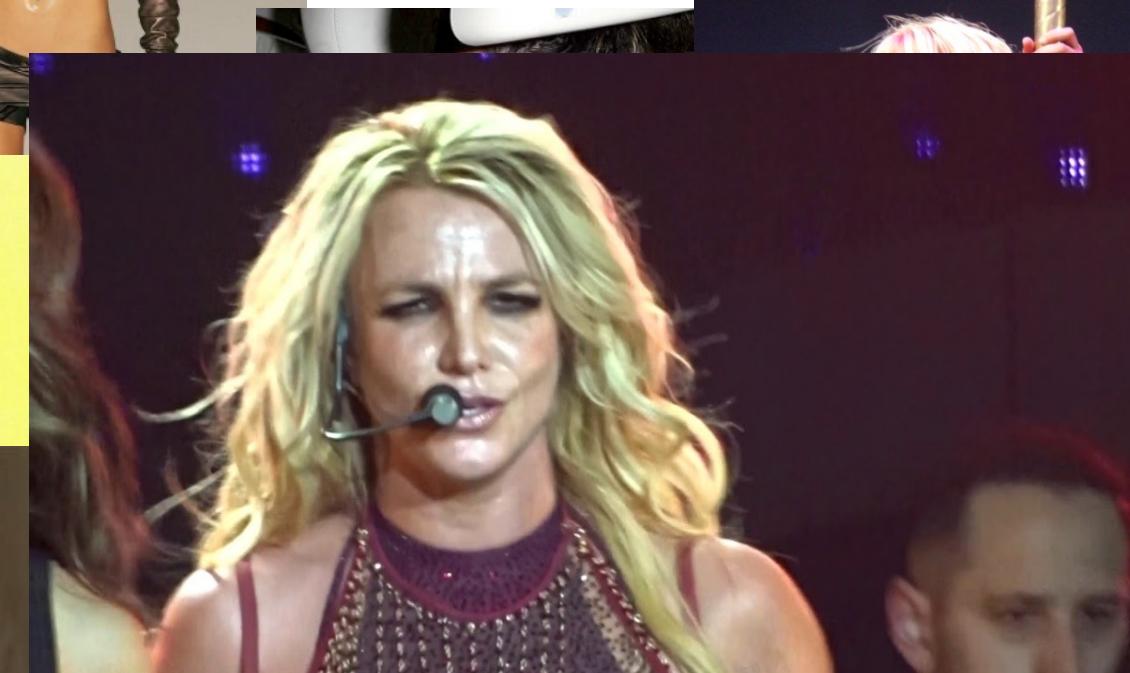
## II. Decay and Perish as Suffering



Happy moments will pass  
Everything will pass

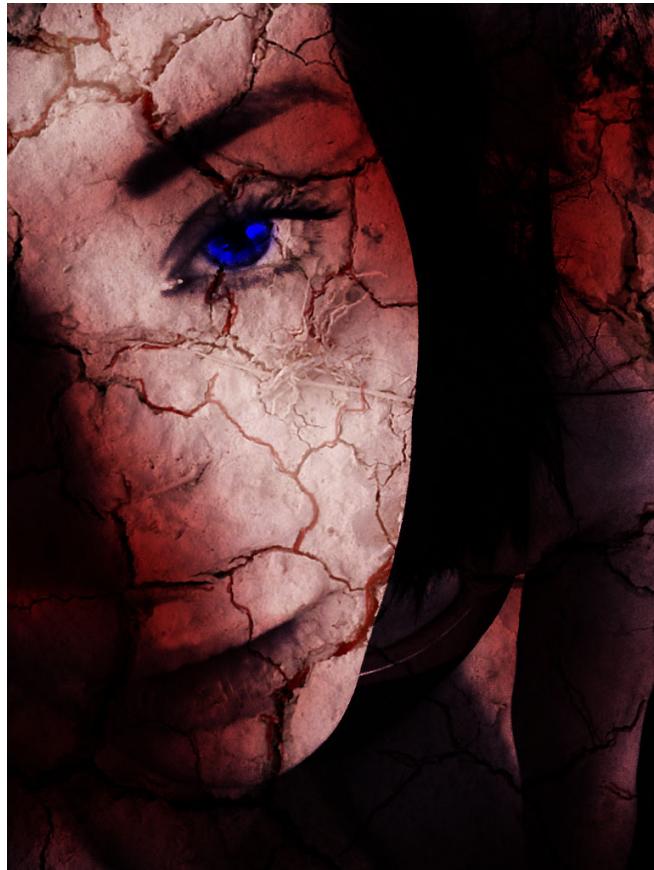


## II. Decay and Perish as Suffering



### III. Instability of conditioned Phenomena as Suffering

Causally conditioned phenomena are  
unstable, transient and impermanent



Restlessness is suffering,  
dis-ease!



# To You...

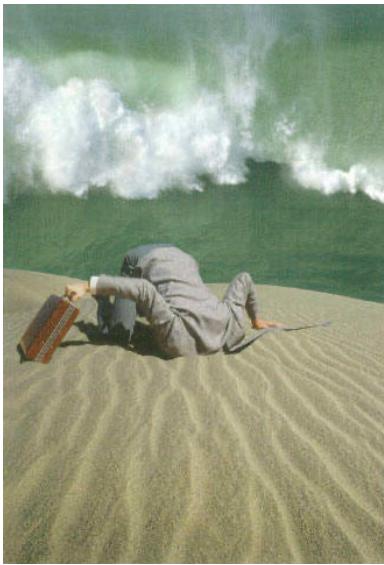
- Which type of suffering is most immediate?
- Which type of suffering is most worrying?



# Why do Buddhists study Sufferings?



- There is pain and suffering in the world
- To develop the motivation to escape from samsara
- To develop compassion



## The Second Noble Truth: The cause of suffering



- Because of the delusion and ignorance of not being able to see the true nature of things, people become attached to the concepts ‘I’ and ‘mine’,
- and hence, give rise to craving and attachment, followed by greed, hatred and ignorance.



The cause  
of the  
disease



# *Taṇhā*

*Taṇhā (Pāli): Thirst, Desire, Longing, Greed*

Types of Craving:

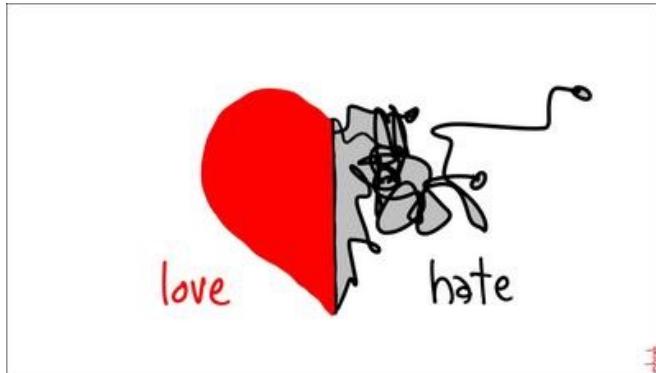
- Craving for Sensual Pleasures
- Craving for Existence
- Craving for Non-Existence



Insight into Taṇhā:

- Desire is like drinking salt water: the more you drink, the thirstier you become. It's akin to eating sugary food—while it may taste delightful, it is ultimately detrimental to your health. The higher the sensual pleasure, the more insatiable your thirst becomes.

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6N\\_L1NQQ5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6N_L1NQQ5Y)



From craving and attachment come...



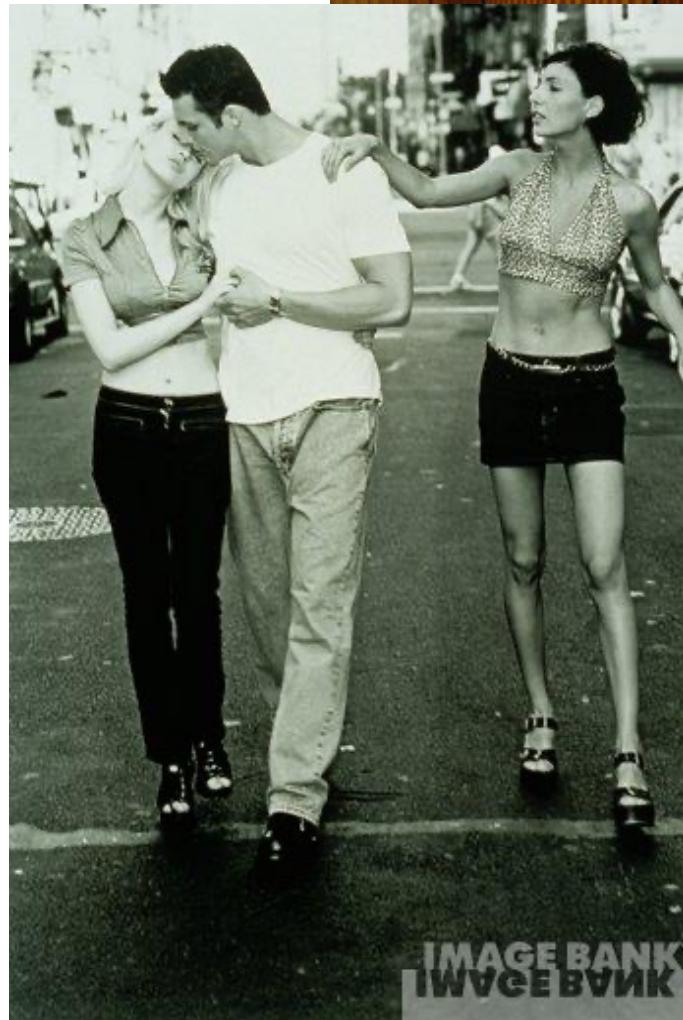
Hatred



Fear



Loneliness



Jealousy



I am dying!

# Craving and attachment: “Mine”

## The Cycle of Ignorance and Suffering

- With ignorance, the notions and sentiments of “I” and “mine” arise, giving birth to craving and attachment. This, in turn, leads to greed, hatred, and further ignorance.
- These deluded mind-states drive actions and behaviors that generate and accumulate karma, entrapping human beings in an endless cycle of suffering.



ONCE YOU ARE IN  
SAMSARA.....

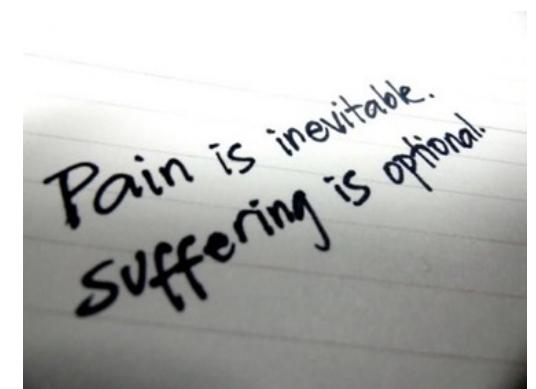
- 7. Feeling
- 8. Craving
- 9. Clinging or grasping
- 10. Existence or becoming
- 11. Birth*
- 12. Aging and death*



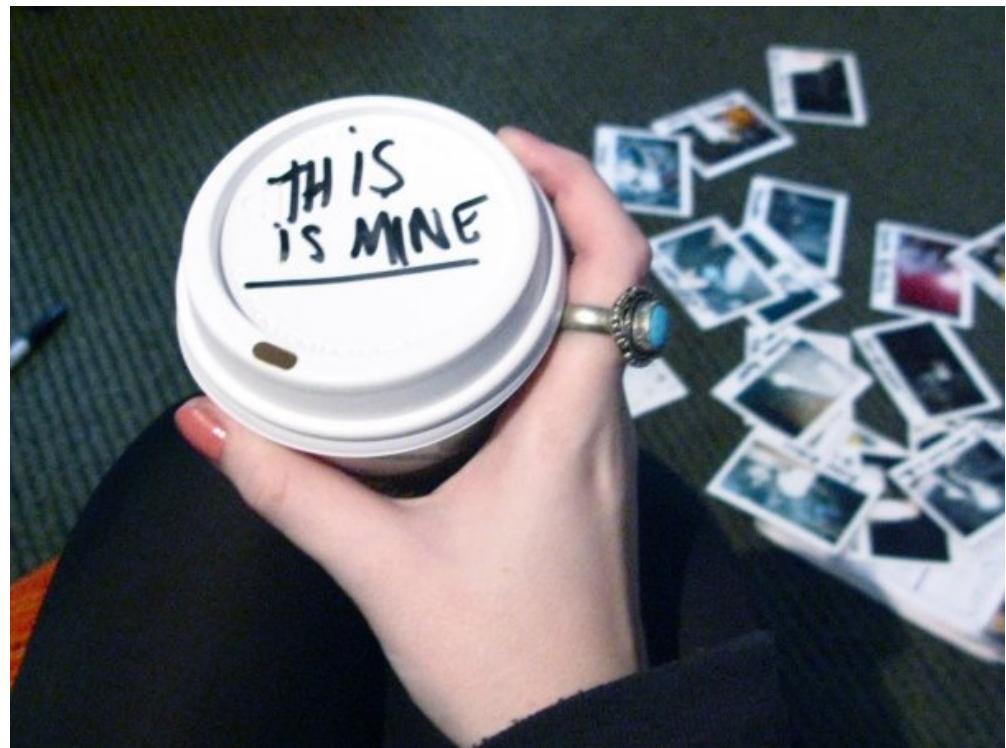
- 1. Ignorance*
- 2. Volition*
- 3. Consciousness*
- 4. Name and form*
- 5. The sources of perception*
- 6. Contact*

Because I feel Pain,  
there is Suffering!

- I. Pains as Suffering
- II. Perishing as Suffering
- III. Instability of conditioned Phenomena as Suffering



# Is that really yours?



# The Third Noble Truth: The Cessation of Suffering



Nothing that you have not given away will ever  
be really yours.

(C. S. Lewis)

Once you purchase something, it becomes your responsibility and concern. However, once you sell it, those concerns no longer apply to you.



# Autumn leaves are just falling leaves!



Old age and deaths are just  
old age and death!





# The Cessation of Suffering

Is it possible to cure  
the disease?  
Is the disease cured?

- The cessation of suffering is possible. Through right understanding and diligent practice, ignorance, attachment and craving and the delusive concept of self can be eliminated.
- When ignorance and craving cease, suffering comes to an end, and the bondage of life and death is broken. At that time, true happiness and peace of mind are attained.



# *True Freedom and Sustainable Happiness*

Sustainable happiness:

- Free from the pressure:
  - To ‘be’ or ‘not to be’,
  - To ‘do’ or ‘not to do’
  - To ‘have’ or ‘not to have’



A serene inner peace that:

- coming from understanding and wisdom
- would not be disturbed by the ever-changing external conditions



# The Fourth Noble Truth : the Path Out of Suffering



The  
medicine

dreamstime.com

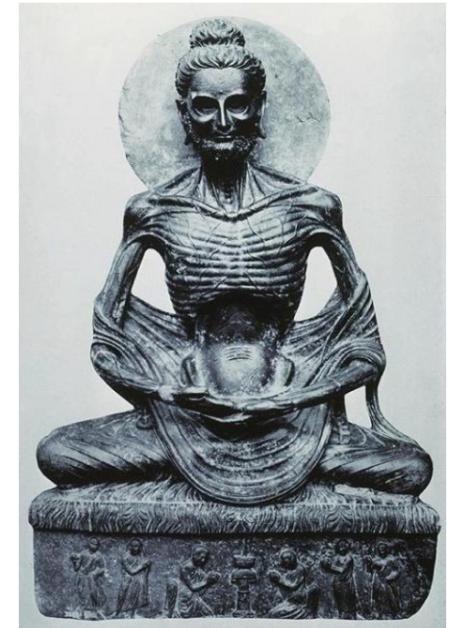
# The Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering

- The Middle Way
- The Noble Eightfold Path:



# The Middle Way

- *"Monks, these two extremes ought not to be practiced by one who has gone forth from the household life. (What are the two?)*
- *There is addiction to indulgence of sense-pleasures, which is low, coarse, the way of ordinary people, unworthy, and unprofitable;*
- *and there is addiction to self-mortification, which is painful, unworthy, and unprofitable.*



# Why the Middle Way?

- "Avoiding both these extremes, the Tathagata (the Perfect One) has realized **the Middle Path**;
- it **gives** vision, gives knowledge, and leads to calm, to insight, to enlightenment and to Nibbana
- And what is that Middle Path realized by the Tathagata...? It is the **Noble Eightfold path**, and nothing else.



## Cause of Suffering

- Ignorance and the attachment to the concepts of 'I' and 'mine'
- *Taṇhā* (Pāli): thirst, desire, longing, greed

## Path of Elimination of Suffering

*Wisdom (panna)*

*Right View*

Right thinking/intention

*Concentration (samadhi)*

Right Effort

*Right Mindfulness*

Right Concentration

*Morality (sila)*

Right Speech

Right Action

Right Livelihood

## The Eight-Fold Path



# The Eight Noble Paths

## 1. Morality (*sila*)

- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood

## 2. Concentration (*samadhi*)

- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

## 3. Wisdom (*panna*)

- Right View (understanding)
- Right thinking (aspiration)



# Right View



- is the beginning and the end of the path
- to see and to understand things as they really are and to realize the Four Noble Truths.

- 1. *Wisdom (panna)*
  - Right View (understanding)
  - Right thinking (aspiration)
- 2. *Concentration (samadhi)*
  - Right Effort
  - Right Mindfulness
  - Right Concentration
- 3. *Morality (sila)*
  - Right Speech
  - Right Action
  - Right Livelihood

# *Morality (sila) :*

## Creating the right conditions

The **five mindfulness trainings of being aware of the suffering** cause by:

- The destruction of life
- Exploitation, social injustice, stealing, and oppression
- Sexual misconduct
- Unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others
- Unmindful consumption



# Determination and Concentration

- Concentration is the ability of the mind **to recall and to focus and pay attention** to a wholesome object mindfully and continuously
- With concentration,
  - one will not be easily distracted or sway by external stimulus
  - Facilitate the development of insight and wisdom





# Wisdom

- Wisdom is the ability to discern which thoughts and actions are beneficial, leading to peace of mind, freedom, and happiness.
- On a deeper level, it involves recognizing the emptiness nature of phenomena and the mind.
- Conversely, wisdom also identifies thoughts and actions that are harmful and would lead to suffering and entanglement, particularly those that nourish sensual desires.
- True wisdom involves making a conscious decision to develop and follow thoughts and actions that lead to freedom and happiness. Ultimately, it recognizes the emptiness of all phenomena and attains liberation from all attachment.





# Developing Right View

## 1. Learning:

- Approach earning and studying with eagerness and an open mindedness

## 2. Contemplating:

- reflect on what you've learned, digest the information, and verify it against reality

## 3. Practicing:

- Adopt the “right view” as the perspective for understanding yourself and the world

*Learning to be aware and  
mindful in order to develop  
correct understanding and  
right view is the foundation  
of Buddhist practice*



Friend of HK photos



# Mindlessness

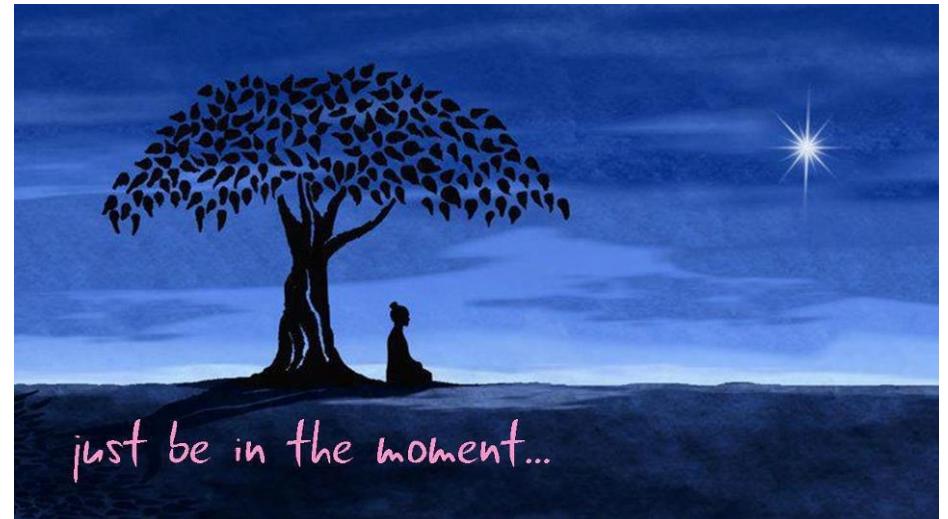


An inactive state of mind characterized by:

- **Reliance on past distinctions and categories:** The past overly influences the present.
- **Single perspective:** Being trapped in one way of seeing things.
- **Insensitivity to context:** Ignoring the nuances of the current situation.
- **Rule and routine governed:** Actions dictated by habits and routines.
- **Typically, in error but rarely in doubt:** Making mistakes but with unwarranted confidence.

Ellen Langer

# Mindfulness



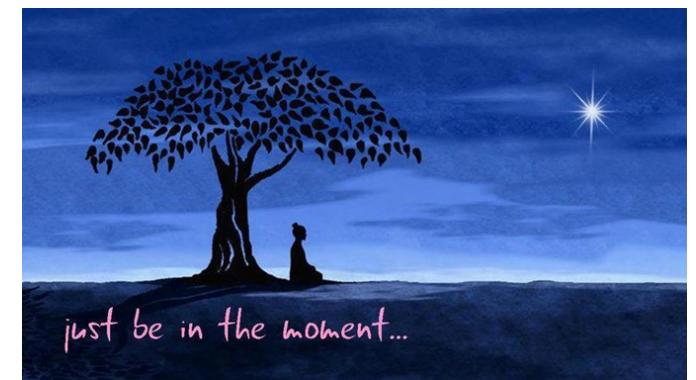
*just be in the moment...*

An **active state of mind** characterized by novel distinction—drawing that results in

1. Being situated in the present
2. Sensitive to context and perspective
3. Rule and routine guided
4. Phenomenological experience of engagement
5. Noticing novelty reveals uncertainty

# Mindfulness

- **Novel distinction-drawing:** Creating new categories and distinctions.
- **Being situated in the present:** Fully engaging with the here and now.
- **Sensitivity to context and perspective:** Being attuned to the specifics of the current situation and considering various viewpoints.
- **Rule and routine guided:** Using rules and routines as flexible guidelines rather than strict determinants.
- **Phenomenological experience of engagement:** Deep involvement in one's experiences.
- **Noticing novelty reveals uncertainty:** Recognizing new aspects of situations, which highlights the inherent uncertainty in life.



just be in the moment...

# The Practice of Mindful Breathing

- Be mindful of your forehead
- Calm/Ease 輕/鬆
- Let it be/Relax 自然/安樂
- Notice and enjoy the automatic and effortless breathing