

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



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## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review.

#### ➤ Topic One : General Introduction

- ➔ Buddhism is an **education**, not a religion or a philosophy.
  - It teaches us how to recover our wisdom and regain our Buddha nature.
  - It teaches us how to solve our problems through wisdom – an art of living.
- ➔ The **law of causality** governs everything in the universe.
- ➔ All sentient beings possess the **same Buddha nature**.
  - Our Buddha nature is temporarily **lost** due to **delusion**.
  - Our lost Buddha nature can be recovered **only** via **cultivation**.
- ➔ Karma refers to an action and its retribution under the law of causality.
  - **Good and bad karmas do not offset each other – prevailing ones occur first.**
  - Karmas, good or bad, accumulate over time and do not disappear.
  - When many bad karmic retributions come together, they form disasters.
- ➔ Cultivation means to stop planting bad seeds and nurturing bad conditions, and to, instead, plant good seeds and nurture good conditions.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review.

- Topic Two : Taking the Three Refuges and Accepting the Four Reliance Principles
  - ➔ We formally accept the Buddha's education and **set our goals** by Taking the Three Refuges.
    - Buddha (Awakening 覺), Dharma (Right or Proper 正), Sangha (Purity & Clarity 淨)
    - The Three Refuges are within ourselves.
  - ➔ We return to and rely on the **Three Refuges within ourselves** and accept the **Four Reliance Principles** provided to us by the Buddha to guide ourselves along the path of **cultivation**.
    - Rely on the Dharma, not on the persons who expound it. (依法不依人)
    - Rely on the meaning of the sutra, not just on the words. (依義不依語)
    - Rely on wisdom, not on perception. (依智不依識)
    - Rely on the sutras that can lead us to break out of delusion, not on the ones which won't. (依了義經不依不了義經)(Sutras need to fit one's level, or they will not help.)
  - ➔ Four Reliance Principles also help us authenticate a teaching and the person who expounds the teaching.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review (Cont'd)

#### ➤ Topic Three : Recognizing the Four Noble Truths

➔ We begin cultivation by recognizing the Four Noble Truths:

- There is suffering in our lives. (苦)
- There is a cause or origin of sufferings. (集)
- There is a cessation of sufferings. (滅)
- There is a path leading to the cessation of sufferings. (道)

➔ Karma (業) refers to an action and its retribution under the law of causality.

➔ Sufferings occur because we are committing innumerable karmas every moment.

➔ Bad karmas are subsumed as **three poisons: greed (貪), anger (瞋), and ignorance (癡).**

- Greed, Anger, and Ignorance are also called the **Mind Karma (意業)** that drives our **Body Karma (身業)** and **Speech Karma (語業).**

➔ **Body Karma, Speech Karma, and Mind Karma** together

- **Seeded** and **are seeding** the causes of all sufferings of the past, present, and future
- **Conditioned** and **are conditioning** all sufferings of the past, present, and future

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review. (Cont'd)

- Topic Three : Recognizing the Four Noble Truths (Cont'd)
    - ➔ Nirvana is the cessation of sufferings. (Nirodha 滅諦)
    - ➔ Nirvana can only be attained via continuous cultivation with diligence and focus, and when we reach Buddhahood.
    - ➔ Realization of the **Noble Eightfold Path** is **the path** to the cessation of sufferings, Nirvana.
  - Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation
    - ➔ Clearly depicts the function of the law of causality in the death & rebirth cycle – Dependent Arising (Pratitya Samutpada 緣生)
      - **Due to the existence or production of A, B arises or is produced.**
    - ➔ Also explains how to “stop” the chain (Moksha 還滅)
      - **If we don't want B to arise or be produced, we MUST STOP the existence or production of A.**
    - ➔ The Twelve Links are:
      - First Link – Ignorance or Avidya (無明)
      - Second Link – Volitional Action (行)
- (Avidya and Actions are the Causes/Seeds (過去苦因) in the past, from which the present Effects (Dukkha, 現在苦果) arise.)**

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review. (Cont'd)

#### ➤ Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation

##### ➔ The Twelve Links are: (Cont'd)

- Third Link – Consciousness (識)
- Fourth Link – Name & Form (名色)
- Fifth Link – Six Sense Spheres (六入)
- Sixth Link – Contact (觸)
- Seventh Link – Feeling (受)
- Eighth Link – **Attachment** (愛)
- Ninth Link – **Grasping** (取)
- Tenth Link – **Existence** (有)

Consciousness through Existence are the seeds from which future Dukkha arise. (現在苦因)

- Eleventh Link – Birth (生)
- Twelfth Link – Aging and Death (老死)

Birth, Aging and Death are the future Dukkha (苦) arisen from the seeds of suffering we are presently planting. (未來苦果)

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review. (Cont'd)

#### ➤ Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation

➔ **Attachments (愛), Grasping (取), and Existence (有) are the only ones over which we still have control.**

- Breaking out of the Chain from these places are definitely possible.
- It seems the easiest from Existence: stopping depositing anything into our consciousness.

➔ **Mahayana's Perspective of Four Noble Truths and Twelve Links (大乘佛法對四聖諦與十二因緣的觀察)**

- All dharma are conditionally arisen or existent (緣生).
- The sense of existence (生) of the Four Noble Truths and the Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation is also a false illusion; so is the extinction (滅) of them.  
『無無明，亦無無明盡，乃至無老死，亦無老死盡。無苦集滅道，無智亦無得』。(般若波羅密多心經)
- Form and Emptiness do not differ in nature.  
『色不異空，空不異色』(是指性相不二)
- Therefore, we should dwell on NEITHER existence NOR non-existence.  
(不住空亦不住有)

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review. (Cont'd)

#### ➤ Topic Five: Understanding the Noble Eightfold Path

- ➔ **It is the Fourth Noble Truth:** Realization of the **Noble Eightfold Path** is the **only path** to the cessation of sufferings – Nirvana.
- ➔ Regardless of Theravada or Mahayana Buddhism, the Noble Eightfold Path is a **must**.
  - Right Understanding (正見)
  - Right Thought (正思維)
  - Right Speech (正語)
  - Right Action (正業)
  - Right Livelihood (正命)
  - Right Effort (正勤)
  - Right Mindfulness (正念)
  - Right Concentration (正定)
- ➔ It centered on teaching us to take the middle way (i.e., to avoid the extremes) (中庸之道) and to develop the proper cultivation path.
- ➔ All in all, live a simple life, i.e., on what we have, not on what we expect to have.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ A quick review. (Cont'd)

#### ➤ Topic Five : Nurturing the Three Virtuous Conditions (Cont'd)

- ➔ Be **filial** to one's parents; respectfully **attend** one's teachers and all elders; **compassionately refrain** from killing; **cultivate** the Ten Virtuous Deeds (a.k.a. Ten Good Deeds).  
『孝養父母；奉事師長；慈心不殺；修十善業』。
- ➔ Take the **Three Refuges**; uphold the **precepts**; conduct oneself in a **proper and decent** manner; and do not break laws and customs.  
『受持三皈；具足眾戒；不犯威儀』。
- ➔ Give rise to the **Bodhi mind**; deeply believe in the **law of causality**; **recite and uphold** Mahayana sutras, and **encourage** and **help** others to advance on the path to enlightenment.  
『發菩提心；深信因果；讀誦大乘；勸進行者』。
- ➔ Complete realization of all the Three Virtuous Conditions is imperative to the attainment of Buddhahood.
- ➔ The keys to success are:
  - Unwavering belief. (深信)
  - Unwavering vow. (切願)
  - Continuous practice. (實行)

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ Six Rules of Living in Harmony (六和敬):

- Recorded in *Agama Sutra* (阿含經) and other sutras.
- The Three Virtuous Conditions are for self-cultivation, or practicing alone.
- The Six Rules of Living in Harmony are for Sangha members practicing together.
- What is a Sangha (和合僧團)?
  - ➔ Four or more people practicing together and abiding by the Six Rules of Living in Harmony.
  - ➔ A Sangha is **comprised of monastic and/or laypeople**.
  - ➔ “Returning to and relying on the Sangha is the noblest of the beings-kind” (Master Hui Neng) – Lesson 2. 『皈依僧，眾中尊』 (六祖慧能)
  - ➔ The Sangha represents **purity, clarity, and harmony**.
- The spirit of the Six Rules of Living in Harmony not only applies to Sanghas, but also to all teams or groups of any size, even as large as a country or the world.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ Developing Common Goals (見和同解):

- Common goals are imperative to any team or group.
- But how do we establish common goals?
- We drop our personal insistences, attachments to our own views.
  - ➔ They could easily be biased (in conventional terms).
  - ➔ They are most assuredly deluded (in Dharma terms).
- Requires great patience and tolerance.
  - ➔ Selflessness, humility, sincerity, and respect.
- Revert back to what was recorded in the sutras.
  - ➔ Sutras reflect our Buddha nature which is common to everyone.
  - ➔ Accord with our Buddha nature.
  - ➔ One sutra or one school is all we need.
- Our common goal is to attain enlightenment.
- A perfect example, the first Pureland temple, Tung Lin Si (東林寺), established by Master Hui Yuan (慧遠大師).

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### ❑ Abiding by the Same Precepts and Rules (戒和同修):

- Based on the fundamental precepts Buddha taught us:
  - ➔ Refrain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and taking intoxicants.
- Local laws, ordinances and customs.
- Also includes group rules, etc., whether stated or implied.
  - ➔ Especially those “pure” codes (清規) followed in Buddhist centers and temples.
- Local laws and customs, and group rules are subject to change.
- The fundamental precepts must be followed.

### ❑ Living and Practicing Together (身和同住):

- Utilizes group momentum to prevent one from backsliding on the cultivation path.
- In the past, only in-charge, sick persons, and older people could have individual rooms in a temple or cultivation place.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ Refraining from Arguing (口和無諍):

- Conflicts can easily result from excessive speech.
- Careless speech will deplete our good fortune (福報).
  - ➔ “To protect one’s speech karma, never laugh at or criticize others shortfalls.”  
(*Sukhavati-vyuha Sutra, that is, the Infinite Life Sutra* 無量壽經)  
『善護口業，不譏他過』。(無量壽經)
  - ➔ “Respectfully keep silent” (止語) in every cultivation center.
- Revert to the Triple Gems whenever disagreements arise.
  - ➔ Use the Triple Gems as the criteria to reflect on our own conduct.
  - ➔ The full name of the *Infinite Life Sutra* tells us that “purity,” “equality,” and “awakening” are the goals, methods, and criteria for our cultivation.

# Introduction To Buddhism Series

## Lecture 7 – Six Rules of Living in Harmony



### □ Share the Joy from Cultivating Together (意和同悦):

- “I feel delightful when I can practice and realize what I learned.”  
(Confucius)

『學而時習之，不亦說乎。』(孔子)

### □ Share the Offerings Equally (利和同均):

- Offerings to any member belong to the Sangha.
- Individuals have nothing; therefore, there is nothing to dwell on.
- Share our good fortune – give generously.
- Effectively use the Four All-embracing Methods (四攝法).
  - ➔ Give unsparingly (佈施).
  - ➔ Kind words (愛語) – sincerely show our care for others' well being.
  - ➔ Beneficial actions (利行) – always be mindful of others' interest and reflect on our behavior.
  - ➔ Comradeship and cooperation (同事) – share the burdens of others.