

Everlasting Happiness,
as Buddha Attains 6

Presented by Venerable Da Shi

**Translated by
The Dharma Committee
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)**

Preface

Buddha came into this world to lead all sentient beings away from suffering and towards enlightenment. He forsook his throne and worldly possessions for the pursuit of enlightenment. It was his wish to guide all sentient beings in their understanding of the karmic cycle and the path to Nirvana. After his passing into Parinirvana, his teachings were collected and compiled by his followers.

It is Venerable Da Shi's wish to continue the Buddha's teachings, spread the seeds of compassion, and carry on his wish for all sentient beings to attain Nirvana. Since his ordination, Venerable Da Shi has been actively involved in the teaching of the Dharma in many places, including Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. In 2004/2005, Venerable Da Shi was invited by the Life Television Station in Taiwan to present talks on various Dharma topics. This book was written based on the consolidated content of Venerable Da Shi's televised talks, in hope that his compassionate wish would be furthered through the spreading of the Dharma.

Foreword

EVERLASTING HAPPINESS, AS BUDDHA ATTAINS

Editorial Notes

The Buddha was born into this world out of great compassion with the aim to help all mortal beings avoid sufferings and attain endless bliss.

The world of mortal beings is full of suffering. It is a surreal world of endless desires and yet fulfillment of all desires is impossible. We have to work hard to find fulfillment but it is all transient. It is like a trap where we relentlessly pursue wealth, appearance, fame, gastronomic satisfaction, and excessive sleep without ever pondering what all these could lead to. We repeatedly go through birth, aging, sickness, and death and in this continuous cyclic existence, we suffer immeasurably.

The Buddha is like an expert doctor with the ability to diagnose and treat all kinds of ailments. Indeed, he dispenses eighty four thousands procedures for as much trouble that mortal beings could possibly face in this world. All these are found in the Buddha's teachings. If we practice his teachings with complete faith and realization, besides saving ourselves

from suffering in this life, we can also find liberation in time to come.

There are very few fortunate beings that have the chance to hear the Buddha's teachings. The number of people who are able to hear and learn the Buddha's Dharma teachings is said to be like the amount of soil caught in one's nail if one were to use hands to dig into the ground.

Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains is translated from a Chinese compilation of Venerable Da Shi's Dharma teachings on television in Taiwan, R.O.C. He has used the Agama Sutra as the central focus of these teachings, supplemented by relevant Dharma from Mahayana Sutras, including the Prajna Sutras, the Middle Way, the Maha-prajna-paramita-Sastra, the Dasabhumika-Vibhasa-Sastra, the Saddharma-Pundarika, etc. for better understanding. Through his skillful narration and explanation, Venerable Da Shi has made the Buddha's Dharma very easy to understand and at the same time, interesting. There are also many citations of examples where one can apply in one's life and practice.

It is the wish of Venerable Da Shi that these teachings should reach out to more people, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. For Buddhists who have sought refuge in the Triple Gem, these teachings serve to strengthen their understanding of the Dharma and improve practices. For non-Buddhists, may it serve as a guide to attain true bliss.

The focus of this book is on the upholding of precepts (Sila). This is the sixth installment of a translated series and it will also be made available on our website at www.mypty.sg. Other topics in the series will be published progressively in subsequent books.

The Dharma introduced in this series accords with the teachings in the Chinese Mahayana tradition, which have originally been translated from Sanskrit scriptures. Hence, Sanskrit has been used for the names and specific Buddhist terminologies in the text. Readers can find help from the footnotes on the relevant pages and Glossary at the end of this book for explanation of common Buddhist terms (first appearance in italics) and concepts.

The Dharma Editorial Committee at Miao You Pu Ti Yuan in Singapore wishes all readers blissful fulfillments in reading.

@@@ This work is an effort to uphold and support Venerable Da Shi's great vow of spreading the Dharma in gratitude of the Buddha's compassion. Please help to spread the wisdom and cheers of the Dharma by passing this book on to someone else should you feel that you do not need it anymore. As the Buddha taught, the gift of the Dharma excels all gifts! May all have the chance to know the Buddha's Dharma! @@@

The Dharma Editorial Team
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)

UPHOLDING PRECEPTS (SILA) – (5)

The Five Precepts are the foundation of all precepts. The Five Precepts are abstinence from: killing; stealing; sexual misconduct; lying; and consuming intoxicants.

Abstinence from Killing

(1) Definition of "Killing"

Killing refers to ending the life of any sentient being that has consciousness.

(2) Is a Fetus Considered a Sentient Being?

A fetus is formed when the *bardo* enters the healthy womb of a mother and combines with the sperm and ovum. Once all these conditions are present, a new life is formed. Thus, we should not have abortions as it is an act that not only hurts us but also harms the life of another.

Sentient beings are compassionate. When we see a child suffer, we instinctively want to help and protect him. It is in our kind nature to do so.

However, we begin to develop unwholesome thoughts due to bad influences. This is analogous to a toilet tainting our

clothes with unfavorable odor. But if we leave them in an incense factory, they will exude a pleasant aroma.

Example

Sakyamuni Buddha and Venerable Ananda were Naga kings in their past lives. Out of curiosity, they decided to travel to the human realm. Since the size of a Naga is enormous beyond our imagination, they had to camouflage themselves by transforming into two tiny snakes.

One day, both of them were hiding in a shrub when a venomous snake appeared and wanted to eat them. This venomous snake was the past life of Devadatta.

The Naga king that was Venerable Ananda was furious and wanted to transform into his Naga appearance to devour the venomous snake.

However, the Naga king that was Sakyamuni Buddha advised him, "We have to observe the precepts as set by the Buddha and not harm sentient beings. Do not be bothered by the ignorance of this sentient being. Let us be compassionate towards it and just leave."

The two tiny snakes then transformed into Nagas and returned to the sea. The venomous snake was stunned as he watched the transformation.

Sakyamuni Buddha has Great Compassion. Even when he was a Bodhisattva in the animal realm in his past life, he never had

the slightest thought of anger towards any sentient being. Likewise, we should uphold the precept of not killing and not hurt any sentient being.

Five Conditions That Constitute Transgression of the Precept of Not Killing

- (1) Sentient Being** – The other party who is harmed is a sentient being. He could be a human, animal, one of the eight groups of spiritual beings, or even a ghost.
- (2) Awareness** – We are conscious that we have harmed a sentient being.
- (3) Intent to Kill** – The determining factor in the transgression of the precept is whether we have the intention to kill.
- (4) Scheme** – We devise various methods to harm others.
- (5) Termination of Life** – The life of the sentient being has ended.

(1) Sentient Being

The severity of transgressing this precept depends on whether the sentient being is a human being and whether the being dies as a result of the act of killing.

Apart from human beings and livestock, other animals such as ants, cockroaches, and snakes are also considered sentient beings.

(2) Awareness

The severity of transgression is also dependent on our conscious recognition of the sentient being as a human or an animal.

For instance, if we perceived a person to be a non-being in total darkness and hurt him unknowingly, we would be deemed to have transgressed the precept but it is regarded as a minor offense. Conversely, if we treat a non-being as a person and harm it, it constitutes an offense too as we harbor the intention to kill, even though it is not a sentient being.

The severity of the transgression also varies with the type of sentient beings. The killing of one's father, mother, and an Arahant, are classified under the Five Heinous Acts⁴.

(3) Intent to Kill

The main factor in the commission of the Five Heinous Acts is the intention to kill. As long as we harbor the will to kill, it constitutes an offense.

There are many cause and conditions for generating the will to kill.

(a) Greed – Some people will kill to satisfy their palate for meat. One has violated the precept when there is an

⁴ Five Heinous Acts refer to killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an Arahant, wounding the rupa-kaya of the Buddha, and wrecking the harmony of the Sangha. These five deeds will warrant rebirth in the Avici Hell.

intention to kill and the life of the sentient being has been terminated. Even if we have not taken the vows to uphold the precepts, we still have to bear the unwholesome karma of killing.



There are others who kill for fame, fortune, or even lust. At times, two people might kill each other for possession over another person.

Example 1

During Sakyamuni Buddha's era, the presence of Buddha led many devotees to take refuge in the Buddha. Even the king provided sustenance to the Buddha and not to the heretics. One of the heretics thus devised a plan to deter devotees from the Buddha so that the heretics could continue receiving sustenance.

The heretics decided to send a woman to make frequent visits to the vihara where Buddha resided. One day, the heretics killed the woman and buried her near the vihara in order to frame the Buddha. Despite the slander, Buddha did not refute the allegations. Seven days later, internal conflicts led to squabbling among the heretics, and the truth came to light.

Buddha explained the cause for this ordeal. Buddha was once an actor in his past life. He met a well-dressed, elegant lady adorned with jewelry and he invited her to go sightseeing. While they were in a jungle, he killed the lady so as to take possession of her fine clothes and jewelry.

As he knew that a Pratyeka Buddha was practicing in the jungle, he attempted to frame the Pratyeka Buddha. So he buried the corpse in the vicinity while the Pratyeka Buddha left for alms round. When the corpse was found, everyone assumed that the Pratyeka Buddha had killed the woman. They brought him to the city and prepared for his execution. The actor felt that the Pratyeka Buddha was innocent and should not be punished. So he turned himself in and was eventually executed.

Buddha said, "I killed a person in the past due to greed for her clothing and jewelry. I also framed a Pratyeka Buddha. Hence, I descended to the hell realm and suffered immeasurably. Even now as Buddha, I am not spared from karmic effect. This is my karmic retribution and no one is to blame."

Example 2

Our greed for fame, fortune, wealth, lust, and gluttony causes us to harm sentient beings. Even though we are well aware that the other party is a sentient being, we still use all kinds of means to take their life.

For instance, our craving for food drives us to search for varieties. However, nothing is comparable to the cruelty of feasting on live monkey brains. A monkey is confined to a hole in the middle of a dining table and its skull is cracked open alive. The patrons then gather round to eat the monkey's brain. Such horrific act to satisfy one's cravings totally neglects the suffering of the monkey and will definitely lead one to endless suffering in the hell realm.

- (b) Anger** – A person consumed by anger after having his fortune stolen or when his relatives are hurt, may cause harm to the other party.

Example

Buddha had to endure the suffering of bones aching. However, he was not troubled by the physical suffering as he knew that this was the karmic effect of his past unwholesome deeds. The Compassionate Buddha then revealed his past misdeeds to illustrate the law of cause and effect to us.

Buddha was a doctor in his past life and a wealthy patient once came to him for treatment. This rich man had sought treatment from numerous doctors but his illness was still

not cured. Thus, he promised to reward the doctor handsomely if he could be healed. However, after the wealthy man recovered, he left without keeping his promise. The doctor did not take it to heart initially but subsequently, the wealthy man visited and left without making payment for his treatment again. When it happened for the third time, the doctor got angry for being cheated repeatedly. So during the fourth visit, the doctor calmly prescribed an unsuitable medication for the rich man and this caused his death.

The doctor had taken the life of his patient out of anger and such misdeed caused him to suffer in the hell realm. After he took rebirth in the human realm, he generated *Bodhicitta* and cultivated diligently, finally becoming Sakyamuni Buddha. Yet, even after attaining Buddhahood, Buddha still had to endure the karmic effect of aching bones.

A doctor's mission is to save lives. However, not every life could be rescued even though the doctors had put in their best effort and made an attempt to fulfill their mission. Under such circumstances, the doctor has not transgressed the precept of killing if his patient cannot recover and dies. This is because he has treated his patient faithfully and the consequence could be the karmic result of the patient. Therefore, being the patient's family, we should be more understanding but we may request the doctor to treat the patient with compassion.

(c) Jealousy – Fame, fortune, or familial relationships could lead to jealousy and trigger the will to kill.

Example

There was a married couple who remained childless for many years. So the wife asked her husband to marry a mistress to bear children. After the mistress married into the family, she soon gave birth to a son. The husband was delighted and doted on his son.

The jealous wife thought, "I will lose my status in this family when the child inherits the family wealth in the future." She then plotted to kill the child and pierced a needle into the infant's skull. The child cried relentlessly but nobody knew what the problem was. In the end, the child died after seven days.

The mistress thought, "Why would my child die suddenly? The first wife must have been jealous of my son and harmed him." Thoughts of revenge filled the mistress's mind.

One day, the mistress learnt from a monastic that the merits of undertaking the Eight Precepts will enable all wishes to be granted. So she undertook the Eight Precepts and made a vow to be reborn as the first wife's child. She wanted to make the first wife suffer the pain of losing her child repeatedly.

When we undertake the Eight Precepts, we should make vows that aspire towards liberation and Buddhahood. Yet,

the unwise mistress made such a foolish aspiration. After she took the Eight Precepts, she passed on after seven days due to sorrow.

Not long after the mistress's death, the first wife was pregnant. It was the mistress fulfilling her aspiration by taking rebirth as the child of the first wife.

The first wife was delighted to have a child in middle age and doted on the child affectionately. Sadly, the child passed away one year later and she was devastated. After some time, she was pregnant again. This time, the child died four years later. In total, she conceived and gave birth to four children repeatedly but they all did not survive. Her fifth child managed to live till the age of fifteen, but also died eventually.

By this time, the first wife had aged. She wept in grief as she thought of her children who had all passed away. Just then, an Arahāt met her and comforted her, "Your children were the reincarnations of the late mistress."

The first wife asked, "Why is this so?"

The Arahāt replied, "The late mistress was revengeful as she knew that you caused the death of her child. She wanted you to suffer the same ordeal of losing one's child. You should confess and repent immediately. If she remains unforgiving, you should undertake the Eight Precepts."

Hence, the first wife decided to take the Eight Precepts. On her way to the monastery, she came across a huge python blocking her path. She was terrified and beseeched the Arahāt to save her. The Arahāt appeared promptly and spoke to the python, "You have taken your revenge for so long. It is wise to let bygones be bygones. She has sincerely repented for her past misdeeds. Moreover, she will be observing the Eight Precepts and dedicating the merits to you so that you can be liberated from suffering. Do not hinder her from taking the Eight Precepts as the karmic retribution for doing so might lead you to the hell realm. Cease your hatred and start cultivating to be free from all these suffering." After heeding the advice of the Arahāt, the python relinquished its hatred and left.

Thus, jealousy can cause one to kill and generate unwholesome karma that leads to immense suffering.

- (d) **Wrong Views** – Sentient beings tend to follow traditional customs of animal sacrifice to worship deities. They mistakenly believe that this will appease the deities and lead to blessings of good fortune in return. Under such circumstances, killing is committed under the influence of wrong views.

- (e) **Ignorance** – In ancient Taiwan, the aborigines used to practice headhunting and would offer the heads of humans to the deities. A man named Wu Feng could not bear to see people being killed. Hence, he sacrificed himself in order to awaken the aborigines and instil in

them the *Right View* of cause and effect. Headhunting is a form of killing that arises due to ignorance and lack of wisdom.

- (f) **Fear** – When facing death, some people will kill the other party out of fear for one's life. Such act of killing due to fear brings about karmic retribution too.

Example

Buddha and Venerable Ananda were collecting alms when they saw a piece of wood chip standing in their way. The wood chip then followed Buddha wherever he walked. Buddha knew that his past unwholesome karma had ripened and he took the opportunity to expound to the audience the cause and effect of his past deeds.

Buddha made several transformations, including a mountain, flame of fire, water, and wind. But each time, the wood chip passed through the transformations undamaged. Buddha ascended to the Heavens of the Four Deva Kings, Trayastrimsat Heaven, Yama Heaven, Tusita Heaven, Nirmanarati Heaven, Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven, and Maha Brahma Heaven, but the wood chip still followed him closely. During the transition, Buddha expounded the law of karmic cause and effect to the devas.

When Buddha returned from the heavenly realm, he told Venerable Ananda, "Please ask the devotees to leave now.

They would be devastated to see Buddha injured by the wood chip."

After everyone left, Buddha stretched his foot out and let the wood chip pierce through his midfoot, causing it to bleed profusely. At this juncture, the great physician Jivaka came forth and treated his wound.

Buddha told the audience that he was a captain of a ship in one of his past lives. They had planned to search for treasures in the ocean. At the same time, there was another ship searching for treasures too. Both ships had a crew of five hundred men each. During their voyage, they both stopped over on an island. At that moment, a female heavenly being informed them that there would be a huge tidal wave after seven days. The deva advised them to be prepared to leave any time. After the deva left, a demonic lady appeared. She told the crew that there would not be a tidal wave after seven days and everyone could relax and enjoy themselves to their hearts' content. The captain, who was Buddha's past life, told his crew that they ought to be prepared to set sail regardless whether a tidal wave would strike.

On the other hand, the captain of the other ship was the past life of Devadatta. He told his crew not to worry about the tidal wave and to enjoy themselves. Seven days later, a tidal wave occurred. Since the Buddha's crew was well-prepared, they boarded their ship and prepared to set sail. However, Devadatta's crew was unprepared to set sail and

so they boarded the Buddha's ship out of panic. As a ship was unable to accommodate one thousand men, a fight soon broke out between the two groups of crew.

During the scuffle, Buddha pierced Devadatta's foot with a spear. This act ultimately led to Devadatta's death. Although Buddha had killed Devadatta out of self-defense, he still had to suffer rebirth in the hell realm. Even after attaining Buddhahood, Buddha had to endure the karmic result of having his foot pierced by a wood chip.

- (g) **Killing by profession** – Executioners or butchers kill in order to earn a living. Although such killings were committed due to their profession, it would still generate unwholesome karma.

(4) Scheme

One uses various ways to harm and kill a sentient being.

- (a) **Own effort (body):** One's body can be used to kill someone. For instance, one can punch, kick, or crush someone to death using the fist, legs, or body respectively.

External force (objects): Some people make use of external objects to hurt others. When a couple squabbles, they might grab anything in sight and hurl it towards the other party. Likewise, if a doctor or nurse has a feud with others, they may prescribe inappropriate medication to cause harm to others out of animosity.

Some people buy white arsenic to poison others; drown others in water; set fire to their houses; foul play of car accidents; and even cast spells, using witchcraft or venomous insects.

Combination of own effort and external forces: Some feel that their strength is inadequate and resort to devices as a means to kill. For instance, when a couple squabbles, one might end up hurting the other with a chopper in a fit of rage. When this homicide has taken place, one will be left to regret.

So we need to observe the precepts; not only are we compassionate to others, we learn to subdue our impulsive desires.

(b) Body, speech, and mindset: There are people who use various means to cause a pregnant woman to undergo a miscarriage. This includes assigning hefty manual work to her, giving her distress and misery, or even poisoning her. Such unwholesome acts are carried out physically.

Some use words to antagonize her and make her feel depressed, leading her to take her own life eventually. There are people who use harsh words like "wishing you a pre-mature death and be reincarnated earlier", or "this money is for your medication but do not come to me if you passed on taking it". Whether such speech is said with intention, the listener would think you are just playing a prank. However, such words have a hidden intention to

harm. If the person died due to any of the conditions associated with the speech, the speaker would have broken the precept of non-killing.

- (c) Instigate killing:** There are books that teach people ways to commit suicide. If readers actually followed the instructions in the book and died, the author will have to bear severe karmic retribution.

After the 9/11 bombing of the twin towers in New York, books were written to teach people how to set up a bomb. Such books caused extreme distress to the public.

A popular phrase in a Taiwanese soap opera was as follows, "We will give you a tin of gasoline and a lighter". Such words are instigating others to kill. Spoken words are like spilled water – they cannot be recovered once they are spoken. As such, we should be mindful with our actions, speech, and mindset for they are essential to the observance of precepts.

- (d) Instructed killing:** When a person wants someone to lose his life, he might deliberately ask the person to go to a dangerous place that has poisonous snakes, wild beasts, or villains. If the person was killed in the process, the person who sent him would be guilty of transgressing the precept of non-killing.

(e) Applauding Death: As Buddhists, we have to pay special attention not to praise the death of others. There are three types of people, whom we are likely to violate the precept of non-killing by applauding their death:

- (1) Wrongdoer: When we see a wrongdoer, we might say, "This person has committed many crimes and ought to be dead soonest," or "The world will be better off without you committing more unwholesome deeds." If the person were to die after hearing such statements, we would have broken the precept of not killing because we had hoped for the wrongdoer to die.
- (2) Precept observer: We have learnt that those who uphold the precepts or practice the Ten Kinds of Mindfulness will take rebirth in the heavenly realm or even attain Nirvana. Hence, we might say, "You have observed the precepts strictly and practiced the Perception of Impureness diligently throughout your life. This would definitely ensure rebirth in the heavenly realm or attaining of Nirvana. As such, you should pass on so that you can be reborn in the heavenly realm or even attain nirvana earlier." Such incorrect speech actually wishes for the other person to die and applauds their death. Such words violate the precept on non-killing.
- (3) People in suffering: Some people may say to a person who is suffering, "If you pass on now, you will be relieved from all illness and suffering. So it is better to die sooner!"

Old age and sickness are inevitable representations of impermanence that all sentient beings have to undergo due to karma. We should not misguide others that the path to liberation is to die early. If he dies after hearing these words, we would be responsible for his death. We should instead, encourage the elderly and ill as such, "This body is impermanent so we must learn to accept old age, sickness, and death graciously. In order to do so, we should take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and uphold the precepts. We must always be mindful of The Great Compassionate Buddha. Through these cultivations, we can thus be liberated and attain Buddhahood in the future and be compassionate to all sentient beings. I empathize with your discomfort but we must learn to bear the pain of this ailing body. However, let us not vex our mind and stay mindful of the Great Compassionate Buddha and Bodhisattvas. We can then be focused on the joy of liberation and contemplate single-mindedly on the Buddha and aspire to be reborn in Amitabha Buddha's Western Pure World."

(5) Termination of Life

Regardless if we have instigated a person's death or applauded his death, through our effort or with the aid of external means, it is an offense if we harm him and have intended to take his life. However, the severity of the offense depends on whether the person's life ended. If the person dies instantly or after we leave the scene, it is classified as a

severe offense. But if the person does not die, it is classified as a less severe offense. If the death of the person is triggered by the action of someone else, we would still have committed a less severe offense while the killer who directly takes the life of the person commits a severe offense. Despite the differences in the severity of the offense as to light, medium or severe, the karmic retribution generated is still unwholesome.

When we have understood the five conditions that constitute the transgression of the precept of not killing, we should be mindful of our actions, speech, and thoughts. The Practice of Endurance helps us to be mindful and observe the precepts. Through endurance, we are able to subdue unwholesome thoughts and this in turn keeps our actions and speech in check. By having a thorough understanding of the precepts, we will then be able to check against ourselves consistently to see if we have committed any misdeeds.

Example 1

When a patient dies while being treated by a doctor, the doctor has not transgressed the precept as the doctor does not harbor the intent to kill.

Example 2

If we unintentionally step on an ant and cause its death, we have not broken the precept as we are not aware of its existence and do not have the intent to kill. After realizing that we have killed an ant, we should apologize to it and be mindful not to walk hastily next time and make the same

mistake again. We should cultivate unity of the body and mind by maintaining mindfulness when we walk and not be distracted.

The correct mindset when listening to Dharma is not to prejudge whether we are able to practice the Dharma or not. So when we listen to teachings of precepts, we should not have a preconceived notion that upholding the precepts is beyond our capabilities. We should first ponder the essence of the precept and seek a good understanding by learning the details of the precept. When we identify with the Buddha's teachings of precepts, we can then compare the gap between our current state and the benchmark of the Dharma. Perhaps we have only achieved one percent at the moment, but we can cultivate progressively towards the targeted benchmark. When we have completed cultivation, we will have attained Buddhahood.

If we perceive the Dharma to be too far-fetched and unachievable from the beginning, we can never improve as we tend to lower our standards or even give up on practicing altogether. The correct attitude is to first accept the Dharma teaching and slowly adjust our practice towards achieving the state of perfection. When we have an in-depth understanding of the Dharma, we will have Right View and Right Understanding. This will allow us to review our conduct to see if we have upheld the precepts and mark our next destination.

Exclusions from Offense of Killing

There are a few special circumstances where the act of killing does not constitute to the transgression of the precept.

- (1) **To save the lives of the majority:** Sacrificing a minor group of people in order to save the lives of a village or a nation.
- (2) **To save the life of a sage:** If someone intends to kill an Arahata, it is an exception if we hurt this person in order to save the Arahata. In this situation, our act was done not out of intention to kill but compassion so as to prevent the killer from suffering in the *Avici Hell* for killing an Arahata.
- (3) **Insanity:** This refers to a person who is mentally ill to the extent of treating fire as gold and touching fire with his bare hands without crying in pain, or even feeding on feces. However, if the person's degree of insanity is minor, killing and breaking the precept is still a severe offense.

Severity of the Offense

- (1) **Heinous offense:** Killing one's parents, Buddhist teachers (Upadhyaya), Buddhist preceptors (Acarya), or Arahats are heinous deeds that will lead one to the *Avici Hell*.
- (2) **Severe offense:** Killing a human being.
- (3) **Medium offense:** Killing the eight groups of spiritual beings.
- (4) **Less severe offense:** Killing an animal.

Example 1

Although it is a light offense to kill an animal, the karmic retribution gets more severe when the intent to kill increases. For instance, the karma of killing an elephant is more serious than killing an ant because killing an elephant would require greater effort and willpower. The degree of intent to kill, the method of killing, and the subject being killed are factors that determine the severity of the karmic retribution.

Example 2

Some traditional Chinese medicine prescriptions require a decoction of herbs with turtles, tortoises, carps, or even centipedes. Now let us consider which is more important – saving our lives or upholding the precepts? By now, we should be certain that upholding the precepts is more important! When we have faith in the Buddha, we will readily observe the precepts and abstain from taking any medicine decocted with the meat of sentient beings. If we were to pass on as a result of not taking the decoction, we will at least take rebirth in the heavenly realm. The bliss that heavenly beings enjoy is far beyond that of humans.

What should we do if our family insisted that we consume the decoction? We would have to decide wisely, just like the Srotapanna who would rather kill himself and observe the precepts than to slaughter sheep as insisted by his parents.

This body is impermanent and will decay one day. Consuming medicine that is decocted with meat does not guarantee our

recovery. Instead, our unwholesome karma will definitely accumulate regardless of the medicine's efficiency.

Ten Consequences of Killing

(1) Ingrained anger, even in future lives

A person who has a habit of killing will often harbor thoughts of hatred and anger. This ingrained habit of anger cannot be eliminated easily and will continue to grow and carry over to the next life.

Example

If a person gets agitated easily, it becomes a habit. Similarly, killing will become habitual for a person who kills frequently.

An unemployed man who had just started a family was advised by a friend to sell pork for a living as it was profitable. Initially, the man felt that selling meat of sentient beings was cruel and shameful. But later on, he started to learn butchery as well after his friend persuaded him to do butchering rather than look for pork suppliers. When he arrived at the slaughter house for the first time, the wailing of pigs and the sight of blood-smeared floors horrified him and he could not bear to be near it. However, on second thought, he would be jobless if he did not enter the slaughter house. So for the sake of the pay, he learnt to slaughter pigs. As time went by, he became indifferent towards killing and his compassion slowly diminished as slaughtering pigs became a habitual part of his life.

(2) Abhorred and unwelcome by everyone

Sentient beings tend to stay away from people who kill. When we meet a person whose profession involves killing, we might think that it is better to keep a distance as he might harm us if we were to have a disagreement with him.

(3) Continual unwholesome and malicious thoughts

Like a murderer who kills for pleasure, one will be vicious in every thought and action.

(4) Fearsome like a snake or tiger

A person who kills instils fear in others like a tiger or snake and everyone will stay away to avoid being hurt.

(5) Constantly uneasy and restless

People who kill live in fear and uneasiness all the time, even during their sleep. They will always carry weapons for protection wherever they go as they are paranoid that they will be harmed.

Hence, we should always observe the precepts and be compassionate. Whenever our affliction arises, we should learn to subdue them.

(6) Frequent nightmares

Those who cultivate conscientiously would have a peaceful mind that is rarely tainted with afflictions. In comparison, those who kill habitually are constantly afflicted by anger.

Their intense animosity will result in them having constant nightmares of being pursued and killed.

(7) Terror at time of death

Butchers who kill animals or sell meat for a livelihood will envision images of poultry coming to claim their lives at their moment of death. They will be tormented and die out of horror. As such, we should protect all sentient beings and not harm them.

We also should teach our children to protect all sentient beings from a young age. Since these sentient beings have parents just like them, its parents will be heartbroken if it was hurt. Likewise, if the parents met with harm, the young being may not survive without the care of its parents. Thus, we should take the opportunity to educate our children so that non-killing becomes their habit from young.

(8) Short life span

Those who kill will end up short-lived. On the contrary, those who protect and free the lives of captive beings will have the karmic result of longevity.

(9) Rebirth in the hell realm

Those who kill and break the precept will be reborn in the hell realm.

(10) Premature death when reborn as humans

Those who kill will have short lives when they are reborn in the human realm.

As we learn the unwholesome results of killing, we must uphold the precepts diligently. We should neither kill in order to satisfy our palate nor antagonize and harm someone out of anger.

We should cultivate Right Understanding and Right View, and stop sacrificing livestock as offering to the deities or heavens. When we are bullied, we should just stay away and not retaliate out of fear.

Let us all observe the precepts and cultivate wholesome deeds so that we can live in peace happily and be carefree and at ease.

| Abstinence from Killing | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Definition | To kill is to take the life of a sentient being. This includes abortion and suicide. |
| Sequence | (1) The key to success on the path of Bodhi is Great Compassion as humans are basically empathetic. This journey begins with abstinence from killing. Compassion enables us to be reborn as humans. (2) All sentient beings value their lives the most and desire to live. To save the lives of these beings, the first precept is to abstain from killing. |
| Conditions | <u>Five Conditions that Constitute Offense:</u> (1) Sentient being (2) Awareness (3) Intent to kill (4) Scheme (5) Termination of life |
| Severity of Offense | <u>Three Levels of Severity:</u> (1) Heinous offense: Killing one's parents, Buddhist teachers (Upadhyaya), Buddhist preceptors (Acarya), or Arahats. (2) Severe offense: Killing a human being. (3) Less severe offense: Killing an animal. <u>Severity is also dependent on:</u> (1) The intent to kill: Killing out of ignorance (severe offense), anger and greed (less severe offense). (2) The kind of sentient being that is killed. (3) Method of killing. |
| Exclusions | <u>Three Exceptions:</u> (1) To save the lives of the majority (2) To save the life of a sage – Hurting the killer out of compassion so as to prevent the killer from committing the Five Heinous Acts, even if this meant that one will take rebirth in the hell realm. (3) Insanity – Severe levels of mental illness equivalent to: – Touching fire like an ordinary person would seize gold. – Handling feces like an ordinary person would handle sandalwood. – Mental illness that is less severe is not considered insanity. Killing under such circumstances is not exempted and equates to severe offense. |

| Abstinence from Stealing | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Definition | Stealing is taking something without consent from the owner. It is categorized under six scenarios: (1) Thieving (2) Snatching (3) Swindling (4) Extortion (5) Deceit (6) Eviction |
| Sequence | (1) It is preceded by killing in the Ten Meritorious Deeds and the Ten Unmeritorious Deeds. (2) Killing and stealing generate detrimental results, first to the direct karmic result, and subsequently to the circumstantial karmic result. On the contrary, committing wholesome deeds will generate positive karmic results. |
| Conditions | <u>Six Conditions that Constitute Offense:</u> (1) Ownership (2) Aware that the object belongs to someone (3) Intent to steal (4) Valuables (5) Scheme (6) Removal from its origin |
| Severity Of Offense | <u>Three Levels of Severity:</u> (1) Stealing from the Sangha or the Sangha of the ten directions is an extremely severe offense. The sin is graver than killing eighty-four thousand parents or committing the Five Heinous Acts. (2) Stealing from the Triple Gem, teachers, parents and people who have generated Bodhicitta is a severe offence (3) Value of object: Severe Offense (equivalent to eight coins in ancient times) Less Severe Offense (Between three and five coins in ancient times) Least Severe Offense (Below three coins in ancient times) Severity of offense also depends on the degree of distress inflicted on the victim. |
| Exclusions | <u>Five Exceptions:</u> (1) Perception of being given (2) Perception of being the owner (3) Perception of worthless waste (4) Perception of transitory use (5) Perception of Kinship A Bodhisattva who punishes corrupt officials out of compassion by robbing from them and returning the loots to the respective victims is also an exception. |

| Abstinence from Sexual Misconduct | |
|--|---|
| Definition | Flirtation is an unethical conduct and it is unethical to have a sexual relationship with someone other than the legal spouse. An Upasaka who undertakes the Five Precepts should abstain from such misconduct. Laities can also abstain from all sexual activity voluntarily, and such laity is known as a Brahmacharya Upasaka. (Duration of abstention is according to one's will) |
| Sequence | A Bodhisattva acts for the benefits of others (parartha). Thus, the precept of abstinence from killing is foremost priority as killing goes against the nature of compassion. On the contrary, for a practitioner who self-cultivates for own benefit (svartha), the precept of abstinence from sexual misconduct holds priority as lustful thoughts taint the mind and hinder the practice of meditation and cultivation of wisdom. Unwholesome deeds that lead to suffering in Samsara will also be committed. |
| Conditions | <u>Five Conditions that Constitute Offense:</u> (1) Sentient being (2) Improper contact (3) Attachment derived from desire (4) Scheme (5) Unification |
| Severity Of Offense | <u>Severity of offense is dependent on:</u> (1) Intent: out of greed (severe offence), anger and ignorance (less severe offence). (2) Contact: Unethical conduct with a next-of-kin or someone respectable constitutes a severe offence. (3) Count of felonies (Offense from light to severe) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstaining from the misconduct after committing an offense • Abstaining from the misconduct after several offenses • Recidivating of the offenses • Constant violation of the precept |
| Exclusions | <u>Three exceptions:</u> (1) Asleep or unconsciousness (2) Without joyous feeling (3) No sexual desire An Upasaka should refrain from any sexual activity when observing the Eight Precepts. Likewise on the Six Purification Days, for the laity who has undertook the Bodhisattva Precepts. There is no exclusion for monastics who live in celibacy. |

| Abstinence from Lying | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Definition | Lying is false speech spoken in contradiction to one's thoughts, through dishonest words and deceptive speech. It includes harsh speech (scolding), divisive words (gossip), and frivolous conversation (content that is irrelevant to one's practice). |
| Sequence | The first three precepts are related to body actions while this precept is related to speech. It is easy to violate this precept as it includes four kinds of unwholesome speech and the offense is severe. |
| Conditions | <u>Six Conditions that Constitute Offense:</u> (1) Sentient being (2) Awareness (3) Intent to deceive (4) Conceal the truth (5) Clearly articulated (6) Comprehensible |
| Severity Of Offense | <u>Classified as heinous offense, major lies, and minor lies:</u> (1) Heinous offense: Proclaim Erroneous Views as Right Dharma and vice versa; sow discord among the monastics, and hinder monastics from propagating the Dharma. (2) Major lies (severe offense): Proclaim Arahatsip or fruition of Bodhisattva practice when one has not attained. (3) Major lies (less severe offense): Proclaim false sighting of deities and ghosts; proclaim to be well-versed in Tripitaka, and the attainment of four meditations and eight concentrations, when one has not attained. These offenses obstruct Right View and Right Faith, and hinder one from attaining the Pure Dharma Eye. (4) Minor lies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim not to have seen when one has seen and vice versa • Claim not to hear when one has heard and vice versa • Claim to be unaware when one is aware and vice versa • Claim not to know when one knows and vice versa • Claim non-existence when it exists and vice versa |
| Exclusions | <u>Exceptions of Major Lies:</u> (1) Conceit (adhimana) (2) Expounding Dharma and not self-proclaiming attainment (3) Said in jest (Everyone knows it is a joke) <u>Exceptions of Minor Lies:</u> To protect lives of sentient beings and prevent them from suffering, or for the sake of Dharma and spoken with no malicious intent. <u>Exceptions of frivolous speech:</u> (1) To alleviate one's troubles and sorrows (2) To safeguard sentient beings and help instill faith in the Dharma |

| Abstinence from Taking Intoxicants | |
|---|--|
| Definition | <p>Intoxicants include anything that has the appearance, odor, or taste of liquor, and the consumption of which could cause drowsiness or ecstasy.</p> <p>There are two categories of alcohol:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Grain based alcohol fermented from grains (2) Non-grain based alcohol fermented from flowers, fruits, seeds, roots, stems, leaves, or herbs. |
| Sequence | <p>Abstinence from taking intoxicants is a precept of precaution (prajnapiti-sila) to forestall the transgression of the first four precepts, which are also known as prakrti-sila (against values and integrity).</p> <p>The Bodhisattva Precepts state that the offense of selling liquor is graver than self-consumption, as intoxicating others is against the practice of Bodhisattvas.</p> |
| Conditions | <p><u>Five Conditions that Constitute Offense:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Intoxicating (2) Awareness (3) Intent to intake (4) No critical ailment that requires the intake (5) Swallowing <p>Each gulp down the throat counts as a violation of the precept.</p> |
| Severity Of Offense | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Self-consumption of liquor breaks the Five Precepts (2) Selling and brewing of liquor breaks the Bodhisattva Precepts and it is a severe offence |
| Exclusions | <p><u>Two Exceptions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Critical illness that requires the concoction of alcohol in medication (2) Apply externally on the wound (e.g. use of anesthesia in surgery) |

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Altruistic Joy: Also known as Sympathetic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Amitabha Buddha: The Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life, who presides over the Western Pure World, to which anyone can be reborn through single minded recitation of or meditation on the Buddha's name.

Anagamin: One who has attained the third stage of Liberation. Such a person has abandoned sensuous desires. Upon passing from the human realm, he will take rebirth in one of the five special worlds in the World of Form, called the Suddhavaśa worlds, or "Pure Abodes", from which he will attain Arahātship and will never return to the human realm. Hence, he is also known as a Non Returner. An Anagamin has abandoned the five lower fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahātship.

Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi: The Supreme and Complete Enlightenment.

Arahat: One who has traversed the Eightfold Noble Path to reach the fourth and final stage of Liberation, called Arahātship. An Arahat has abandoned all ten fetters that bind beings to the cycle of existence. Also known as the Perfect One. See also Arahātship.

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Arahatship: The fourth and final stage of Liberation, in which one is fully liberated from Samsara and is no longer subject to death and rebirth. The four stages of Liberation are: The First stage known as Srotapanna; the Second stage known as Sakradagamin; the Third stage known as Anagamin; and the Fourth stage known as Arahat.

Avici Hell: Also known as the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture. It is the deepest and worst hell. Those born in this hell suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to suffering without interruption, until they have exhausted the retribution for their evil karma.

Bardo: A Tibetan term for the state of existence intermediate between two lives.

Bhikshu: A fully ordained male member of the Buddhist Sangha or monk observing two hundred and fifty Precepts.

Bhikshuni: A fully ordained female member of the Buddhist Sangha or nun observing five hundred Precepts.

Bhutatahata: The true character of reality. The inherent or true nature of phenomena or true suchness. (诸法实相)

Bodhicitta: Also known as the Bodhi-mind or the Bodhi-heart, in which "Bodhi" means "enlightened". It is the aspiration to attain supreme Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Bodhisattva: A being who has developed Bodhicitta and is striving for enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Brahma King: The King of the Brahma World.

Brahma World: In the widest sense, this is the name of the World of Form; in a narrower sense, it is the collective name of the first three heavens of the World of Form. See also Three worlds of existence.

Buddha: The Fully Enlightened One, who possesses perfect wisdom and compassion.

Compassion: Also known as Karuna. See also Four Divine States of Mind and Great Compassion.

Cycle of existence: See Samsara.

Dana: Charity; benevolence; generosity.

Defilements: The mental states of greed, hatred, and delusion which temporarily cloud the mind and manifest in unwholesome actions. These defilements are seen as the very roots of Samsaric existence and are known as the three poisons.

Deva: A heavenly being.

Dharma: The Teachings of the Buddha.

Dharma-kaya: The Dharma body, the truth body, the reality body.

Eight Precepts: Observed by lay Buddhists during certain retreats: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual activities; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not take intoxicants; (6) do not wear bodily adornments, use perfumes, engage in singing and dancing, and watching dances or plays; (7) do not sleep in a raised bed; and (8) do not eat after noon.

Eightfold Noble Path: The fundamental teaching of the Buddha that shows the path that leads to the cessation of suffering: (1) Right View or Right Understanding; (2) Right Thought; (3) Right Speech; (4) Right Action; (5) Right Livelihood; (6) Right Effort; (7) Right Mindfulness; and (8) Right Concentration.

Eighteen Forms of Emptiness: Eighteen aspects of emptiness as accorded in the Mahaprajnaparamita-sutra. (十八空)

Eighteen kinds of transformation: Includes (1) moving objects or even worlds; (2) emitting fire from the body; (3) illuminating innumerable worlds; (4) causing sentient beings in all the six realms to be seen; (5) changing an object into something different; (6) roaming freely by penetrating walls, mountains, water, air, and so on; (7) rolling anything into a minute size; (8) enlarging objects to gigantic proportions; (9) storing up swarms of people, mountains, or earth within the body; (10) entering any group, assuming their forms and voices, preaching to them, and then disappearing; (11) magnifying the body to a thousand fold; (12) hiding this magnified metamorphosis; (13) subjecting sentient beings to one's will; (14) controlling the supernatural powers of those below one in spiritual achievements; (15) endowing sentient beings with eloquence; (16) restoring memory to those who forget the Dharma; (17) giving joy to listeners; and (18) lighting up the creatures in all the worlds.

Eon: See Kalpa.

Equanimity: Also known as Upeksa. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

First Stage of Fruition: Also known as the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained the first stage of fruition is known as a Srotapanna or Stream Enterer.

Five aggregates: Form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness.

Five desires: Wealth, lust, fame, food, and sleep.

Five Powers: Obtained through the practice of the Five Wholesome Faculties: (1) Power of Faith; (2) Power of Effort; (3) Power of Mindfulness; (4) Power of Concentration; (5) Power of Wisdom.

Five Precepts: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; and (5) Do not take intoxicants.

Five sensual pleasures: Pleasurable feelings derived from the contact between the five sense bases of eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body, and the five sense objects of form, sound, odor, flavor, and tactile object.

Five Wholesome Faculties: (1) Faculty of Faith; (2) Faculty of Effort; (3) Faculty of Mindfulness; (4) Faculty of Concentration; (5) Faculty of Wisdom.

Four Divine States of Mind: (1) Maitri or Loving-kindness; (2) Karuna or Compassion; (3) Mudita or Altruistic Joy; and (4) Upeksa or Equanimity.

Four Foundations of Mindfulness: (1) Contemplation of the body; (2) Contemplation of feelings; (3) Contemplation of the state of mind; and (4) Contemplation of phenomena. See also Right Effort.

Four Noble Truths: (1) The noble truth of suffering; (2) The noble truth of the cause of suffering; (3) The noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and (4) The noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Four pairs and eight categories of Sravaka practitioners: This refers to Sravaka practitioners who practice the Srotapanna path and those who have attained Srotapannaship; the ones who practice the Sakradagamin path and those who have attained Sakradagaminship; the ones who practice the Anagamin path and those who have attained Anagaminship; the ones who practice the Arahat path and those who have attained Arahatship.

Four Right Endeavors: (1) the effort to get rid of unwholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind, such as the desire to take another's property; (2) the effort to prevent the arising of unwholesome thoughts; (3) the effort to develop wholesome thoughts of loving-kindness and compassion; and (4) the effort to maintain and develop further wholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind.

Four Ways to Attain Samadhi: The basis to attain Samadhi: (1) Desire to practice Concentration; (2) Effort; (3) Mindfulness; (4) Contemplation.

Great Compassion: The aspiration to remove the sufferings and causes of sufferings of all sentient beings.

Heavens of the Four Deva Kings: Also known as the Heavens of the Deva Kings of the Four Heavens. This is the first of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three worlds of existence.

Hell of Screaming: One of the Eight Hot Hells. The other seven are: the Hell of Thoughts, the Hell of Iron Chains, the Hell of Crushing, the Hell of Great Screaming, the Scorching Hot Hell, the Extreme Scorching Hot Hell, and the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture (also known as the Avici Hell).

Kalpa: Also known as Eon. It is often used to denote a very long period of time. There are small, medium, great, and incalculable kalpas. A great kalpa indicates the length of time between the creation and recreation of a universe, spanning the period of the universe's formation, existence, destruction, and non-existence.

Karma: The deeds carried out by a person and their effects on the person's future, especially in relation to their succeeding rebirths. Karma can be classified as actions of the body, speech, and mind, each of which can have the moral quality of wholesomeness, unwholesomeness, or indeterminate.

Karuna: Also known as Compassion. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

King Yama: The King in charge of the hell realm.

Law of causality: Also known as the law of cause and effect. This is a fundamental concept within Buddhism governing all situations, in which all actions, which is a cause, will produce a corresponding

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effect. It is also stated as good begets good, evil begets evil; good will not beget evil, evil will not beget good.

Law of Dependent Origination: The principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of cause and conditions.

Loving-kindness: Also known as Maitri. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Maitri: Also known as Loving-kindness. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Mara: The Demon King who resides in the Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven.

Mudita: Also known as Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Naga: Dragon or serpent. A beneficent divine being who governs the various water bodies, such as seas, lakes, rivers, and springs.

National Preceptor: The Religious Adviser to the King equivalent to the position of a Prime Minister.

Nirmanarati Heaven: This is the fifth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three worlds of existence.

Nirvana: The perfect state of mind that is free from greed, hatred, and delusion, and hence all suffering. See also Parinirvana and Residue-less Nirvana.

Non Returner: See Anagamin.

Once Returner: See Sakradagamin.

Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven: This is the sixth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Mara, the Demon King, resides in this heaven. See also Three worlds of existence.

Parinirvana: Also known as the Great Nirvana; it indicates the Buddha's entering into the state of residue-less Nirvana. See also Nirvana and Residue-less Nirvana.

Perfect One: See Arahant.

Prajna: Wisdom; insight; divine intuition.

Pratyeka Buddha: Also known as the Silent Buddha, or Self-enlightened One. The Pratyeka Buddha appears in an era when there is no Buddha or the Buddha's teachings. He lives apart from others and achieves enlightenment through self-contemplation and realization of dependent arising.

Pure Dharma Eye: The pure vision of the true Dharma.

Residue-less Nirvana: Also known as Nirvana without residue. It refers to the state of total liberation from all physical and mental conditions. This is in contrast with Nirvana with residue, where the body still exists. See also Nirvana and Parinirvana.

Right Action: To conduct oneself in moral, peaceful, and honorable ways, that is in keeping with the precepts of not killing, not stealing,

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and not committing sexual misconduct. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

Right Concentration: To develop one's meditation according to the four Dhyanas. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Effort: To develop the Four Right Endeavors. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Faith: To develop faith in the Triple Gem and the Four Noble Truths, that through practicing Buddhism, all sentient beings can eventually attain liberation from Samsara.

Right Livelihood: To live honorably in a profession which is in no way harmful to sentient beings, and in keeping with the precepts. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Mindfulness: To practice the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. See also Four Foundations of Mindfulness and Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Speech: To abstain from telling lies, slandering, frivolous speech, and harsh speech. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

Right Thought: To have only thoughts which are in line with Buddhist teachings. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

Right Understanding: See Right View.

Right View: To develop the understanding or view that complies with the Buddhist teaching of causality or the law of cause and

effect; understanding the Four Noble Truths. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Right Understanding.

Right View of Dependent Arising: Also known as Law of Dependent Origination. It is the principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of cause and conditions. It is an elaboration of the Principle of Cause and Effect, highlighting the concept of inter-dependency of existence, and also the duality/non-duality.

Rupa-kaya: The material body.

Saha World: The secular world, which is known as the world that must be endured as it is full of sufferings.

Sakra: The King of Trayastrimsat Heaven.

Sakradagamin: One who has attained the second stage of Liberation. Such a person, upon passing from the human realm, will take rebirth in the heavenly realms, after which he will be reborn in the human realm one last time to attain Arahatsip. Hence he is also known as a Once Returner. A Once Returner has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. He is distinguished from the Stream Enterer by the fact that the Once Returner has weakened greed, hatred, and delusion to a greater degree. Therefore, he has fewer than seven rebirths. See also Arahatsip.

Samadhi: Meditative concentration. Often used to denote the deepest state of pure concentration, in which the mind is free from distraction and totally absorbed in the object of concentration. There are many levels and types of Samadhi, such as the Samadhi of Loving-kindness and Compassion.

Samsara: Also known as the Cycle of existence or cyclic existence. This refers to the endless cycle of suffering caused by birth, death, and rebirth in the six realms of cyclic existence.

Sangha: The Buddhist monastic order or community.

Seven Factors of Enlightenment: (1) Mindfulness; (2) Discriminative investigation of the Dharma; (3) Effort; (4) Joy; (5) Ease of body and mind; (6) Concentration; and (7) Equanimity.

Sila: The precept; code of morality; Buddhist ethics.

Siksamana: A female novice nun in waiting observing Six Precepts.

Six consciousnesses: The consciousnesses of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

Six Paramitas: The Sanskrit word Paramita means to cross over to the other shore. Paramita may also be translated as perfection, perfect realization, or reaching beyond limitation. Through the practice of these six Paramitas, we cross over the sea of suffering (Samsara) to the shore of happiness and awakening (Nirvana); we cross over from ignorance and delusion to enlightenment. The six Paramitas refer to:

- The Perfection of Generosity (Dana Paramita),
- The Perfection of Ethics (Sila Paramita),
- The Perfection of Patience (Ksanti Paramita)
- The Perfection of Joyous Effort / Enthusiastic Perseverance (Virya Paramita),
- The Perfection of Concentration (Dhyana Paramita),
- The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita).

Six realms: The realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, asuras, and heavenly beings.

Six sense bases: Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

Six sense objects: Form, sound, odor, flavor, tactile object, and phenomena.

Sramanera: A male novice monk observing Ten Precepts.

Sramanerika: A female novice nun observing Ten Precepts.

Srotapanna: One who has attained the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained this stage is said to have entered the Stream that leads to Liberation, hence he is also known as a Stream Enterer. Due to the fact that the Stream Enterer has attained an intuitive grasp of Buddhist teachings ("Right View") and has complete confidence in the Triple Gem, he will not be reborn in the three lower realms again, and will take at most seven cycles of rebirths alternating between the heavenly realm and the human realm before attaining the final stage of Liberation, Arahatsip. A Stream Enterer has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahatsip.

Stream Enterer: See Srotapanna.

Supernatural powers: The six supernatural powers are: (1) Divine eye or clairvoyance; (2) Divine ear or cliraudience; (3) mental telepathy or ability to read the thoughts of others; (4) psychic travel or telekinesis; (5) knowledge of the past and future; and (6) ending contamination. The first five supernatural powers can be acquired by one who practices deep concentration,

but the sixth supernatural power is only attainable when one has attained Arahatship.

Sympathetic Joy: Also known as Altruistic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Ten directions of space: The directions of North, South, East, West, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, Zenith, and Nadir, thus covering all spaces.

Ten epithets: The ten honorable titles of Buddha. These ten epithets are common to all Buddhas.

- Tathagata - Thus-Come One or Thus-Gone One,
- Arahat - Worthy of Offerings,
- Samyak-Sambuddha - Equally, Perfectly Enlightened One,
- Vidyacarana-Sampanna - Knowledge and Conduct Perfected,
- Sugata - Well-Arrived One or Well-Gone One. Tathagata is completely in control of his own births and deaths,
- Lokavid - Understanding the World,
- Anuttara - Unsurpassed One,
- Purusa-Damya-Sarathi - Tamer of Men,
- Sasta Deva-Manusyanam - Teacher to Gods, Humans, and heavenly beings,
- Buddha-Bhagavan - Buddha the World Honored One.

Ten Kinds of Mindfulness: (1) Mindfulness of the Buddha; (2) Mindfulness of the Dharma; (3) Mindfulness of the Sangha; (4) Mindfulness of the Precepts; (5) Mindfulness of Generosity; (6) Mindfulness of the Heavens; (7) Mindfulness of the Cessation of Thoughts; (8) Mindfulness of Breath; (9) Mindfulness of the Impermanence of the Body; and (10) the Mindfulness of Death.

Ten Stages of Bodhisattva Practice: According to the Prajna sutras, the ten stages of Bodhisattva Practice are:

- the stage of dry wisdom,
- the stage of nature,
- the stage of the eighth person,
- the stage of insights,
- the stage of diminishment of afflictions,
- the stage of freedom from desire,
- the stage of completion of discernment,
- the stage of the Pratyeka Buddha,
- the stage of the Bodhisattva, and
- the stage of the Buddha.

Tenfold meritorious cause of action: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not slander; (6) Do not engage in frivolous speech; (7) Do not engage in harsh speech; (8) Do not bear greed; (9) Do not bear hatred; and (10) Do not stay deluded.

Three lower realms: The three lower realms refer to hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals; as opposed to the three upper realms of humans, asuras, and heavenly beings. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

Three periods: The past, present, and future.

Three poisons: See Defilements.

Three Upper Realms: This refers to humans, asuras and heavenly beings; as opposed to the three lower realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

Three worlds of existence: The World of Sensuous Desires, the World of Form, and the Formless World. All beings in the six realms of cyclic existence can be found in the World of Sensuous Desires as these beings are plagued by various sensuous desires. Beings in the World of Form have abandoned sensuous desires but still cling on to physical forms, while beings in the Formless World have even relinquished the physical forms and exist only in mental states.

Trayastrimsat Heaven: Also known as the Thirty-Three Heavens. It is the second of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three worlds of existence.

Tripitaka: The three main collections of the Buddhist canon – (1) sutra-pitaka (sermons collection); (2) vinaya-pitaka (rules collection); (3) abhidharma-pitaka (philosophical treatises collection). Also known as the Three Baskets.

Triple Gem: The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

Tusita Heaven: This is the fourth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Maitreya Bodhisattva is currently residing in this heaven, awaiting for the cause and conditions to ripen for him to descend to the human realm and become the next Buddha to save and liberate all sentient beings. See also Three worlds of existence.

Twelve Links of Dependent Origination: The twelve links of dependent origination provide a detailed description on the problem of suffering and rebirth. They are: ignorance, mental formation, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, aging and death. There is no existing phenomenon that is not the effect of dependent

origination. All phenomena arise dependent upon a number of casual factors, called conditions.

- Ignorance is the condition for mental formation.
- Mental formation is the condition for consciousness.
- Consciousness is the condition for name and form.
- Name and form is the condition for the six senses.
- The six senses are the conditions for contact.
- Contact is the condition for feeling.
- Feeling is the condition for craving.
- Craving is the condition for clinging.
- Clinging is the condition for becoming.
- Becoming is the condition for birth.
- Birth is the condition for aging and death.

Upeksa: Also known as Equanimity. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

Western Pure World: Also known as Sukhavati in Sanskrit. It refers to the Pure World of Amitabha Buddha.

Wheel Turning Monarch: Also known as Chakravartin. A universal emperor and protector of Buddhism. It is a term used for an ideal universal ruler, who rules ethically and benevolently over the entire world. Wheel turning literally means whose chariot is rolling or whose Dharmachakra (Wheel of the Dharma) is turning everywhere without obstruction.

Yama Heaven: This is the third of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three worlds of existence.

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"Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains" is based on a series of video Dharma teachings presented by Venerable Da Shi. We hope to continue releasing more titles in this series at a later date. You may check our website (www.mypty.sg) for updates.

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