

## Buddhist Teaching towards Peace

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### Abstract

This article provides a view of the Buddhist vision of peace in the sense of peace studies. The first section has highlighted the terms of peace and its different perspectives of peace. The next it will be examined some basics of Buddhism and its contribution towards a peace and peaceful resolutions of conflict. The last section explores the potentials of Buddhist contributions to the peacemaking efforts and the promotion of a culture of peace in today's world. To prevent any kind of disputes, the Buddha teaches eight principles of cordiality for any community. As for inter-group or international affairs, Buddhist scriptures are rife with stories that teach nonviolent intervention. The article concludes the Buddhist perception and its vision also its originals in order to create peace in mind as well within everyone.

### What is peace?

Peace can be identified in different ways, thus it takes variety of forms. Most people think of peace as the absence of war. Peace Education means to learn about and to learn for peace. Therefore learning about peace means gaining knowledge and understanding of what contributes to peace, what damages it, what leads to war, what does 'peace' mean on each level, what is the role in it, and how are the different levels connected.

Learning peace is also got a different degree of value. Learning for peace means learning the skills, attitudes and values that one needs in order to contribute to peace and help maintain it. For example, this means learning to deal with conflicts without the recourse to violence, learning to think creatively, learning to apply the methods of active non violence or learning to deal with cultural differences in a constructive and a proper way. There has been no shortage of definitions of peace. It can be defined such as;

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- The absence of war or other hostilities.
- Freedom from quarrels and disagreement; harmonious relations: i.e- roommates living in peace with each other.
- Public security and order: i.e-“was arrested for disturbing the peace”.
- Inner contentment; serenity: i.e- peace of mind.

It is possible to indicate the sayings of some famous persons, can be identified in the below context;

- "Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." - Mahatma Gandhi
- "There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered." - Nelson Mandela

### **Different perspectives Peace**

Initially there are two different aspects of peace namely, negative peace and positive peace. It can be elaborated as below.

- **Negative Peace** is the absence of direct violence (physical, verbal, and psychological) between individuals groups and governments.
- **Positive Peace** is more than the absence of violence, it is the presence of social justice through equal opportunity, a fair distribution of power and resources, equal protection and impartial enforcement of law. Generally the concept of positive peace involves the elimination of the root causes of war, violence, and injustice and the conscious effort to build a society that reflects these commitments. Positive peace assumes an interconnectedness of all life.

### **What is Buddhism?**

Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who lived about 25 centuries ago in what is now Nepal and northeastern India. He came to be called "the Buddha," which means "awakened one," after he experienced a profound realization of the nature of life, death and existence. In the remaining years of his life, the Buddha traveled and taught. What so ever, he didn't teach people what he had realized when he became enlightened? Instead, he taught people how to realize enlightenment for themselves. He taught that awakening comes through one's own direct experience, not through beliefs and prayers.

Buddhism does not include the idea of worshipping a creator god, some people do not see it as a religion in the normal. Hence the basic tenets of Buddhist teaching are straightforward and practical, for example nothing is fixed or permanent, actions have consequences and change is possible. So Buddhism addresses itself to all people irrespective of race, nationality, caste, sexuality, or gender. And also it teaches practical methods that make people to realize and use its teachings in order to transform their experience, to be fully responsible for their lives.

### **What Buddhism Has to Say about Peace and the Peaceful Resolution of Conflict**

Generally comparing with major world religions, the core meaning inside Buddhism is a religion of peace. The Pali verse (Theravadin) in Dhammapada, makes this abundantly clear.

*"Hatred is never appeased by hatred.*

*Hatred is only appeased by Love (or, non-enmity).*

*This is an eternal law." (Verse 5, Dhammapada).*

The Pali term for "eternal law" here is dhamma, or the Buddhist teachings. So, this verse on non-enmity has to do with a tenet of the Buddhist faith that is fundamental, namely, peace and non-harm.

### **Buddhist ideas for attaining world peace**

Buddhism teaches that whether we have global peace or global war is up to us at every moment. The situation is not hopeless and out of our hands. If we don't do anything, who will? Peace or war is our decision. The fundamental goal of Buddhism is peace, not only peace in this world but peace in all worlds. The Buddha taught that the first step on the path to peace is understanding the causality of peace. When we understand what causes peace, we know where to direct our efforts. In other words, we can take many actions in our quest for peace that may be helpful. But if we do not first address the fundamental issues, all other actions will come to nothing.

The Buddha taught that peaceful minds lead to peaceful speech and peaceful actions. If the minds of living beings are at peace, the world will be at peace. Therefore it is possible to look first at the Buddha's vision of the world, including the causality of its operations. Finally, having developed a Buddhist theoretical

framework for understanding the nature of the problem and its solution, we can try to apply the basic principles in searching for concrete applications to create peace in everywhere that we can actually put into practice in our own daily lives.

### **Aspects of the Buddhist world view**

The Buddha taught that all forms of this life. He did not admit to any essential division in the spiritual condition of human beings and other forms of life. In fact, according to Buddhist teachings, after death a human being is reborn, perhaps again as a human being or possibly in the animal realms or in other realms. Likewise, animals can, in certain circumstances, be reborn as human beings. All sentient beings are seen as passing through the unending cycle of the wheel of rebirth. They are born, they grow old, become sick, and die. They are reborn, grow old, get sick and die, over and over and over again.

### **Karma- The network of cause and effect**

What determines how you are reborn is karma. Whether you obtain a human body, whether male or female, or that of an animal or some other life-form is karma. Whether you have a body that is healthy or sickly, whether you are intelligent or stupid, whether your family is rich or poor, whether your parents are compassionate or hard-hearted all that is karma. It refers to activity mental, verbal, and physical as governed by complex patterns of cause and effect. There are two aspects of karma. Individual karma is not limited to a single lifetime. What you did in your past lives determines your situation in your present life. If you did good deeds in past lives, the result will be an auspicious rebirth. If your actions in past lives were predominantly bad, your situation in the present will be inauspicious. If in this life you act more like an animal than a human being, your next rebirth will be as an animal.

Shared karma refers to our net of inter-relationship with other people, non-human beings, and our environment. A certain category of beings live in a certain location and tend to perceive their environment in much the same way, because that particular shared situation is the fruition of their former actions.

Life centered on self naturally tends toward the selfish. Selfishness poisons us with desire and greed. When they are not fulfilled, we tend to become angry and hateful. These basic emotional conditions cover the luminous depths of our minds and cut us off from our own intuitive wisdom and compassion; our thoughts and actions then emanate from deluded and superficial views.

### **The problem and solution: The Four Noble Truth**

Lord Buddha taught his followers the Four Noble Truths as follows:

#### **1. The Truth of Suffering**

The First Noble Truth is generally get a meaning as "Life is suffering." Many people new to Buddhism tune out as soon as they hear this. But the Pali word *dukkha* also refers to anything that is temporary, conditional, or compounded of other things. Even though something precious and enjoyable is *dukkha*, because it will end. Related to the nature of life is the nature of self. We can understand that life is impermanent but are everybody of us is as the same. The Buddha taught that before we can understand life and death we must understand the self.

#### **2. The Truth of the Cause of Suffering**

The Second Noble Truth teaches that the cause of suffering is craving or thirst (*tanha*). We continually search for something outside ourselves to make us happy. But no matter how successful we are, we never remain satisfied. Lord Buddha taught that this thirst grows from ignorance of the self. We go through life grabbing one thing after another to get a sense of security about ourselves. We attach not only to physical things, but also to ideas and opinions about ourselves and the world around us. Then we grow frustrated when the world doesn't behave the way we think it should and our lives don't conform to our expectations. The Buddha's teachings on karma and rebirth are closely related to the Second Noble Truth.

### 3. **The Truth of the End of Suffering**

The Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths are sometimes compared to a physician diagnosing an illness and prescribing a treatment. The first truth tells us what the illness is, and the second truth tells us what causes the illness. The Third Noble Truth holds out hope for a cure. The Buddha taught that through diligent practice, we can put an end to craving. Ending the hamster-wheel chase after satisfaction is enlightenment (*bodhi*, "awakened"). The enlightened being exists in a state called *Nirvana*.

### 4. **The Truth of the Path That Frees Us From Suffering**

In the Fourth Noble Truth, the Buddha as physician prescribes the treatment for our illness namely "The Eightfold Path". Unlike in many other religions, in Buddhism there is no particular benefit to merely believing in a doctrine. Instead, the emphasis is on living the doctrine and walking the path.

#### **Right View**

Seeing the world as it is can be highlighted as Right View, with an understanding of the Three Marks of Existence, and the Four Noble Truths. When you fully understand the marks and truths, then you see the world and yourself without delusion, hatred, greed, etc. This will probably lead to have peace in mind and with others when someone have developed right view towards other people.

#### **Right Intention**

In order not to create more suffering, we need to rely on paying attention (mindfulness) to what our *intentions* are with others and with our actions. If our intentions stem from anger, resentment, or greed, then we are more likely to do harm than if our intentions are driven to help, to understand, to better our actions in the world.

#### **Right Action**

With wholesome intentions, our actions are more likely to be skillful as well. This pay attention to how we act or behave in the world, our actions go towards

helping and not harming, that what we do is skillful and don't do what leads to more suffering. It bears good judgement, based on whether or not your action will bring harm or suffering to yourself or others. Moreover this would lead to limit such conflicts as people will make sure that their action will not cause any kind of suffering to others.

### **Right Speech**

From the above, you probably figured out already that Right Speech is talking, and includes emailing/messaging, in such a way that you don't hurt feelings, you don't lie, don't use deceptive or intentionally confusing language, that you don't gossip, or intentionally make people angry with your speech. It is visible that these facts would have a strong impact of creating peace among all.

### **Right Livelihood**

Right Livelihood addresses how we earn a living and more. I've seen a lot of debates online where people argue about whether it's ok or not to work at certain places. Again, this is another part of the path that asks us to determine for ourselves if what we do for a living is causing suffering, or whether what we do is neutral or helping. It's not a matter of this place is bad and that place is good.

### **Right Effort**

Without effort, our practice is toast. As, we all know that to accomplish anything we need to put effort in. For our practice, however, this effort has the motivation of lessening suffering. So, the effort we put into our practice is the impetus for dropping whatever gets in the way of our developing ethics, compassion, and it motivates us to let go of greed, fear, angst, hatred and finally it lessen conflicts and create peace among people and mind.

### **Right Mindfulness**

Mindfulness in a nutshell is paying attention, but it stretches beyond that. The norm for many of us is to go through our days, living mostly in our heads, with thoughts of the past or future, in conversation with people who aren't present,

ruminating over and over problems. Now, that's not to say thinking and problem solving aren't necessary.

### **Right Concentration**

This is usually called as the practice of focusing the mind solely on one object. Where mindfulness is open to whatever arises, concentration is focusing on one thing to the exclusion of everything else. Concentration also improves naturally through mindfulness meditation. Concentration requires use of Right Effort, Right Intention, and Right Mindfulness. Some argue that you can't have really good concentration until you've developed the ability to let go of anger, hatred, discursive thinking, negativity, etc. Therefore right concentration can be utilized in order to have a peace mind and concentrate only on the problem its causes and its solutions in the face of obstacles and other issues.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion this article examines the Buddha's a limited fundamental teachings that contribute to peace building and peacekeeping in the world. A Buddhist worldview based on the principle of dependent origination thus, its analysis of the causes of conflicts and violence, and the open communication and participatory decision making procedures in social organizations, would inform and provide useful paths for theoretical approaches and research based applications in peace studies.

Moreover the Buddhism has true value of nonviolence and compassion. Buddhism would also inspire all people on the path of peace. Considering the above facts, the insight, the perseverance, and the proactive creativity to realize the infinite possibilities latent in the dependently originated reality, peace, from the Buddhist perspective, is more realistic and achievable. This could be definitely utilized to create peace within everybody around us without any limitations.

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