

# The Practice of Morality (Sila)

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# A Gradual Path

- Like **dana**, the practice of **sila** is not merely for outward appearance but for inner purification of the mind (heart).
- A gradual path of purification:

*Avoiding evil*

*Do good*

*Purify the mind*

*This is the teaching of the Buddhas*

[Dhp 183]

# What is virtue (sila)?

- **Virtue is an act that is :**
  - Wholesome, good, beneficial
  - For oneself, others, society
  - True across time and space
- **MN 61 [Instructions to Rahula]**
  - 'This bodily action I want to do — would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Would it be an unskillful bodily action, with painful consequences, painful results?'

# MN 61 [Instructions to Rahula]

<b>Mode of action</b> <b>Time</b>	<b>Body</b>	<b>Speech</b>	<b>Mind</b>
Before	<b>Is it harmful to self, others or both?</b> <b>Will it lead to painful results?</b>		
During			
After			

# Practice of Sila

	Observance
Lay men and women	Five Precepts ( <i>pañca-sila</i> )
Lay men and women doing intensive meditation practice (as on Uposatha days)	Eight Precepts ( <i>attha-sila</i> )
Novice monks ( <i>samanera</i> ) and nuns ( <i>samaneri</i> )	Ten Precepts ( <i>dasa-sila</i> )
Fully-ordained monk ( <i>bhikkhu</i> )	227 rules of the Bhikkhu Patimokkha
Nun ( <i>bhikkhuni</i> )	311 rules of the Bhikkhuni Patimokkha

# The 5 Precepts

PANCASILA	FIVE PRECEPTS
1. Panatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami	1. I undertake the precept to <b>refrain from destroying living creatures</b>
2. Adinnadana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami	2. I undertake the precept to <b>refrain from taking that which is not given</b>
3. Kamesu micchacara veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami	3. I undertake the precept to <b>refrain from sexual misconduct</b>
4. Musavada veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami	4. I undertake the precept to <b>refrain from incorrect speech</b>
5. Suramerayamajja pamadatthana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami	5. I undertake the precept to <b>refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness</b>

# The 5 Precepts

## Spectrum: (Least to Highest)

The 5 Precepts (Original)	Thich Nhat Hanh's version
1. Avoid killing	1. Reverence for life
2. Avoid stealing	2. Generosity
3. Avoid sexual misconduct	3. Sexual responsibility & Trust
4. Avoid lying	4. Deep listening and loving speech
5. Avoid intoxicants	5. Mindful consumption

# Sense Restraint

SENSE ORGAN	SENSE OBJECT
1. Eyes	Form
2. Ears	Sound
3. Nose	Smell
4. Tongue	Taste
5. Body	Touch
6. Mind	Thoughts



# The Benefits of Virtues for Self

- Protect us against the Laws of Men
- Keep clear conscience (hiri), free from remorse (ottappa), free from fear (abhaya)
- **Mahaparinibbana Sutta [DN 16]** mentioned five rewards of virtues:
  1. Success in life, or an increase in wealth through diligence
  2. A favorable reputation
  3. Self-confidence in society, in the presence of nobles, Brahmans, householders and ascetics
  4. A serene death
  5. A good rebirth

# Rebirth

ATTAINMENT	REBIRTH
5 – 8 JHANAS	FORMLESS WORLD (ARUPALOKA)
1 – 4 JHANAS	FORMED WORLD (RUPALOKA)
SILA & DANA (HIGH DEGREE) SILA & DANA (MODERATE DEGREE) SILA & DANA (MILD DEGREE)	SENSUAL WORLD (KAMMALOKA)  DEVA WORLD HUMAN WORLD (LUCKY LIFE) HUMAN WORLD (TOUGH LIFE)
LACK OF SILA & DANA	WOEFUL WORLDS

**Dana SILA Bhavana**

# The Benefits of Virtues for Others

- Keeping the 5 precepts is a gift of **abhaya** (fearlessness) to others
- It leads to harmony and peace in society
- It creates atmosphere of trust and respect

# Foundation of Spiritual Path

- **Hiri (conscience)** and **Ottappa (remorse)** are the two pillars that hold the world together
- **Dana** and **Sila** provide the solid foundation for our spiritual practice
- Practising sila prevent stupid or wrong-headed behavior from getting in the way of liberation

# Benefits of Virtues [AN10.1]

“Hence, Ananda,

**(1) virtuous ways** of conduct have non-remorse as their benefit and reward;

**(2) non-remorse** has gladness as its benefit and reward;

**(3) gladness** has joy as its benefit and reward;

**(4) joy** has serenity as its benefit and reward;

**(5) serenity** has happiness as its benefit and reward;

**(6) happiness** has concentration as its benefit and reward;

**(7) concentration** has knowledge and vision of things as they really are as its benefit and reward;

**(8) knowledge and vision of things as they really are** has revulsion and dispassion as its benefit and reward;

**(9) revulsion and dispassion** have the **(10) knowledge and vision of liberation** as their benefit and reward.

In this way, Ananda, virtuous ways of conduct lead step by step to the highest.”

# Recalling your Virtues

- "Furthermore, there is the case where you recollect your own virtues: '[They are] untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, conducive to concentration.'
- At any time when a disciple of the noble ones is recollecting virtue, his mind is not overcome with passion, not overcome with aversion, not overcome with delusion. His mind heads straight, based on virtue.
- And when the mind is headed straight, the disciple of the noble ones gains a sense of the goal, gains a sense of the Dhamma, gains joy connected with the Dhamma.
- In one who is joyful, rapture arises. In one who is rapturous, the body grows calm. One whose body is calmed experiences ease. In one at ease, the mind becomes concentrated." [AN 11.12]

# Noble Eightfold Path

Right Speech

Right Action

Right Livelihood

# RIGHT SPEECH

- **Vaca Sutta [AN 5.198]:**
  1. Spoken at the right time
  2. Spoken in truth
  3. Spoken affectionately
  4. Spoken beneficially
  5. Spoken with a mind of good will



# Triple Filter Test

1. Is it true?
2. Is it good?
3. Is it appropriate?
  - Time
  - Place
  - Person
  - Approach

# RIGHT ACTION

1. Avoid killing
2. Avoid stealing
3. Avoid sexual misconducts

# RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

<b>WRONG LIVELIHOOD</b> Vanijja Sutta [AN 5.177]	<b>RIGHT LIVELIHOOD</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Dealing with weapons</li><li>2. Dealing with human flesh trade, eg. Slavery, sex trade, prostitution</li><li>3. Dealing with animal meat</li><li>4. Dealing with poisons</li><li>5. Dealing with intoxicants</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Non-harmful → Healing</li><li>2. Beneficial</li><li>3. Honest</li></ol>

# Dighajanu Sutta [AN 8.54]

## 1. Being consummate in initiative

- Good in your trade / skills / jobs

## 2. Being consummate in vigilance

- Guard against the loss of one's wealth

## 3. Admirable friendship (kalyana mitta)

- Choosing to be friendly with people of good virtues and spiritual

## 4. Maintaining one's livelihood in tune

- Living a moderate lifestyle based on one's own income

# 4 Ways of Losing Properties

1. Debauchery is sex
2. Debauchery in drinking
3. Debauchery in gambling
4. Having evil friends & companions

# 4 Ways to Happiness in this Life

1. Consummate in conviction (saddha)
2. Consummate in generosity (dana)
3. Consummate in morality (sila)
4. Consummate in discernment (panna)

# Kalyana mitta encourages Sila

- "And what is meant by admirable friendship?
- There is the case where a lay person, in whatever town or village he may dwell, spends time with householders or householders' sons, young or old, who are advanced in **virtue**.
- He talks with them, engages them in discussions. He emulates:
  - consummate **CONVICTION** [in the principle of kamma] in those who are consummate in conviction
  - consummate **VIRTUE** in those who are consummate in virtue
  - consummate **GENEROSITY** in those who are consummate in generosity, and
  - consummate **DISCERNMENT** in those who are consummate in discernment. This is called admirable friendship.“[AN8.54]

# Why Sila before Bhavana?

- Meditation
  - Calmer mind
  - Better attention
  - More powerful mind
    - For good or evil? Example – Devadatta
- Sila, therefore, is the solid foundation on which bhavana is based



# Top 5 Virtues of ancient Greece

1. Wisdom (Good judgment)
2. Justice (for self, others, society)
3. Fortitude (courage to do what is right)
4. Self Control (Temperance)
5. Love

# Science of Virtues

- STAGE for happiness:
  1. Savoring the Present
  2. Thankfulness (Gratitude)
  3. Altruistic purpose (Aim, Goal, Meaning)
  4. Generosity
  5. Empathy