

## AT SEDAKA

At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Sumbhas, near the town of the Sumbhas called Sedaka. There the Buddha addressed the mendicants:

“Once upon a time, mendicants, an acrobat set up his bamboo pole and said to his apprentice Medakathālikā, ‘Come now, dear Medakathālikā, climb up the bamboo pole and stand on my shoulders.’

‘Yes, teacher,’ she replied. She climbed up the bamboo pole and stood on her teacher’s shoulders.

Then the acrobat said to Medakathālikā, ‘You look after me, dear Medakathālikā, and I’ll look after you. That’s how, guarding and looking after each other, we’ll display our skill, collect our fee, and get down safely from the bamboo pole.’

When he said this, Medakathālikā said to her teacher, ‘That’s not how it is, teacher! You should look after yourself, and I’ll look after myself. That’s how, guarding and looking after ourselves, we’ll display our skill, collect our fee, and get down safely from the bamboo pole.’

That’s the way,” said the Buddha. “It’s just as Medakathālikā said to her teacher. Thinking ‘I’ll look after myself,’ you should cultivate mindfulness meditation. Thinking ‘I’ll look after others,’ you should cultivate mindfulness meditation. Looking after yourself, you look after others; and looking after others, you look after yourself.

And how do you look after others by looking after yourself? By development, cultivation, and practice of meditation. And how do you look after yourself by looking after others? By acceptance, harmlessness, love, and sympathy.

Thinking ‘I’ll look after myself,’ you should cultivate mindfulness meditation. Thinking ‘I’ll look after others,’ you should cultivate mindfulness meditation. Looking after your-

self, you look after others; and looking after others, you look after yourself.”