The Ten Perfections for Young Readers

From *The Perfections Leading to Enlightenment* by Sujin Boriharnwanaket, translated by Nina van Gorkom (Zolag, 2007)



"May I, by this gift, enable beings to achieve long-life, beauty, happiness, strength, intelligence, and the supreme fruit of unsullied bliss."

Every Pali word is followed by its English in brackets. A quiz follows every two chapters; the answers are at the back.

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How to read this book

This book is about ten good qualities that the Buddha built up over many, many lives before he became the Buddha. They are called the ten *pāramī* (perfections). Each chapter takes one of them, explains it in plain words, and tells a true story from the Buddha's past lives to show it in action.

Pali words. The Buddha's teaching was written down in a language called Pali. You will meet Pali words all through this book. Every time one appears, its English meaning sits right next to it in brackets, like this: *dāna* (giving), *citta* (mind). You never have to remember a Pali word to understand the page. But if you do remember a few, you will be able to read the ancient texts one day.

Saying the words. A line over a letter makes it long: *ā* sounds like the "a" in "father", *ī* like the "ee" in "see", *ū* like the "oo" in "moon". A dot under a letter (*ṭ*, *ḍ*, *ṇ*) means you curl your tongue back a little. *ñ* sounds like the "ny" in "canyon". *ṃ* sounds like "ng". So *paññā* is said "pan-nyaa" and *mettā* is said "met-taa".

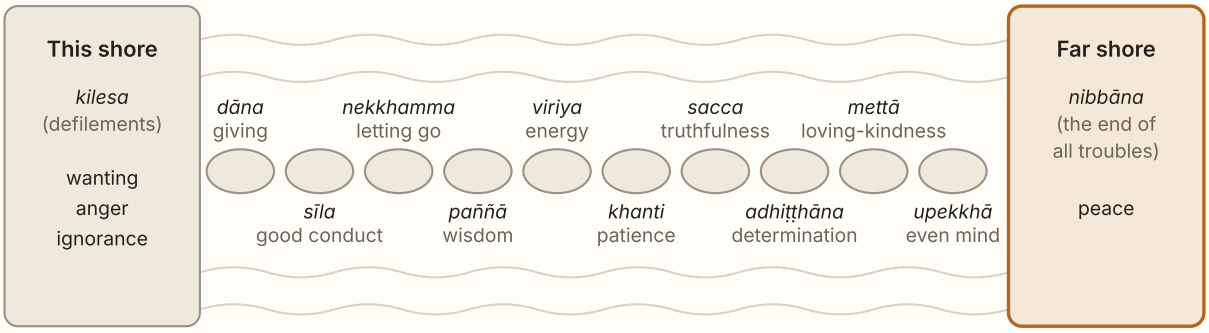
Hard words. Some English words in this book are hard. The first time a hard word is met in a chapter it has a small number after it, like this: aeons[5]. Its meaning is given at the end of the chapter, under "Hard words in this chapter", and all the hard words are listed together at the back, after the word list. In the web edition, tapping or clicking on the word shows its meaning.

Quizzes. After every two chapters there is a short quiz.

Where the stories come from. The stories are not made up. They come from the *Jātaka* (birth stories) and the *Cariyāpiṭaka* (Basket of Conduct), two books of the *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets, the oldest collection of the Buddha's teaching), and from the old commentaries that explain them. The Buddha told these stories himself. In each one he is the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be), the person who is working, life after life, to become a Buddha. The way they are told here follows the book *The Perfections Leading to Enlightenment* by Sujin Boriharnwanaket, translated by Nina van Gorkom, which you can read for free on abhidhamma.org when you are older.

Introduction: what is a perfection?

Imagine a wide, fast river. On this side live all the troubles of the mind: wanting, anger, ignorance[1], fear. On the far side there is peace, with none of those troubles. The ancient texts call the far side *nibbāna* (the end of all troubles). A *pāramī* (perfection[2]) is a good quality that carries a person across. That is what the word means: something that goes across to the far shore.



"the perfections in our daily life as supporting conditions leading to enlightenment"

There are ten of them. Here they are, with their Pali names:

Pali	English	What it is in one line
dāna	giving	sharing what one has
sīla	good conduct	not harming by deed[3] or word
nekkhamma	letting go	being happy with enough
paññā	wisdom	seeing things as they really are
viriya	energy[4]	not being lazy about doing good
khanti	patience	putting up with hard things calmly
sacca	truthfulness[5]	being honest in word and deed
adhiṭṭhāna	determination[6]	holding firmly to a good aim
mettā	loving-kindness[7]	wanting others to be well
upekkhā	even-mindedness[8]	staying steady when things go up or down

What a person really is. The *Abhidhamma* (the higher teaching) is the part of the *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets) that explains what the mind really is. It says that what people call a person is really a stream of moments. In each moment there is a *citta* (consciousness[9]), a moment of knowing something, and with it some *cetasika* (mental factors[10]): feeling, liking, disliking, kindness, laziness and so on. Each *citta* (consciousness) arises[11] because of conditions[12], falls away[13] at once, and another takes its place. There is

no little person inside who owns them. The ancient texts call this *anattā* (non-self[14]). So when this book says that someone gives, or someone is patient, that is only the ordinary way of talking. What is really there is a *citta* (consciousness) with good *cetasika* (mental[15] factors).

Good moments and bad moments. A *citta* (consciousness) can be *kusala* (good) or *akusala* (bad). Every perfection is *kusala* (good). But not every good deed is a perfection. What makes the difference is the aim behind it. A gift given in the hope of praise, or of being rich in the next life, is still *kusala* (good). But it is not a perfection. It is a perfection when the danger of wanting, anger and ignorance has been seen, and the aim is to be free of them. The opposite of all ten perfections is *lobha* (attachment[16], wanting). A perfection is good done without wanting anything back.

Three roots of trouble. *Akusala* (bad) states grow from three roots: *lobha* (attachment), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (ignorance). These three, and the other bad *cetasika* (mental factors) that grow from them, are called *kilesa* (defilements[17]), the things that dirty the mind. All ten perfections work against the *kilesa* (defilements), until one day they are gone.

How each one begins. Each perfection begins when the harm in its opposite is seen. When the harm of stinginess[18] is seen, giving arises. When the harm of hurting others is seen, good conduct arises. When the harm of laziness is seen, effort arises. When the harm of impatience is seen, patience arises. When the harm of wanting to get back at people is seen, kindness arises. It is the same for all ten.

Medicine for the mind. The road to the far shore is very long. The ancient texts call it the *ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga* (the noble eightfold path). A sick and weak person cannot walk a long road, even if the way is known. The *kilesa* (defilements) are the sickness. The ten perfections are the medicine that makes the *citta* (consciousness) strong enough to walk the whole way.

Wishing is not deciding. Some people do a good deed and then pray for a reward. That is a wish, not *adhiṭṭhāna* (determination). Determination is the firm aim of reaching the far shore and not letting that aim go.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
2. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
3. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
4. **energy**: effort; the strength that keeps on going
5. **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
6. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it
7. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
8. **even-mindedness**: having a mind that stays level and calm whatever happens
9. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
10. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
11. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
12. **condition**: something that has to be there before another thing can happen
13. **fall away**: to end; to stop; to be gone
14. **non-self**: not a self; not a person; not anyone's
15. **mental**: to do with the mind
16. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
17. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
18. **stinginess**: not wanting to give or share; meanness

Chapter 1. Dāna (giving)



"May I, by this gift, enable beings to achieve long-life, beauty, happiness, strength, intelligence, and the supreme fruit of unsullied bliss."

Dāna (giving) comes first in the list of ten, and there is a reason. A person who cannot let go of a small thing, a sweet or a pencil, will find it much harder to let go of the biggest thing of all: the idea that *nāma* (mind) and *rūpa* (matter[1]) are "me" and "mine". Giving is practice in letting go.

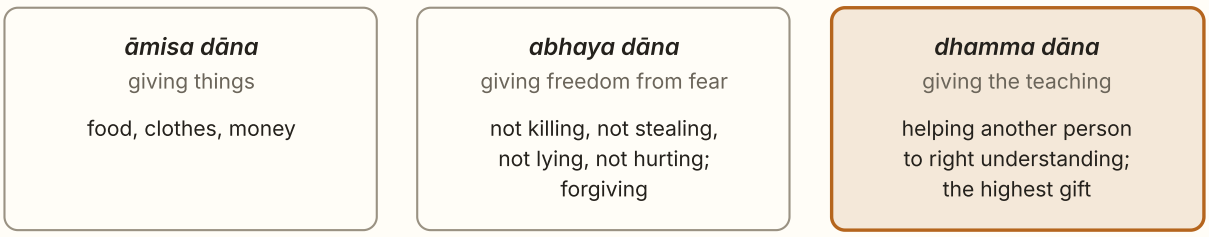
	***Dāna* (giving)**
What it is	letting go of something
What it does	pushes away greed for things that could be given
How it shows itself	not holding on tightly
What it needs	something that can be given away

Giving and understanding. *Dāna* (giving) is giving things away for the good and the happiness of others. At the moment of giving there is no selfishness. The giving can be with *paññā* (wisdom) or without it. Wisdom at the moment of giving remembers that nothing lasts: not the gift, not the one who gives, not the one who receives.

Three kinds of gift. The ancient texts name three kinds of *dāna* (giving).

1. *Āmisa dāna* (giving things): food, clothes, money, time, a seat on the bus.
2. *Abhaya dāna* (giving freedom from fear). When someone decides never to kill any living being[2], every creature in the world receives a gift: safety. The same is true of not stealing, not lying, not hurting. The Buddha said that a person who keeps these rules "gives to immeasurable[3] beings freedom from fear". Forgiving is also a gift of this kind: the person who is forgiven is safe from that anger.

3. *Dhamma dāna* (giving the teaching). This is the highest gift. A meal fills a hungry person for a day. Helping someone understand what is really good and really harmful helps them in this life and in the lives to come.



"three kinds of dāna pārami, perfection of generosity: the giving of material things (āmisadāna), the giving of fearlessness (abhayadāna) and the giving of the Dhamma (dhammadāna)"

When is giving a perfection? Only when nothing is wanted back. Not praise. Not a present in return. Not even a happy rebirth[4] in a *deva* (heavenly being) world. Giving done in order to look good is still *kusala* (good), but it is not a perfection[5]. Only the *citta* (consciousness[6]) at the moment of giving shows which it is.

How the Bodhisatta gave. The ancient commentary[7] tells how the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) gave in his past lives:

- When he saw that someone needed something, he gave it before they asked.
- He gave what people wanted, not what they did not want.
- If there was not enough for everyone, he shared out evenly what there was.
- He never gave things that harm people: weapons, poison, strong drink. He did not give a sick person food that would make them worse, even if they begged for it.
- He gave with a smile and kind words, never with a frown.
- If he gave food, he added clothes. If he gave clothes, he added food.
- If he noticed greed growing for some beautiful thing of his, he found someone to give the thing to, and gave it away.

The four knots. Sometimes there is something to give and someone who needs it, and still the *citta* (consciousness) does not want to give. The commentary names four knots that tie giving up, and the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) had a thought ready for each one.

1. *Not feeling like it.* Giving does not come easily now because it was not practised in the past. So he gave anyway, so that in the future the mind would be glad to give.
2. *The poor gift.* His things were poor now because he had not given in the past. So he gave what he had.
3. *The beautiful gift.* He had set his heart on the highest goal of all. For that goal it was right to give the loveliest things.
4. *Loss.* All things get lost and wear out, whether they are given or not. So he gave.

That last thought is worth keeping. Fires, floods, thieves and kings take people's things all the time. Whether a thing is kept or lost depends on *kamma* (deeds[8] and their results[9]), not on whether it was given.

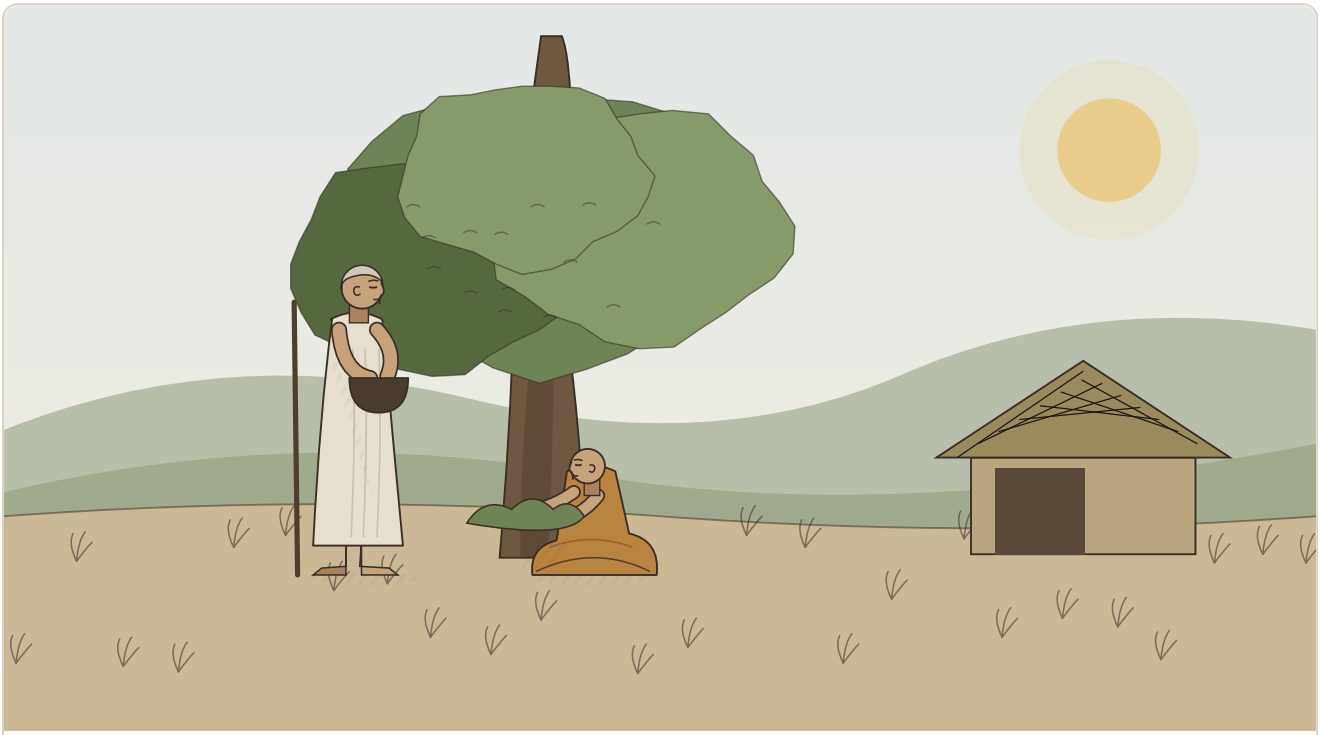
Three moments. *Cetanā* (intention[10]) in giving has three moments: before, when the decision to give is made; during, when the gift is handed over; after, when the giving is remembered. The *citta* (consciousness) can be *kusala* (good) at all three moments, or it can slip. Someone gives gladly, and afterwards thinks with pride what a generous[11] person they are. That afterthought is *lobha* (attachment[12]), not giving. So the mind has to be watched.

A gift that cannot be held. Can a sound be given? The commentary says it can. A drum can be given to a temple, so that the drum can be beaten. The teaching can be chanted aloud. Gladness at someone else's good deed can be said out loud. That last one has a name: *anumodana* (rejoicing[13] in another's good deed). It costs nothing, and it is a gift.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **matter**: the kind of reality that does not know or feel anything, such as hardness, colour or sound
2. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
3. **immeasurable**: too big to measure
4. **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
5. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
6. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
7. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
8. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
9. **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
10. **intention**: what the mind means to do; the mind's choosing
11. **generosity**: giving freely and gladly
12. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
13. **rejoice**: to be glad

Chapter 2. Sīla (good conduct)



"Sakka, in the guise of a brahmin, came to see the ascetic Akitti"

Sīla (good conduct) means not harming anyone by what is done or said. The ancient texts call it *tapa* (burning away), because good conduct burns away the dirt of *akusala* (bad states).

	***Sīla* (good conduct)**
What it is	keeping deeds[1] and words in order
What it does	drives out bad behaviour
How it shows itself	a clean way of living
What it needs	*hiri* (shame at doing wrong) and *ottappa* (fear of the results[2] of doing wrong)

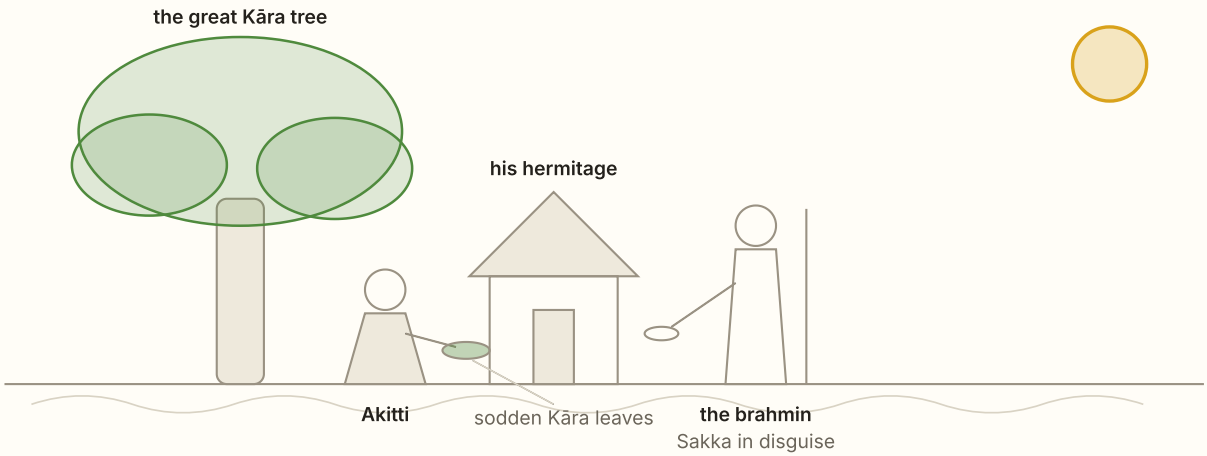
The five rules. The most basic *sīla* (good conduct) is the *pañca sīla* (five precepts[3]):

1. not to kill any living being[4]
2. not to take what is not given
3. not to do wrong in sexual matters
4. not to lie
5. not to drink or take anything that clouds the mind

When one of these rules is broken, the *citta* (consciousness[5]) behind it is always *akusala* (bad). At that moment there is no *mettā* (loving-kindness[6]) for the one being harmed. A *sotāpanna* (stream-enterer, a person who has reached the first stage of enlightenment[7]) keeps all five rules perfectly and can never break them again. Nobody else can promise that. But the rules can still be kept, moment by moment, long before that stage is reached.

Two kinds of shame. Two *cetasika* (mental factors[8]) are the nearest cause of good conduct. *Hiri* (shame) comes from inside: its nearest cause is respect for oneself. *Ottappa* (fear of blame) comes from outside: its nearest cause is respect for someone else. The two always arise[9] together, and both keep the rules. If a person breaks a rule by forgetting, shame or fear of blame makes him quickly put it right.

The story of Akitti. Long ago the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was an ascetic[10] named Akitti. He lived alone in a forest beside a great Kāra tree. When the tree had fruit, he ate the fruit. When it had none, he ate its leaves, boiled in water, and he gathered only enough for one meal a day.



"If the ascetic Akitti wishes to become Sakka, he will give me his sodden Kāra leaves, but if he has not such a wish, he will not give them away."

Sakka, the king of the *devas* (heavenly beings), saw this pure and simple life and wondered what Akitti wanted. Perhaps he wanted to become Sakka himself? So Sakka came down disguised as a brahmin[11] (a priest) and stood before the hut as if asking for food.

Akitti saw that the brahmin needed food. He gave him all the leaves. The next day the brahmin came again, and Akitti gave him all the leaves again. The third day, the same. Sakka saw that this was no bargain for heaven. It was *dāna* (giving) with *sīla* (good conduct), *nekkhamma* (letting go), *khanti* (patience), *viriya* (energy[12]), *adhiṭṭhāna* (determination[13]) and *sacca* (truthfulness[14]) all at once, with no wish for anything back. In each of his lives the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) developed all ten perfections[15] together.

Sakka showed himself and asked why Akitti lived there alone. Akitti answered: "Sakka, King of the devas, rebirth[16] is dukkha, the breaking up of the body is dukkha, and dying with delusion[17] is dukkha. Therefore I dwell here all alone." *Dukkha* (suffering[18]) is the way everything that arises never quite satisfies.

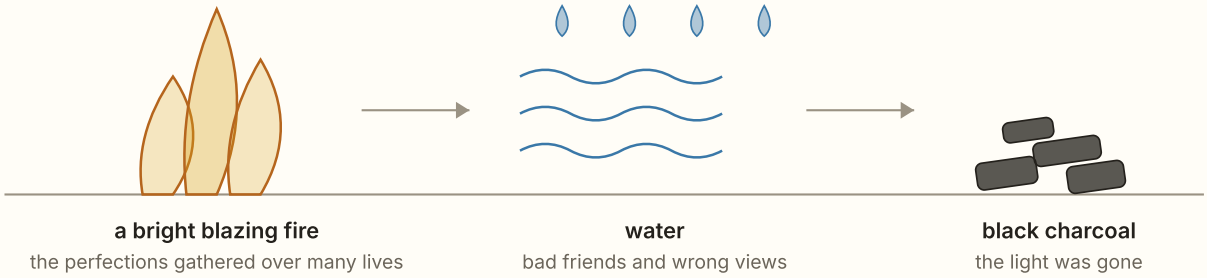
Sakka was pleased and offered him any wish he liked. Akitti asked, one wish at a time:

1. To be free from all attachment[19], even the harmless kind that people feel for their children and their things.
2. That there be no *akusala kamma* (bad deed) that could make him lose land, goods, cattle or relatives.
3. Not to see, hear or sit with fools, because fools advise what is wrong and answer good advice with anger.

4. That people see the wise and listen to them, because the wise advise what is right.
5. That holy beggars might come to his hut each morning, that the food he offered them never run out, and that he never regret his giving.
6. That Sakka never visit him again.

That last wish surprised Sakka. Most people long to see a *deva* (heavenly being). Akitti explained that *devas* (heavenly beings) are glorious and delightful to look at, and seeing them might make him break his vow. Sakka agreed, and left. Akitti lived in that place all his life and was reborn in the *brahma* (highest heavenly) world. The Buddha said that Sakka in that story was Anuruddha, one of his great disciples[20], and Akitti was himself.

Jotipāla and the bad friends. Akitti stayed away from fools, and the next story shows why. In another life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was a young brahmin (priest) called Jotipāla. His family had no faith in the Buddha of that age, the Buddha Kassapa, and Jotipāla copied his parents and looked down on the Buddha too. The commentary[21] says that all the perfections Jotipāla had gathered over so many lives were like a bright blazing fire. In that life the fire met water: the fire went out, and only black charcoal was left. Bad company can do that even to a *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be). The commentary compares the company of fools to drinking bitter water, and the company of the wise to drinking sweet water.



"the rays of light disappeared and only black charcoal was left"

Two sides of good conduct. *Vāritta sīla* (conduct as avoiding) is not doing wrong: the five rules. *Cāritta sīla* (conduct as doing) is doing what is right. The commentary lists what the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) did. He greeted good people with respect. He looked after them when they were ill. He put up with insults from unkind people. He remembered every kindness done to him. When he did wrong, he admitted it. He guided the blind and found a cart for those who could not walk. He hid his own good qualities and admitted his faults. And when he heard about the great deeds of *Bodhisattas* (Buddhas-to-be) of the past, he was not frightened off. They were only human beings, who trained step by step, and the same training would bring him to the same goal.

Good conduct right now. A dear friend does something wrong, and without thinking a person scolds the friend in front of everyone. When *sati* (mindfulness[22], remembering what is good) arises instead, the scolding waits, and the friend is spoken to later, kindly and alone. The *kilesa* (defilements[23]) have to be worn away like that, again and again.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad

2. **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
3. **precept**: a rule of good conduct
4. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
5. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
6. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
7. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
8. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
9. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
10. **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living
11. **brahmin**: a man of the priestly class in ancient India
12. **energy**: effort; the strength that keeps on going
13. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it
14. **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
15. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
16. **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
17. **delusion**: being fooled; not seeing things as they are
18. **suffering**: pain and trouble; anything that cannot give lasting happiness
19. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
20. **disciple**: a pupil; someone who follows a teacher
21. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
22. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
23. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest

Quiz 1 (chapters 1 and 2)

The answers are at the back.

1. What does the word *pāramī* (perfection) mean?
    - (a) a gift for a king
    - (b) a quality that crosses over to the further shore, the eradication of defilements
    - (c) a kind of prayer
    - (d) a letter of the Pali alphabet
2. The book says the ten perfections have one thing as their opposite. What is it?
    - (a) *dosa* (aversion)
    - (b) *lobha* (attachment)
    - (c) *sati* (mindfulness)
    - (d) *paññā* (wisdom)
3. The Buddha said that a noble disciple who gives up the taking of life gives something to immeasurable beings. What does he give them?
    - (a) food and drink
    - (b) freedom from fear, freedom from hostility and freedom from oppression
    - (c) gold and silver
    - (d) a long life
4. Which of these does the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) not give?
    - (a) what is needed, to whoever stands in need of it, even unasked
    - (b) an excellent and beautiful object
    - (c) weapons, poisons and intoxicants
    - (d) a gift together with a bonus
5. When the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) is giving a gift and sees the loss of the object being given, what does he reflect, and what does he then do?
6. Finish the sentence from the book: “No matter how much we give away, generosity is not a perfection if we do not see the need to …”
7. In the story of Akitti, in what guise did Sakka come, what did Akitti give him, and for how many days?
8. Why did Akitti ask Sakka not to visit him again?
9. *Hiri* (shame) and *ottappa* (fear of blame) are the nearest cause of *sīla* (good conduct). Which one has respect for oneself as its cause, and which one respect for someone else?
10. True or false: a *sotāpanna* (stream-enterer) can still transgress the five precepts now and then.
11. What does the commentary compare the perfections of young Jotipāla to, in the life when he was born among people of wrong view?

Chapter 3. Nekkhamma (letting go)



"Since my older brother Sona did not accept your possessions, I will not accept them either"

Nekkhamma (letting go) is turning away from the chase after pleasant sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches. Most people think it means becoming a monk[1]. The ancient texts say it can begin at home, at the moment someone looks at what they have and finds it is enough.

	***Nekkhamma* (letting go)**
What it is	moving away from sense pleasures
What it does	shows that they never quite satisfy
How it shows itself	drawing back from them
What it needs	*saṃvega* (a sense of urgency[2], a jolt that says life is short)

Three kinds of thinking. The ancient texts name three wrong ways of thinking: *kāma vitakka* (thinking about sense pleasures), *vyāpāda vitakka* (thinking with hate) and *vihiṃsā vitakka* (thinking about hurting). The opposite of the first is *nekkhamma vitakka* (thinking of letting go). When the mind wants more pleasant things than it already has, that is *kāma vitakka* (thinking about sense pleasures). When the mind finds that what it has is enough, that is *nekkhamma vitakka* (thinking of letting go). A person who stops buying more clothes just to look nice, and gives the spare ones to someone who can use them, has *nekkhamma* (letting go) in daily life.

Monk or not. A monk who still clings[3] to pleasant things just as a layperson[4] does is, in that way, no different from a layperson. And a layperson who clings less is practising *nekkhamma* (letting go) without a robe. Clinging to the five sense objects[5] is not fully gone until a person becomes an *anāgāmī* (non-returner, the third stage of enlightenment[6]). Until then, the work is to make the clinging smaller, bit by bit.

The story of Sona and Nanda. The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was once born as Sona, the son of a very rich brahmin[7] (priest). His little brother was Nanda, who in a later life became the Venerable Ānanda, the Buddha's attendant.

Their parents wanted them to marry. Sona would not. He wanted to look after his parents all their lives and then become an ascetic[8] (a person who gives up home and comfort to train the mind). Nanda said that he would do the same. Then the parents decided to go with them. All four left home and built a hut in the forest, and the two brothers cared for their parents.



Nanda's fruit
gathered the day before: some spoilt, some unripe



Sona's fruit
sweet and ripe, gathered further away

"Nanda brings all kinds of half-ripe or unripe fruits for them to eat and therefore they will not live long."

Nanda gathered fruit the day before and served it early in the morning. But fruit kept from the day before was sometimes spoilt or unripe. Sona went further into the forest for sweet ripe fruit, but by the time he came back the parents had already eaten Nanda's fruit. Sona was worried: the parents were old, and bad fruit would shorten their lives. He told Nanda to wait each day until he came back, so that both could serve the parents together. Nanda did not listen. He wanted the merit[9] of feeding the parents to be his own. So Sona sent him away.

Nanda went off alone and developed deep calm of mind and the higher powers. Then he wanted to ask his brother's forgiveness, in the grandest way he could. He thought of bringing Sakka, the king of the *devas* (heavenly beings[10]), but decided that was not fitting. Instead he brought the mightiest king on earth, King Manoja. So the king came to the hut, and Nanda was forgiven. From then on Nanda looked after their mother and Sona looked after their father. Then Sona taught the king about caring for one's parents:

> *Joy, careless ease, laughter and sport, are the sure heritage*
> *Of him that studiously[11] shall tend a mother in old age.*

Where is the *nekkhamma* (letting go) in this story? Sona gave up a fortune and a wedding, paid no attention to sense pleasures, and used every spare moment to develop *jhāna* (deep calm of mind).

Letting go in small things. Three everyday examples.

- *Pictures.* Something beautiful is seen and enjoyed. If *sati* (mindfulness[12]) arises[13], it is known that this is only a *dhamma* (a reality[14]) appearing. When the beautiful thing is not there, it is not searched for.
- *Food.* A person is full, but the food is delicious, so one more mouthful goes in. That is the *citta* (consciousness[15]) clinging to taste. Eating just enough to feed the body is *nekkhamma* (letting go).

- *Baths.* Some people love a warm bath, or a cold one, even when the body does not need it. The bath is fine. The clinging to the temperature is the thing to notice.

Letting go is happiness. An ancient text, the *Cūḷaniddesa* (a book of the Tipiṭaka), says that *nekkhamma* (letting go) is a refuge, a protection and a place of no danger, and that it comes with happiness. Only *paññā* (wisdom) sees this, by comparing the two ways of living and finding out which one is really better.

The sick man and the string. A sick man cannot turn over by himself. The nurse ties a string to the bed so he can pull himself round. Pulling the string gives the body a little comfort, but it gives the mind no ease at all. Beings burning with the *kilesa* (defilements[16]) are like that. They cannot pull themselves out by the comfort of a quiet life alone. They need the perfections[17].

The story of Susīma. The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) thought that in his life as Susīma. Susīma was the son of the king's priest, and he grew up with the prince. When the prince became king, he made Susīma his adviser. One day the king's mother saw Susīma riding behind the king on an elephant, fell in love with him, and was so unhappy that she stopped eating. The king solved it by making Susīma the king, with his mother as queen, while he himself became the second in command.

Susīma now had a queen, a palace and a whole kingdom. And from that day he was weary of it all. The queen tried every trick to make him enjoy his reign[18]. Instead Susīma taught the court about both the delight and the misery of sense pleasures, and then he handed the kingdom back. He went to the forest, became an ascetic, and developed *jhāna* (deep calm of mind). The Buddha said that the queen was Rāhula's mother, the king was Ānanda, and Susīma was himself.

Nobody can order it. Nobody can tell another person to stop clinging. Nobody can even order themselves to stop. What can happen is this: *paññā* (wisdom) comes to see that the clinging is not worth keeping. Then it begins, slowly, to let go.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
2. **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
3. **clinging**: holding on tightly; not wanting to let go
4. **lay**: an ordinary person who follows the teaching while living at home
5. **object**: the thing that a moment of mind knows: a colour, a sound, a thought
6. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
7. **brahmin**: a man of the priestly class in ancient India
8. **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living
9. **merit**: goodness earned by a good deed, which brings a good result later
10. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
11. **studiously**: carefully, like a hard-working student
12. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
13. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
14. **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
15. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
16. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
17. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
18. **reign**: the time during which a king rules

Chapter 4. Paññā (wisdom)



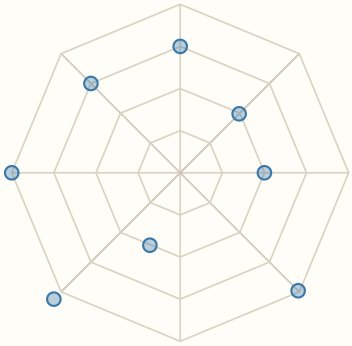
"when the sun rose higher all the dewdrops that were hanging there disintegrated and disappeared"

Paññā (wisdom) is the *cetasika* (mental factor[1]) that understands things as they really are. Without it, none of the other perfections[2] can do their full work. A person may be generous[3], well behaved and patient, but the *kilesa* (defilements[4]) can never be removed unless *paññā* (wisdom) grows sharp enough to see the truth. The commentary[5] gives three pictures for it.

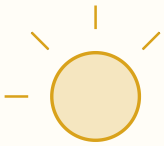
	***Paññā* (wisdom)**
What it is	seeing straight into the true nature of things, like an arrow shot by a skilled archer
What it does	lights things up, like a lamp
How it shows itself	no confusion, like a good guide in a forest
What it needs	*samādhi* (a steady mind) or the four noble truths

The lamp. A man carries an oil lamp into a dark house. The darkness goes, and things can be seen. In the same way, when *paññā* (wisdom) arises[6], the darkness of *avijjā* (ignorance[7]) goes and the four noble truths can be seen. The ancient texts say that *paññā* (wisdom) means "it penetrates": it goes right through to the truth that "this is *dukkha*" (suffering[8]).

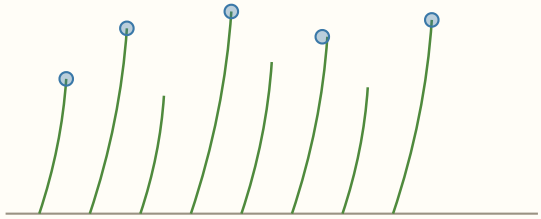
Prince Yudañjaya and the dewdrops. The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was once Yudañjaya, the king's eldest son. Every day he gave *mahā-dāna* (a great offering of gifts). One morning, early, he went to the royal park. Dewdrops hung like strings of pearls on the tree tops, on the tips of the grass and on spiders' webs. Then the sun rose, and one by one the dewdrops vanished.



dewdrops on a spider's web



the sun rises



dewdrops on the grass tips

Like the dewdrops, all conditioned things arise and then disappear.

"These dewdrops came into being and then disappeared. Evenso are conditioned realities, the lives of all beings"

The prince thought: these dewdrops came and went. All things that arise because of conditions[9], including the lives of every living being[10], are like dewdrops on the grass. A great sense of *saṃvega* (urgency[11]) came over him. He asked his parents' leave and went to the forest to live as an ascetic[12].

Many people see dewdrops. Very few are stirred by them to compare their own lives with a dewdrop. When that kind of understanding arises, it should not be let slip. It should be thought about, so that it arises again and again. The commentary shows that in this one life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) fulfilled all ten perfections: giving by his great offerings, letting go by leaving home, wisdom by his thought about the dewdrops, and the rest.

Old Piṅgiya. The brahmin[13] (priest) Piṅgiya was a hundred and twenty years old. He was weak, and his eyes and ears were failing. He came to the Buddha and asked for only one thing: that the Buddha explain the teaching that makes an end of birth and old age. The Buddha told him that clinging[14] to *rūpa* (matter[15], the body and the things sensed through it) should be given up. When the talk was over, Piṅgiya had reached enlightenment[16]. A person who has *paññā* (wisdom) would not ask for anything else, however old and tired.

Life lasts one moment. The ancient texts say there are three kinds of death. *Sammuti maraṇa* (conventional[17] death) is what everyone calls death, at the end of a life. *Samuccheda maraṇa* (final death) is the passing away of an *arahant* (a fully enlightened person), who is never born again. And *khaṇika maraṇa* (momentary[18] death) is death at every moment. Life is a series of *citta* (moments of consciousness[19]), one after another. At this moment there is seeing. Seeing arises, sees, and dies, all in a flash. Then there is hearing, and it dies too. People say a life is long, but really life lasts for one moment of *citta* (consciousness) at a time. A person who understands this sees how pointless it is to cling to things that are gone before they can be held.

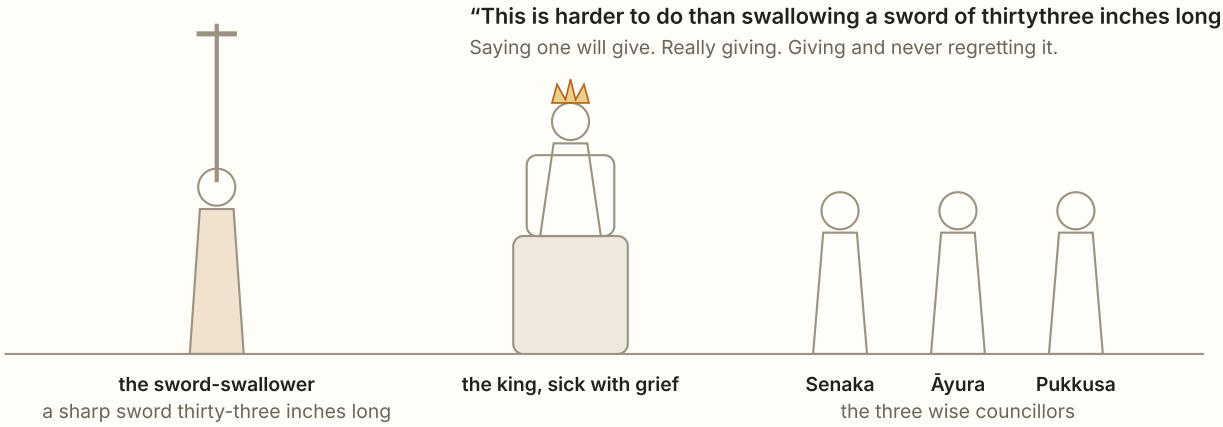
What is harder than swallowing a sword? A king in Magadha (a kingdom in India) had three wise councillors: Senaka, Āyura and Pukkusa. Senaka was the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be). A young man of the court fell in love with the queen and lay down sick with longing. The king took pity on him and said

that the queen might go to him for seven days. But the two of them fell in love and ran away to another country.

The king was so full of grief[20] that he fell ill, and no doctor could cure him. Senaka knew that the sickness was in the king's mind, and he thought of a cure. He arranged a show in which a man swallowed a sharp sword thirty-three inches long. The king asked the wise Āyura whether anything in the world was harder than that. Āyura answered that it is harder to say, "I shall give this away". The king thought: I said I would give the queen, so I have done a hard thing. His grief grew a little lighter.

Then he asked Pukkusa whether anything was harder than saying one will give. Pukkusa answered that to make a promise and really let go of the thing is harder still. The king thought: I promised, and I did give her. His grief grew lighter still.

Then he asked Senaka whether anything was harder than giving. Senaka answered that the hardest thing of all is to give a gift and never regret it afterwards. The king thought: I gave the queen, and then I was sorry about it, and that was not right. What is the use of grieving over her? With that thought all his sorrow slid away like a drop of water off a lotus[21] leaf, and he was well. The Buddha told this story to a monk[22] who wanted to leave the Order because his former wife was tempting him. That monk had been the king. Āyura was Mahā-Moggallāna, Pukkusa was Sāriputta, and Senaka was the Buddha.



"This is harder to do than swallowing a sword of thirtythree inches long."

Regret. Regret after giving shows that there is still clinging to the thing given. But in truth there is nobody who owns it, and nobody who can keep it, because every *rūpa* (matter) and every *nāma* (mind) falls away[23] the moment it has arisen. Wisdom that sees this can give without being sorry.

The angry moment. When someone is angry with another person, *paññā* (wisdom) can remember that the other person, in truth, is only *citta* (consciousness), *cetasika* (mental[24] factors) and *rūpa* (matter), arising and falling away. That person will not be in this world for long. Nobody knows whether this meeting is the last one. A mind that remembers this becomes gentle, and *mettā* (loving-kindness[25]) can arise in place of the anger.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

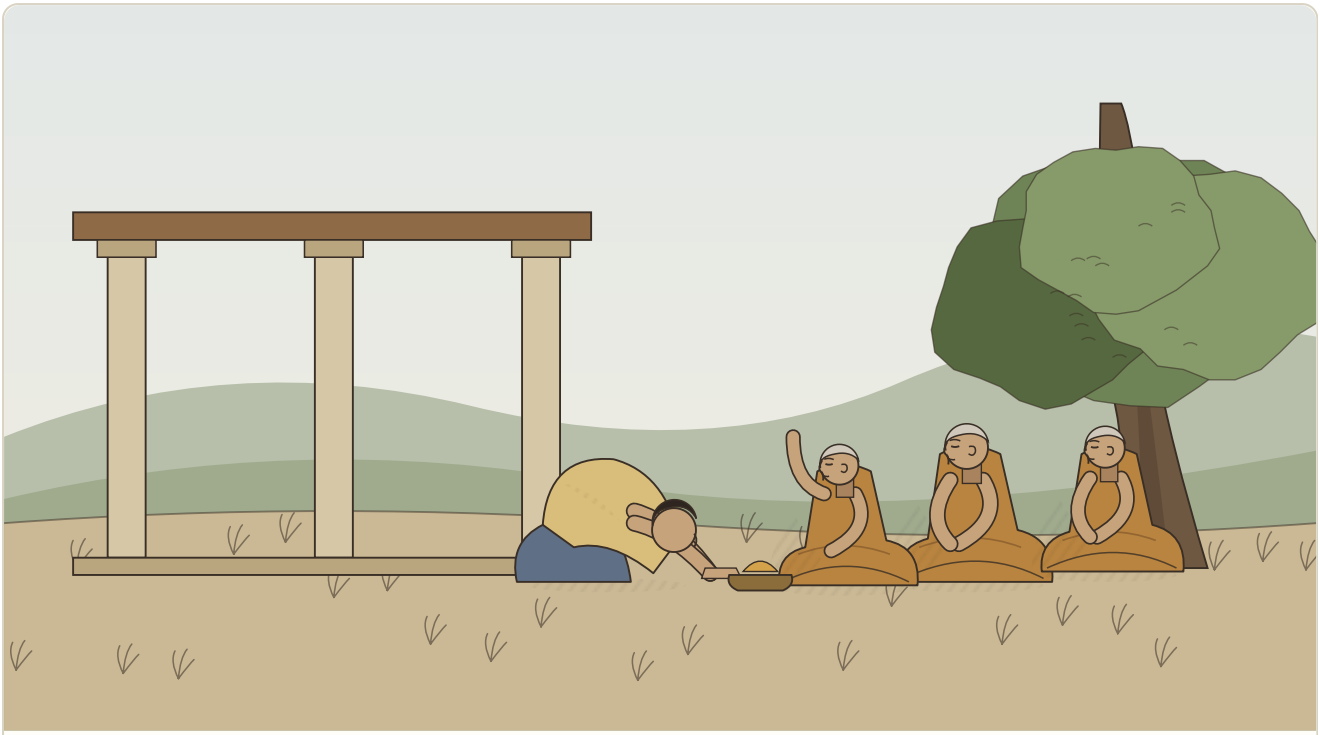
1. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
2. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
3. **generosity**: giving freely and gladly
4. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
5. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
6. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
7. **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
8. **suffering**: pain and trouble; anything that cannot give lasting happiness
9. **condition**: something that has to be there before another thing can happen
10. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
11. **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
12. **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living
13. **brahmin**: a man of the priestly class in ancient India
14. **clinging**: holding on tightly; not wanting to let go
15. **matter**: the kind of reality that does not know or feel anything, such as hardness, colour or sound
16. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
17. **conventional**: the ordinary everyday way of talking, as when a pile of parts is called a chariot
18. **momentary**: lasting only a moment
19. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
20. **grief**: deep sadness, as when someone dies
21. **lotus**: a water flower that grows up from the mud and opens clean above the water
22. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
23. **fall away**: to end; to stop; to be gone
24. **mental**: to do with the mind
25. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone

Quiz 2 (chapters 3 and 4)

The answers are at the back.

1. Which of these is *nekkhamma* (letting go) in daily life?
    - (a) wanting to obtain still more pleasant things, never content with what one already has
    - (b) not wishing to buy more clothing that only beautifies the body, because what one has is more than sufficient
    - (c) savouring one more morsel because the food is so delicious, though one is not hungry
    - (d) liking a warm bath for its pleasant feeling, even though the body does not need one
2. Name the three wrong ways of thinking that *nekkhamma* (letting go) gives up, in Pali or English.
3. In the story of Sona and Nanda, why did Sona send his younger brother away?
4. Whom did Nanda bring to the hut when he came to ask forgiveness, and whom had he first thought of bringing?
5. The sick man and the string: what does the string give the sick man, and what does it not give him?
6. In the story of Susīma, what did Susīma do with the kingdom once it was his?
7. What did Prince Yudañjaya see in the royal park, and what did he compare it to?
8. *Paññā* (wisdom) is compared to three things in the commentary. Name two of them.
9. What are the three kinds of death, and which one means that life lasts only one moment of *citta* (consciousness)?
10. In the story of the sword-swallower, the king asks three wise men what is harder than swallowing a sword. Put the three answers in order, from the easiest to the hardest.
    - really giving the thing away (Pukkusa)
    - saying “I shall give this away” (Āyura)
    - giving and never regretting it afterwards (Senaka)
11. True or false: old Piṅgiya asked the Buddha to make him young again.

Chapter 5. Viriya (energy)



"I never grudge, O Prince, great sages who are seeking what is supreme and ready to pay them honour due with humble mind, I fall before their feet."

Viriya (energy[1]) is effort. The ancient texts say it is the state of a courageous person. When *viriya* (energy) arises[2], a person is not lazy or slack.

	***Viriya* (energy)**
What it is	striving
What it does	strengthens and supports
How it shows itself	not getting tired of the task
What it needs	an occasion for making an effort, or *saṃvega* (a sense of urgency[3])

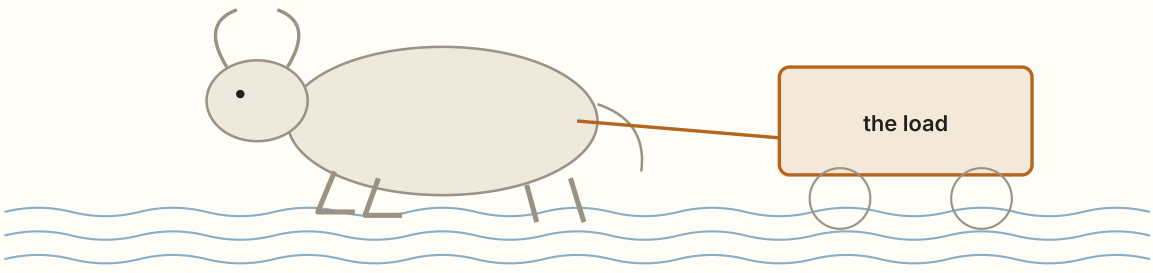
Energy for good and energy for bad. Here is something most people never think about. The *cetasika* (mental factor[4]) *viriya* (energy) arises with almost every *citta* (consciousness[5]), good or bad. When there is attachment[6] to something, energy is there, working for the attachment. Even a coward has *viriya* (energy), energy for cowardice. Even a lazy person has *viriya* (energy), energy that goes into being lazy again and again. So energy by itself is not a perfection[7]. The perfection of energy is effort for *kusala* (good). A question to ask: the *viriya* (energy) that arises now, is it *kusala* (good) or *akusala* (bad)? Most of the time it is likely to be working for *lobha* (attachment).

Nobody makes the effort. When *sati* (mindfulness[8]) is aware of what appears at this moment, there is no "me" who makes an effort to be aware. The effort is the work of *sammā-vāyāma* (right effort), a *cetasika* (mental[9] factor). *Viriya* (energy) is not weary of the task, even when understanding grows very slowly.

Even giving needs energy. A person may have the good intention[10] to give something away, and still not give it, because he is lazy. The thing is there, and the intention is there, but the *viriya* (energy) to carry it out is missing. The same is true of all the other perfections. Sometimes a person thinks that doing good is troublesome, or that he is too tired. At such moments *akusala* (bad states) have won. Life lasts one moment of *citta* (consciousness), so good should be done at once, not later.

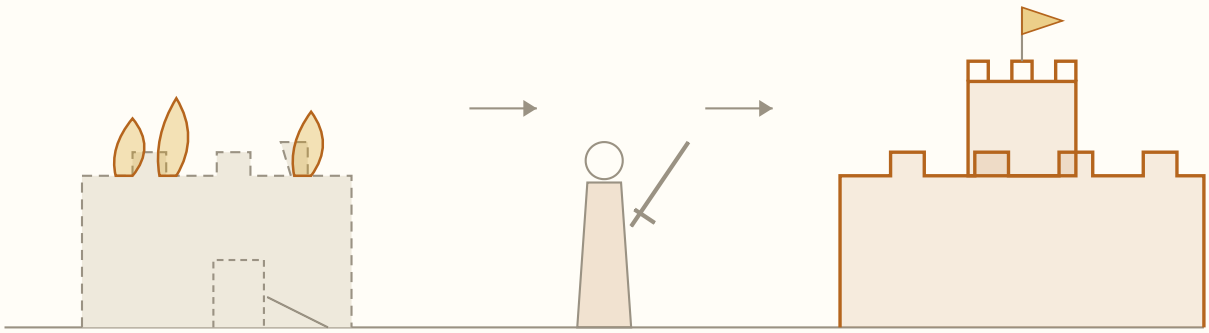
Three pictures of energy. The *Atthasālinī* (The Expositor, an ancient commentary[11]) gives pictures of what *viriya* (energy) does.

- *The old house.* An old house that is falling down is held up by new pillars. When *viriya* (energy) supports a person, good states do not fall away[12] in him. Someone who is bored, lazy or sleepy is like a house that is falling down.
- *The small army.* A small army goes into battle and is pushed back. The king sends strong reinforcements, and the army wins. In the same way *viriya* (energy) does not let the good states retreat; it lifts them up.
- *The ox in the marsh.* A strong ox is set to pull a load out of a marsh. It presses the ground with its knees and does not let the load drop. In the same way *viriya* (energy) takes up the work of doing good and does not drop it.



"the bullock, pressing the ground with its knees, were to carry the burden and would not allow it to drop on the ground"

The city of bandits and the city of peace. The Venerable Sāriputta gave this picture. There were two cities, a city of bandits and a city of peace. A general thought: so long as the city of bandits exists, the city of peace is not safe. So he put on his armour, went into the city of bandits, broke down its gate and its walls, filled in its moat and set fire to it. Then he went into the city of peace and sat down to a fine meal with his family. The city of bandits is *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (personality belief, the wrong view[13] that there is a self). The city of peace is *nibbāna* (the end of all troubles). The general is the person who develops the mind. Wrong view has to be destroyed first, and that takes courage.



"So long as the city of bandits exists the city of peace is not free from danger. I shall destroy the city of bandits."

The hero. The Buddha was called *vīra* (a hero). The ancient texts say why: "He had perseverance and was therefore called a hero. He was valiant and was therefore called a hero. He caused others to persevere and was therefore called a hero." Under the Bodhi tree, before he became the Buddha, he said that he would not move from his seat even if his skin, veins and bones dried up. That is *viriya* (energy) at its highest.

Four right efforts. The Buddha taught four *sammā-ppadhāna* (right efforts):

1. the effort to avoid *akusala* (bad states) that have not yet arisen
2. the effort to overcome *akusala* (bad states) that have arisen
3. the effort to develop *kusala* (good states) that have not yet arisen
4. the effort to keep the *kusala* (good states) that have arisen and bring them to completion

Looking at oneself. The teachers of old said that a monk[14] should examine himself three times a day: in the morning, in the daytime and in the evening. If he cannot do it three times, then twice. If he cannot do it twice, then once. But not to examine oneself at all is wrong. Nobody else can see a person's *akusala* (bad states) as closely as that person can. Someone who examines himself honestly is "easy to speak to". Someone who sees only other people's faults is "difficult to speak to". All of this depends on *viriya* (energy).

Energy is in the mind. The ancient texts say that *viriya* (energy) is always mental, never bodily. A monk who walks up and down to keep himself awake seems to be using bodily energy. In truth the walking happens because of *viriya* (energy), which is a *cetasika* (mental factor).

The man of eighty. The book tells of a man of about eighty who had listened to the teaching for many years. When he heard a radio talk about *vipassanā* (insight[15]), he wrote down the address of the Dhamma Study and Support Foundation and set out to go there to make a donation. He left his house at nine in the morning and arrived at two in the afternoon. He had no time for lunch. That is the *viriya* (energy) of an old man who went against his own comfort in order to do good.

Trying too hard. Some people want to see results[16] quickly, so they strive with all their might. They get tired and have to stop. The result cannot be made to come sooner. *Satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness of realities[17]) is awareness[18] of what naturally appears in daily life, and it cannot be hurried.

King Saṃvara. The *Saṃvara Jātaka* (birth story number 462) was told about a monk who had stopped trying. He had studied for five years, then gone to the forest and worked hard at his meditation[19] for three months, and reached nothing. He decided that he could understand only the words, and went back to the Buddha. The Buddha told him that the highest fruit of the teaching cannot be reached by someone who is lazy, and that in the past he had been full of energy: although he had been the youngest of the hundred sons of the King of Vārāṇasī, he had become king.

King Saṃvara, the youngest of a hundred princes, was chosen as king by his brothers and the people because of his good qualities. His eldest brother, Prince Uposatha, asked him how this had come about. Saṃvara answered that he never grudged[20] honour to the great sages[21], but fell at their feet with a humble mind. Wise men taught him, and he liked to listen and had no envy[22]. He paid his soldiers what was due to them, and wise counsellors[23] helped him, so that the city had plenty and merchants from other lands prospered[24]. When the people heard this, they saw that he was worthy to be king.

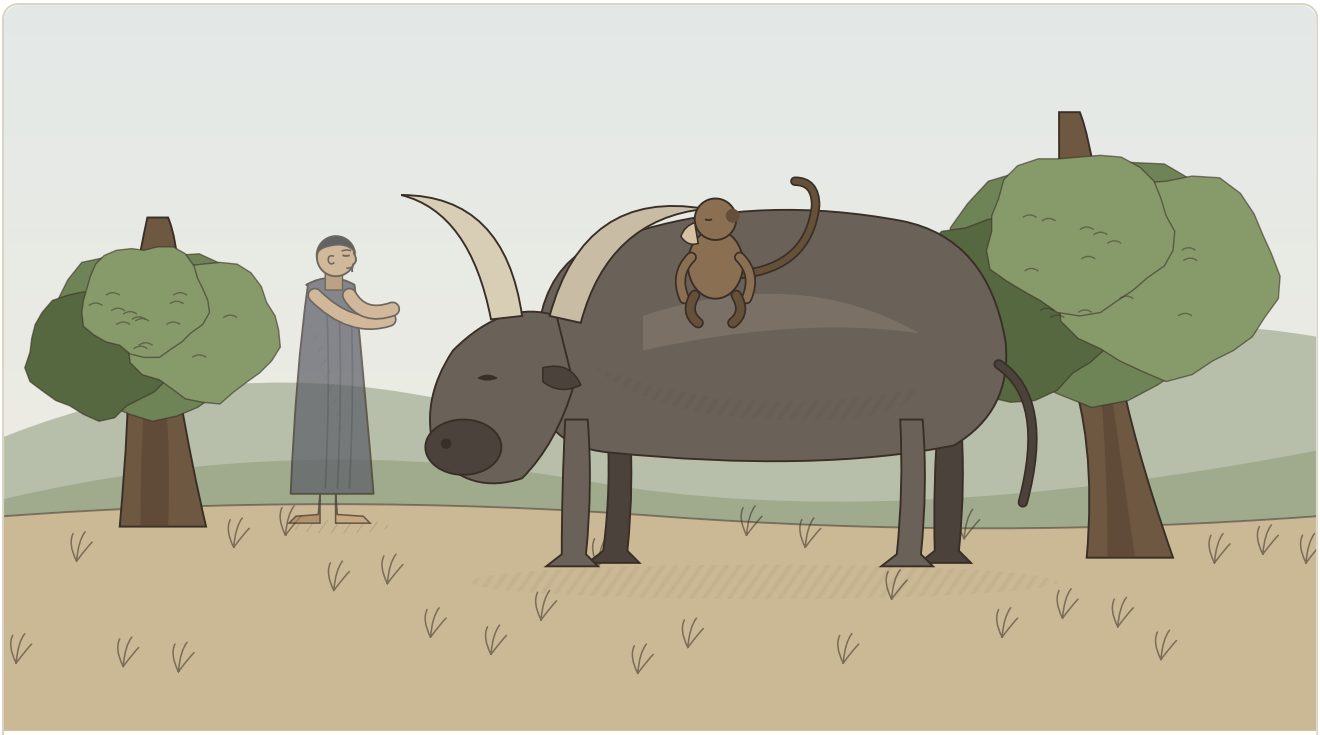
At the end the Buddha said: "Monk, long ago you followed the instruction, but why do you not now strive?" The monk became a *sotāpanna* (stream-enterer). He had been King Saṃvara. Sāriputta had been Prince Uposatha. The courtier[25] who advised the king had been the Buddha himself.

Three occasions. The Buddha said that energy is to be put forth on three occasions: to prevent bad states that have not arisen, to bring about good states that have not arisen, and to endure[26] bodily feelings that are painful and sharp. A person who makes an effort on these three occasions is called "strenuous[27], wise and mindful so that he makes an end of dukkha".

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **energy**: effort; the strength that keeps on going
2. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
3. **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
4. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
5. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
6. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
7. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
8. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
9. **mental**: to do with the mind
10. **intention**: what the mind means to do; the mind's choosing
11. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
12. **fall away**: to end; to stop; to be gone
13. **wrong view**: a wrong idea about what is real, such as the idea that there is a lasting self
14. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
15. **insight**: seeing into something; here, seeing clearly for oneself that there is only mind and matter
16. **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
17. **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
18. **awareness**: noticing what is really there right now; another word for mindfulness
19. **meditation**: developing the mind; people use this word in many different ways
20. **grudged**: to give unwillingly
21. **sage**: a wise person
22. **envy**: being unhappy because someone else has something good
23. **counsellor**: a person who gives advice to a king
24. **prospered**: to do well; to grow rich
25. **courtier**: a person who serves at a king's court
26. **endure**: to bear something hard without giving up
27. **strenuous**: needing great effort

Chapter 6. Khanti (patience)



"He wanted to keep his purity of sīla and did not kill that monkey."

Khanti (patience) is acceptance. The book says it has a wide meaning: patience is needed not only with what is unpleasant, but also with what is pleasant, so that *lobha* (attachment[1]) does not arise[2] when something delightful appears.

	***Khanti* (patience)**
What it is	acceptance
What it does	endures[3] the desirable and the undesirable
How it shows itself	tolerance[4], not fighting back
What it needs	seeing things as they really are

Two kinds of endurance. Someone may stay awake all night in order to get what he wants. That is endurance with *lobha* (attachment). The question is whether a person can put up with as much as that in order to develop *kusala* (good). That kind of endurance is the perfection[5] of patience.

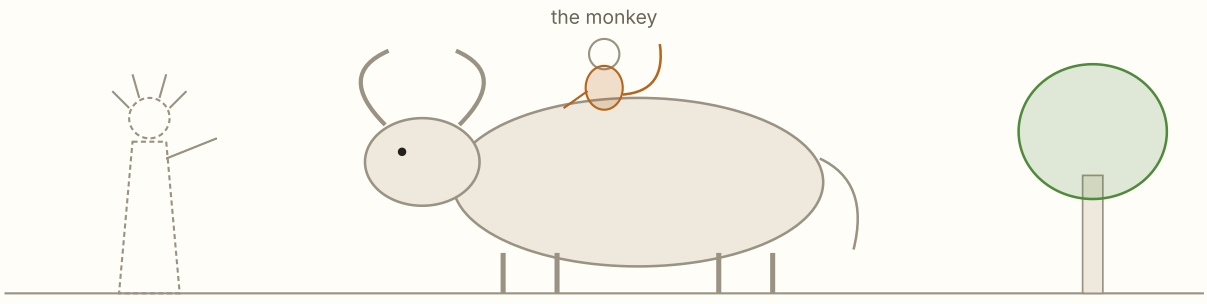
"It is very hot." With patience a person can stand heat or cold. That does not mean the weather changes. It means that because of hot or cold weather, *akusala citta* (bad consciousness[6]) does not arise. If the weather is liked, there is *lobha* (attachment); if it is disliked, there is *dosa* (aversion[7]); either way there is no patience. A person may say "It is very hot," and *akusala citta* (bad consciousness) has probably already arisen. Patience with one's surroundings, the weather, the place, the dhamma of each moment, is called *adhivāsanā khanti* (patience with one's surroundings). The ancient texts say it is the highest *tapa* (burning away).

With people. People who do everything quickly should be patient with people who are slow. There is patience in speech too: before speaking, considering whether what is about to be said is of any use, and if it is not, keeping quiet. And there is no person who is patient. There are only *sobhana cetasika* (beautiful mental factors[8]) that have been developed.

What the commentary says of patience. The commentary[9] praises patience in a long passage. Patience is "the unimpeded[10] weapon of the good", because it drives out anger, the enemy of all good qualities. It is "a stream of water extinguishing the fire of anger", "an ocean on account of its depth", and "a staircase ascending to the worlds of the gods and Brahmas". Then it gives thoughts for the moment when someone does wrong to us:

- If there were no wrong-doers[11], how could the perfection of patience ever be accomplished? A wrong-doer is also a benefactor[12].
- All beings[13] are like my own children. Who becomes angry over the misdeeds[14] of his own children?
- The deed[15] by which wrong was done, and the one who did it, have at this very moment ceased[16]. With whom, then, should there be anger now?
- If the wrong-doer has good qualities, there is no reason to be angry with him. If he has none, he deserves compassion[17].
- Anger is the only real enemy, and when one has patience one has no enemies.

The buffalo and the monkey. The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was once born as a buffalo. A monkey came and dirtied him four times, on his shoulder, his forehead and his eyebrows. A *yakkha* (a spirit) told him to kill the monkey. The buffalo did not give in to anger. He wanted to keep his *sīla* (good conduct) pure, and he wanted to become a Buddha. He said that someone of wisdom, who forgives disrespect from the low, the middling[18] and the high, obtains what he aspired[19] to. Patience is to be developed towards everybody.

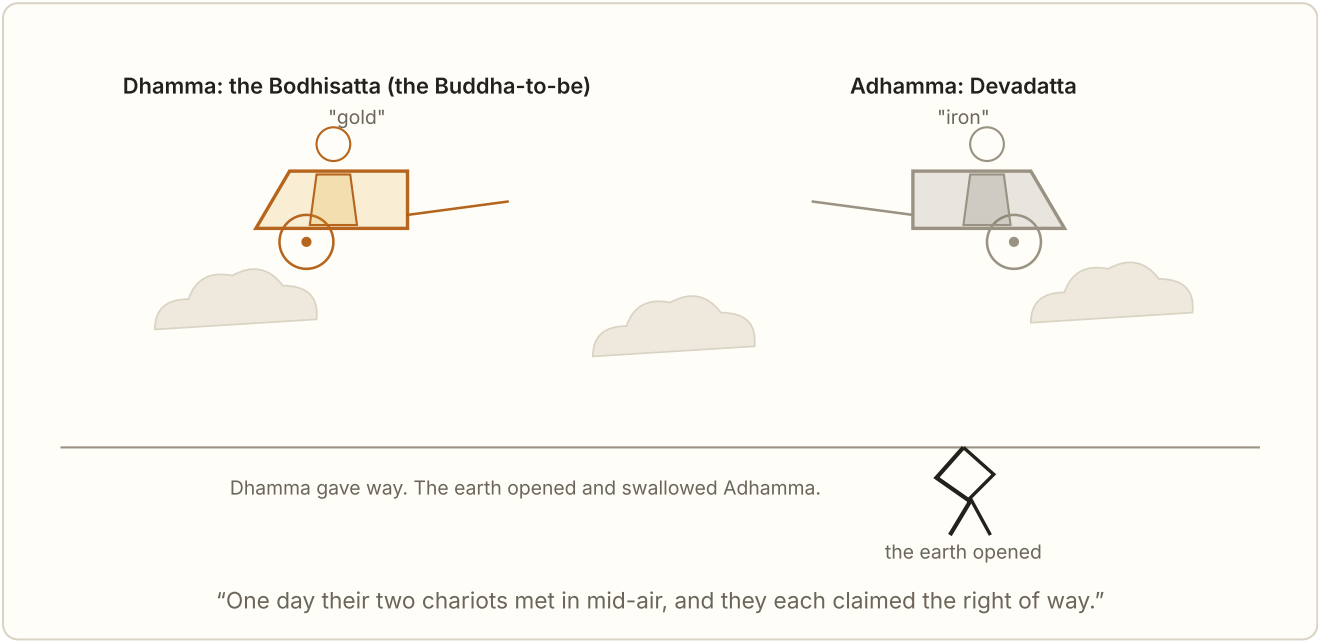


"A yakkha advised him to kill that monkey, but the Bodhisatta did not give in to anger."

Dhamma and Adhamma. In another life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was a *devaputta* (son of a heavenly being) named Dhamma, and Devadatta was Adhamma. Dhamma came among people and taught the ten good deeds, and Adhamma taught the ten evil ones. One day their chariots[20] met in mid-air, and each claimed the right of way. Adhamma said:

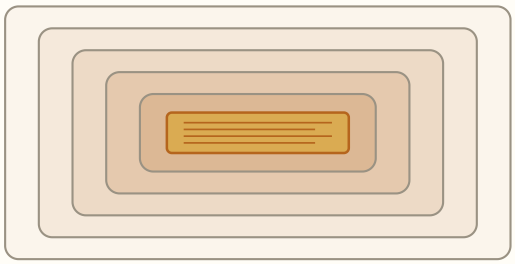
> *By iron gold is beaten, nor do we*
> *Gold used for beating iron ever see:*
> *If Wrong against Right shall win the fight today,*
> *Iron as beautiful as gold will be.*

Dhamma answered that he would swallow all those evil words and give him the way. He gave way, with patience and loving-kindness[21]. And the earth opened and swallowed Adhamma. There is a lesson here for everyone who joins in blaming a wrongdoer again and again: at that moment the *citta* (consciousness) is *akusala* (bad), and the person is really on the side of Adhamma, not of Dhamma.



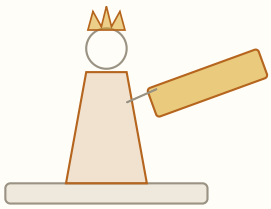
King Pukkusāti. King Pukkusāti ruled in Takkasilā and King Bimbisāra ruled in Rājagaha (two cities of ancient India). They had never met, but they became friends through the merchants who travelled between them. Pukkusāti sent Bimbisāra eight precious cloths. Bimbisāra wondered what he could send back that was finer. He was a *sotāpanna* (stream-enterer), and nothing gave him joy but the *Tiratana* (the Triple Gem: the Buddha, his teaching and his enlightened[22] disciples[23]). So he had a sheet of gold made, and on it he had written the qualities of the Buddha, the ten perfections, the qualities of the *Dhamma* (the teaching) and the *Saṅgha* (the enlightened disciples), and the way to practise mindfulness[24] of breathing. At the end he wrote that if his friend could really grasp this, he should become a monk[25]. He put the sheet in a box, that box in a golden box, and so on, box within box, and sent it off on his best elephant.

On the gold: the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, the ten perfections, and mindfulness of breathing. King Bimbisāra could think of no finer gift.



box within box within box

and inside, a sheet of gold, four cubits long and a span wide



King Pukkusāti reads it alone

The hairs of his body stood on end for joy.

"This box was placed into another box of gold, and this golden box into a silver box, and each box was successively placed into another precious box"

Pukkusāti opened the boxes alone in his palace and began to read. When he read of the qualities of the Buddha, such joy arose that the hairs of his body stood on end, and he had to wait before he could read on. Then he practised mindfulness of breathing and reached *jhāna* (deep calm of mind). For a month nobody saw him but his page. The citizens complained that the king no longer looked after the city. The king asked himself: "Shall we maintain the Kingdom or shall we maintain the teachings?" He answered: the teachings. He cut off his hair with his sword, put on two yellow robes, took an earthenware[26] bowl, and walked out of the palace. Nobody recognised him.

He walked on foot, as the Buddha had done. His feet, which had never walked on hot ground, blistered and bled. He ate the coarse[27] food of the merchants he travelled with as if it were divine food. Because the letter said the Buddha had appeared at Rājagaha, he walked past Sāvatthī, where the Buddha really was, and on to Rājagaha. There a villager told him that the Buddha was at Sāvatthī. It was evening, so he took lodging in the workshop of a potter.

That morning the Buddha had seen him with his mind, and had thought: if I do not go, he will die tomorrow without reaching the third stage of enlightenment. So the Buddha walked forty-five leagues in half a day, came to the potter's door and asked, as an ordinary monk, whether he might spend one night there. "Spacious, friend, is the potter's dwelling," said Pukkusāti; "stay, friend, according to your pleasure." The Buddha spread grass on the dirty floor among the broken pots and sat down as if in his own fragrant chamber.

Later the Buddha asked him whose teaching he followed. "The recluse[28] Gotama," said Pukkusāti, and told him that he had never seen the Buddha and would not know him if he saw him. Then the Buddha taught him that the elements[29] of earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness are not mine, not I, not myself. As he listened, Pukkusāti understood who was speaking. He bowed his head to the Buddha's feet and asked forgiveness for having called the Teacher "friend". The Buddha forgave him. Pukkusāti went out to look for a bowl and robe so that he could be ordained[30], and a cow swerved and killed him. The Buddha said that he had become an *anāgāmī* (non-returner) and would reach *nibbāna* (the end of all troubles)

without returning to this world. Pukkusāti, who gave up a kingdom and walked all that way, must have had the utmost patience. And the Buddha, who walked the same road and slept on the floor of a potter's shed, shows the patience to be developed with regard to seats and beds and everything in one's surroundings.

The teaching of the Buddhas. The *Ovāda-pāṭimokkha* (the exhortation[31] that sums up the teaching) begins with patience:

> *Khantī paramaṃ tapo titikkhā: patience, endurance, is the highest austerity*[32].
> *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ vadanti Buddhā: nibbāna is supreme, the Buddhas say.*
> *Na hi pabbajito parūpaghātī: he is not a recluse who harms another.*
>
> *Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ: not doing any evil,*
> *kusalassa upasampadā: doing what is good,*
> *sacittapariyodapanaṃ: purifying*[33] *one's own mind,*
> *etaṃ Buddhāna sāsanaṃ: this is the teaching of the Buddhas.*

A person who harms another, even a fly or a mosquito, cannot be called a recluse, because he lacks *adhivāsanā khanti* (patience with his surroundings).

The harm of impatience. The Buddha listed five things: the impatient person is not dear to many people; he is full of ill will[34]; much harm comes to him; he dies confused; and he is reborn[35] in an unhappy place. An angry mind at the moment of death is a danger far worse than any danger in this world. Patience is needed above all to listen to the Dhamma, because the perfections take a very long time to develop.

The old monk and his sons. The *Kassapamandiya Jātaka* (birth story number 312) was told about an old monk. A young man had become a monk and soon an *arahant* (fully enlightened). When his mother died he persuaded his father and his younger brother to become monks too. One day the three were walking back to the Jeta Grove. The elder brother went ahead and told the novice[36], the younger brother, to bring their father along slowly. The old man walked very slowly, and the boy, to hurry him, butted him in the back with his head. The old man was so angry that he turned round and walked back to where they had started, and this went on until it was dark. The next day the Buddha blamed the old monk, not the boy, and said that he had behaved the same way in a past life. In that life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was an ascetic, and the old monk was his father. The son said to him: "Father, young boys are just like earthen vessels, they are broken in a moment. Once they are broken it is not possible to mend them. Young boys may be abusive[37] or censure[38] others, but old men should bear with them patiently." And he spoke these lines:

> *Even wise men may quarrel,*
> *But quickly they can become closely united again.*
> *But fools part asunder like untempered*[39] *clay,*
> *They cannot calm down their hate.*

The old recluse trained himself from then on. But in his next life, the book says, he acted as he used to act. Defilements[40] that have not been removed lie quiet and can arise at any time. The only cure is to develop *paññā* (wisdom) with patience, little by little.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
2. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
3. **endure**: to bear something hard without giving up
4. **tolerant**: putting up with things and people one does not like
5. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
6. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
7. **aversion**: not liking something and wanting it to go away; anger, even a little
8. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
9. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
10. **unimpeded**: not held back by anything
11. **wrong-doer**: a person who does wrong
12. **benefactor**: a person who gives help or money
13. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
14. **misdeed**: a wrong act
15. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
16. **cessation**: stopping; coming to an end
17. **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering
18. **middling**: in the middle; neither good nor bad
19. **aspire**: to want very much to reach something high
20. **chariot**: a cart with two wheels pulled by horses, used in old times for war and travel
21. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
22. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
23. **disciple**: a pupil; someone who follows a teacher
24. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
25. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
26. **earthenware**: made of baked clay
27. **coarse**: rough; not fine
28. **recluse**: a person who lives apart from the world to seek the truth
29. **element**: one of the basic parts that everything is made of
30. **ordained**: made a monk
31. **exhortation**: an urging; earnest advice
32. **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living
33. **purify**: to make clean; cleanness
34. **ill will**: wishing someone harm
35. **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
36. **novice**: a boy or young man who has begun training to be a monk
37. **abuse**: to treat or speak to someone cruelly and rudely
38. **censure**: blame; telling someone off
39. **untempered**: not softened
40. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest

Quiz 3 (chapters 5 and 6)

The answers are at the back.

1. The book says the perfection of energy is:
    - (a) any kind of effort, even effort for attachment
    - (b) effort or endeavour for *kusala* (good)
    - (c) bodily strength
    - (d) the effort of a self who makes itself be mindful
2. True or false: according to the Abhidhamma, even a lazy person has *viriya* (energy).
3. The *Atthasālinī* (The Expositor) gives three pictures of what energy does: an old house, a small army and an ox. Explain one of them.
4. In Sāriputta's simile of the two cities, what is the city of bandits?
    - (a) the kingdom of Vārāṇasī
    - (b) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (personality belief, the wrong view that there is a self)
    - (c) laziness
    - (d) anger
5. Give two of the reasons the ancient texts give for calling the Buddha a hero (*vīra*).
6. Name two of the four right efforts (*sammā-ppadhāna*).
7. The teachers of old said that a monk should examine himself how often?
    - (a) once a year
    - (b) three times a day, or twice, or at least once; never not at all
    - (c) only when his teacher tells him
    - (d) only on the full-moon day
8. The old man of about eighty: what time did he leave home, when did he arrive, and why did he go?
9. King Saṃvara was the youngest of how many sons? Say one thing he told Prince Uposatha about why he was made king.
10. True or false: the ancient texts say that energy is bodily, not mental.
11. The book says patience is to be developed towards:
    - (a) only unpleasant things
    - (b) both the unpleasant and the pleasant, so that *lobha* (attachment) does not arise
    - (c) only the weather
    - (d) only teachers
12. A person says "It is very hot" with annoyance. What does the book say has probably already happened, and what is the name of patience with one's surroundings?
13. Give two of the commentary's pictures of patience (for example, what kind of weapon, what kind of water, what kind of staircase).
14. In the story of the buffalo, what did the *yakkha* (spirit) tell the buffalo to do, and what did the buffalo do?
    - (a) to kill the monkey; he killed it

- (b) to kill the monkey; he did not give in to anger and spared it
- (c) to run away; he ran away
- (d) to forgive the monkey; he refused

15. In the story of Dhamma and Adhamma, what did Adhamma say about iron and gold, and what happened to him in the end?
16. What did King Bimbisāra send to King Pukkusāti, and what did Pukkusāti do when he had read it?
17. When the Buddha came to the potter's workshop, Pukkusāti called him "friend". Why did he not know who the Buddha was?
    - (a) the Buddha wore a disguise of a king
    - (b) he had never seen the Buddha, and the Buddha hid his glory and came as an ordinary monk
    - (c) Pukkusāti was blind
    - (d) it was too dark
18. Finish the first line of the *Ovāda-pāṭimokkha*: "*Khantī paramaṃ tapo …*" and say what it means.
19. In the *Kassapamandiya Jātaka*, who did the Buddha blame, the old monk or the boy, and what did the Bodhisatta tell his father about earthen vessels?

Chapter 7. Sacca (truthfulness)

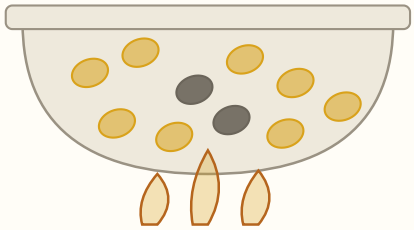


"By this truth may there be well-being, the poison destroyed, may Yaññadatta live."

Sacca (truthfulness[1]) is being truthful through body, speech and mind. To reach the four noble truths, a person has to be truthful about himself: truthful about what is really there in the mind. *Kusala* (good) is *kusala* (good) and *akusala* (bad) is *akusala* (bad), whether it arises[2] in oneself or in someone else.

	***Sacca* (truthfulness)**
What it is	not deceiving[3] in speech
What it does	finds out what is really so
How it shows itself	excellence
What it needs	honesty

Bean soup. The *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets) compares deceitful speech to bean soup. When bean soup is cooked, some beans are cooked and some are not, and whoever eats it now and then bites on a hard one. Speech is like that. When a person talks a great deal, some false words may be mixed in. Or everything he says may be true, from the first word to the last. Only *paññā* (wisdom) knows which it is.



a cooked bean: a true word

a hard bean: a deceptive word

Only paññā (wisdom) knows which is which, and it knows from inside, not from outside.

bean soup

When a person talks a great deal, some deceptive words may be mixed in.

"when one cooks beansoup, some beans are cooked while others are not cooked"

Truthful to the Triple Gem. Truthfulness begins with truthfulness towards the *Tiratana* (the Triple Gem: the Buddha, the *Dhamma*, his teaching, and the *Saṅgha*, his enlightened[4] disciples[5]). When a person sees a Buddha statue, is there respect for the Buddha's qualities, or is there a request for favours: protection, possessions, praise? That question shows how truthful the *citta* (consciousness[6]) is. Being truthful to the *Dhamma* (the teaching) means studying it in order to understand it, not in order to gain anything.

"Thus have I heard." After the Buddha's passing, five hundred *arahant* (fully enlightened) monks[7] met to recite[8] the whole teaching together. This meeting is called the First Council[9]. The Venerable Ānanda, who had been the Buddha's attendant and had heard all his discourses[10], sat down in the teacher's seat to recite them. Some *devas* (heavenly beings[11]) thought that Ānanda must now have become a Buddha himself. Ānanda knew their thoughts, and he would not accept praise for a quality he did not have. So he began with the words *evaṃ me sutaṃ* (thus have I heard): "On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvatthī in Jeta's Wood, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park". By those words he showed that he was only a disciple, repeating what he had heard. The five hundred *arahants* (fully enlightened ones) and thousands of *devas* (heavenly beings) cried "*sādhu*" (good), the earth trembled and flowers fell from the sky.

Those words still open every discourse in the *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets). The Buddha is gone, but the *Dhamma* (the teaching) itself is now the teacher.

Not by water. On cold winter nights, a crowd of ascetics[12] were plunging into the river and climbing out again, believing that this made them pure. The Buddha saw them and said:

> *Not by water is one pure, tho' many folk bathe here.*
> *In whom is truth and dhamma, he is pure and he's a brāhmin.*

Light is the enemy of darkness, and knowledge is the enemy of ignorance[13]. Water does not destroy the roots of evil, so water cannot wash evil away. If it could, the fish and the tortoises, the cows and the buffaloes would all be pure. What makes a person pure is truth.

How the Bodhisatta practised. The commentary[14] gives a short rule for the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be): "He should work energetically for the welfare of beings, be capable of enduring[15] everything whether desirable or undesirable, and should speak without deception." It adds: "He should suffuse all beings with universal[16] loving-kindness[17] and compassion[18]." People usually have *mettā* (loving-kindness) for good people and not for bad ones. But when someone looks down on a person who does wrong, the *citta* (consciousness) of the one who looks down is *akusala* (bad), the same kind as the wrongdoer[19]'s. The

commentary also says: “Without truthfulness, virtue, etc., is impossible, and there can be no practice in accordance with one’s vows.” The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) made a vow to become a Buddha. A vow can only be kept by someone who is firm in truth.

Hārita, who would not lie. In one life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was born into a very rich family, and because of his golden skin they called him Hārita. When his parents died he thought: I too will die. So he gave away his wealth and became a recluse[20] in the Himālaya, where he reached deep calm of mind and the higher powers.

One day he came to Vārāṇasī (a city in India). The king had faith in him, built him a dwelling in the royal park and fed him from the palace. He lived there twelve years. Then the king went away to settle trouble on the border and asked the queen to look after the recluse. One day, when Hārita came to the palace, he saw the queen, and the *kilesa* (defilements[21]) that had lain quiet in him for thousands of aeons[22] rose up like a poisonous snake out of a box. His calm of mind vanished, he could not find *sati* (mindfulness[23]), and he did wrong.

The whole city talked about it. The king would not believe it. When he came home he went to the park, bowed to the recluse, and asked whether the rumour[24] was true, adding that he took it to be false. Hārita thought: if I say I did not do it, the king will believe me. But in this world there is no surer foundation than truthful speech, and someone who forsakes the truth cannot become a Buddha. In some lives a *Bodhisatta* (a Buddha-to-be) may break other rules, but he never tells a lie. So Hārita answered:

> *The rumours, great King, you have heard are true.*
> *Infatuated[25] by the objects[26] of delusion[27], I have done wrong.*

The king praised his honesty and urged him to throw off the lust[28] that was destroying him. Hearing this, the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) came back to himself and said:

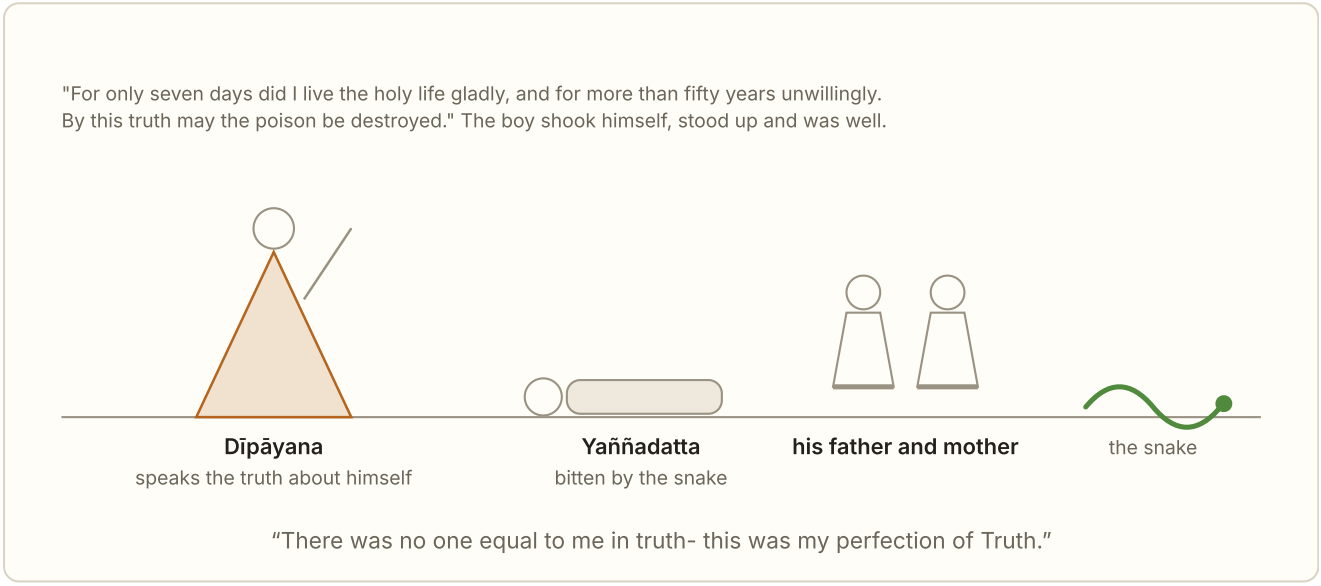
> *Sense pleasures are blinding,*
> *they cause much suffering[29].*
> *They injure gravely[30].*
> *I shall look for the root of sensuousness[31],*
> *I shall cut down lust with its bonds.*

He regained *jhāna* (deep calm of mind), went back to the forest, and at the end of his life was reborn[32] in the *brahma* (highest heavenly) world. The Buddha told this story to a monk who wanted to leave the Order after seeing a beautifully dressed woman. He said that even he, as the recluse Hārita, with all his powers, had fallen because of that kind of defilement. “Why should a strong wind that strikes Mount Sineru not carry off a withered leaf?” Nobody is as steady as Mount Sineru (the great mountain at the centre of the world); people are withered leaves, and the wind is *lobha* (attachment[33]), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (ignorance). When the Buddha had explained the truths, that monk became an *arahant* (fully enlightened).

Kaṇhadīpāyana and the snake. In another life the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was the seer[34] Dīpāyana. For more than fifty years he was unhappy as a recluse, and he told no one. He stayed only because he feared that people would say he had left his wealth and now wanted it back. He kept his *hiri*

(shame) and *ottappa* (fear of blame), and he stayed, sometimes with tears running down his face. He was called Kaṇhadīpāyana (Black Dīpāyana) because he had sat all night beside a wounded friend, and the drops of blood dried black on his body.

One day a friend came to visit with his wife and little son, Yaññadatta. The boy threw a ball, it rolled near a poisonous snake, and when the boy felt for it the snake bit him. He fell to the ground. His parents were in agony[35], and the seer with them. Then Dīpāyana made a *saccakiriyā* (an assertion of truth). He said that for only seven days had he lived the holy life gladly, and that for more than fifty years he had lived it unwillingly, and by that truth might the poison be destroyed and Yaññadatta live. The boy stood up and was well. The *Cariyāpiṭaka* (Basket of Conduct) ends: “There was no one equal to me in truth- this was my perfection[36] of Truth.” Why was the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be), who had loved the homeless life for thousands of lives, unhappy in it in this one? Because nobody who is not yet enlightened is steady.



Small matters. Truthfulness is also keeping one’s word about little things, such as appointments. Even small children notice whether a person does what he says. If a person gets into the habit of small lies, lying becomes easy and he stops seeing that it is wrong. If he keeps to the truth, truthfulness becomes natural to him, and he can see the danger of *akusala* (bad states) at the very moment a lie is about to be told. The perfection of truthfulness has to be developed together with *paññā* (wisdom), and with the next perfection, *adhiṭṭhāna* (determination[37]).

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
2. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
3. **deceive**: to fool someone; to make them believe what is not true
4. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
5. **disciple**: a pupil; someone who follows a teacher
6. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
7. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
8. **recite**: to say a text aloud from memory
9. **council**: a big meeting of the elder monks to settle something
10. **discourse**: a talk or sermon; here, one of the Buddha's talks written down
11. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
12. **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living

13. **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
14. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
15. **endure**: to bear something hard without giving up
16. **universal**: found in every one; here, mental factors that come with every moment of mind
17. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
18. **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering
19. **wrong-doer**: a person who does wrong
20. **recluse**: a person who lives apart from the world to seek the truth
21. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
22. **aeon**: a huge stretch of time, far longer than anyone can count
23. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
24. **rumour**: a story passed from person to person that may not be true
25. **infatuated**: foolishly carried away by liking something
26. **object**: the thing that a moment of mind knows: a colour, a sound, a thought
27. **delusion**: being fooled; not seeing things as they are
28. **lust**: strong wanting, especially for pleasure
29. **suffering**: pain and trouble; anything that cannot give lasting happiness
30. **gravely**: seriously
31. **sensual**: to do with the pleasures of the senses: nice sights, sounds, tastes and so on
32. **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
33. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
34. **seer**: a wise person who sees the truth
35. **agony**: very great pain
36. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
37. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it

Chapter 8. Adhiṭṭhāna (determination)



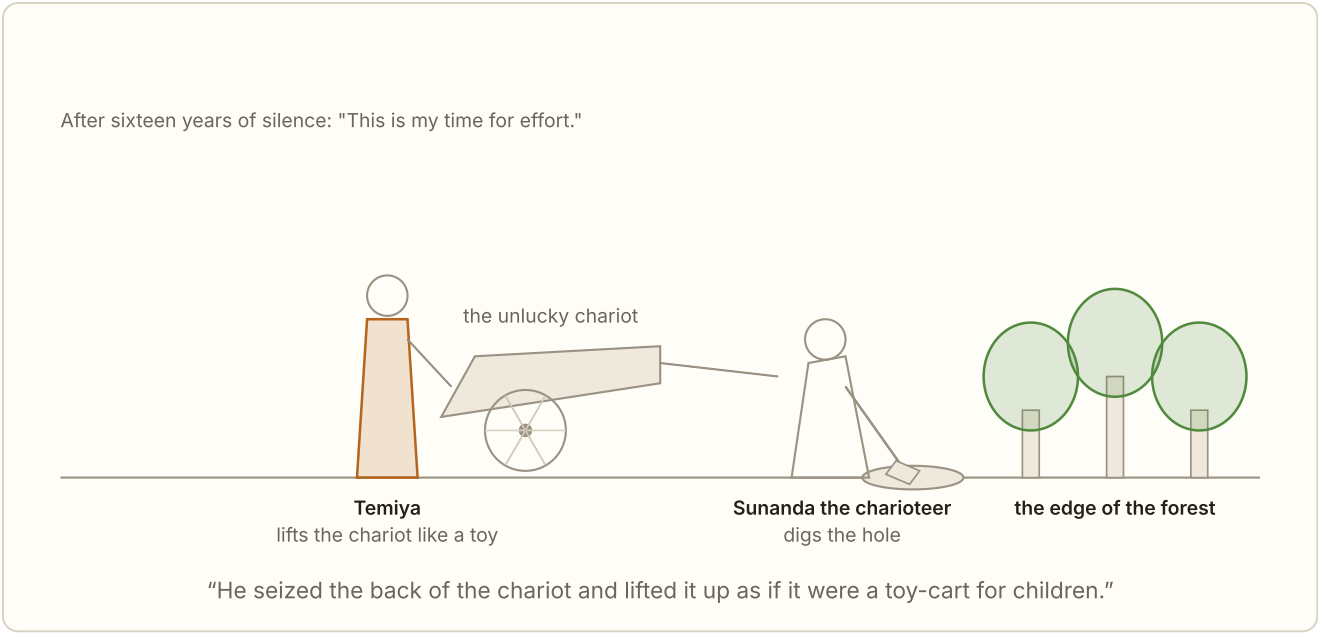
"When the charioteer Sunanda was digging the hole, the Bodhisatta thought, 'This is my time for effort.'"

Adhiṭṭhāna (determination[1]) is the firm resolve to reach the four noble truths, even though the way is long and will take an endlessly long time. The ancient texts say it means the firm determination to develop the ten perfections[2].

	***Adhiṭṭhāna* (determination)**
What it is	resolving upon the ten perfections
What it does	overcomes their opposites
How it shows itself	being unshakeable[3] in that task
What it needs	the ten perfections themselves

Why it is needed. *Kusala citta* (good consciousness[4]) arises[5], and shortly afterwards *akusala citta* (bad consciousness) arises. Sometimes there is determination for good, but when a bad moment comes and pushes towards something bad, the good is easily given up. That is why firm determination is needed. A person who is in love with pleasant sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches will want them again and again, and will not be inclined[6] to develop the perfections at all.

Wise Temiya. This is the life in which the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) developed determination to the highest degree. It is told in the *Mūgapakkha Jātaka* (birth story number 538). He was the son of the king of Kāsi, and people called him Temiya, which means wet, because a great shower of rain fell on the day he was born.



King Kāsirājā ruled in Vārāṇasī (a city in India). He had sixteen thousand wives, but none of them had a child. His chief queen, Candādevī, lived a good life. On the full-moon day she kept the *Uposatha* (observance[7] day) rules and made an act of truth: “If I have never transgressed[8] sīla, may by this assertion of truth a son be borne to me.” Then the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) was conceived.

When the prince was one month old, the king sat with the baby on his hip. Just then four robbers were brought in to be sentenced, and the king gave each of them a terrible punishment. When the baby heard his father pass those sentences, he was shaken. He was afraid of doing such deeds[9] himself and being reborn[10] in hell.

The next day he lay under the white umbrella of royalty and remembered his past lives: a heaven, before that hell, and before that a life as king in this very city. He thought: “I do not need the kingdom. How can I escape from this house of robbers?” A goddess who lived in the umbrella, and who had been his mother in a former life, told him the way: pretend to be dumb, crippled and deaf. From that day he did.

His parents could see none of the signs of a child who is dumb, deaf or crippled. So they began to test him. For a whole day they gave him no milk, but hungry as he was, he made no sound. For years they tried him with cakes, sweets, fruit and toys. Then they tried fear: fire, a wild elephant, snakes, a man waving a sword. He showed no fear, because he thought the danger of hell was a thousand times more fearful. They made deafening noise with conches[11] and drums. They smeared him with molasses[12] and laid him where flies swarmed. They put pans of burning coals under his bed. For sixteen years they tested him, and he did not change his mind. At sixteen they dressed him like a son of the gods and sent the most graceful women to tempt him. He held his breath so that they could not touch him, and they ran away saying he must be a *yakkha* (a spirit), not a man.

At last the king called the fortune-tellers[13], who said that the boy was a person of ill luck, a danger to the king. The king ordered that the boy be taken out by the back gate and buried in the charnel[14] ground. When Temiya heard this he rejoiced[15]: the wish he had held for so long was about to come true.

Queen Candādevī asked the king to give the kingdom to her son. The king refused. She asked for seven years, then six, five, four, three, two, one; then seven months, down to one; then seven days. To seven days the king agreed. So the prince was crowned and led around the city on an elephant. For five nights his mother begged him: "O Temiya, I did not sleep for sixteen years, I have wept because of you, my child, so that my eyes have become swollen and my heart is pierced with sorrow. I know that you are not cripple, deaf and dumb, do not make me utterly destitute[16]." He did not answer.

On the sixth day the king ordered the charioteer[17] Sunanda to take the boy at dawn and bury him. In the morning the charioteer carried the prince down, and the queen collapsed with a cry. Temiya thought: if I do not speak, she will die of sorrow. And then: if I speak, my sixteen years will be wasted; if I keep silent, it will be for the good of myself and of my parents. He kept silent.

The chariot[18] went to the edge of a forest. The charioteer took a spade and began to dig. Temiya thought: "This is my time for effort." He rubbed his hands and feet, stepped down from the chariot, and found he had strength enough to walk a hundred leagues. He lifted the chariot by its back as if it were a toy. Then he taught the charioteer: "You are dependent on me, the son of the king. If you bury me in the forest, you will commit evil. It is as if a person who sits or lies in the shade of a tree will not break the branches." The king was the tree, the prince was the branch, and the charioteer was the traveller resting in its shade. Sunanda begged him to come home. Temiya told him about his past lives and his fear of hell, and said he would become a recluse[19] (a person who leaves home to train the mind). Sunanda wanted to become a recluse too. Temiya said: "O, charioteer, take the chariot back and return after you have paid your debts, because a recluse should not have debts, as is the exhortation[20] of all hermits[21]."

Sunanda told the king everything, and the king set out with his whole army to see his son. Temiya was living happily in a hut in the forest. The king begged him to come and rule. He refused, and taught the king the *Dhamma* (the Buddha's teaching) until the king felt *saṃvega* (urgency[22]) and wanted to become a recluse too, together with the queen and many of the court. The Buddha said that the goddess in the umbrella was Uppalavaṇṇā, the charioteer was Sāriputta, and wise Temiya was himself.

Wanting is not resolving. The book tells of a person who studied the *Dhamma* (the teaching), thought about the long cycle of birth and death, and longed for rebirth to end. But he took no interest in developing *satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness[23] of realities[24]). Wanting the end of rebirth is not the same as being firm in one's determination to develop *paññā* (wisdom).

Four firm foundations. The commentary[25] names four *adhiṭṭhāna dhamma* (foundations), basic to all the perfections:

1. *Sacca* (truthfulness[26]). Firmness in truth, even in small matters, such as keeping an appointment. A person firm in truth stays truthful even when his life is in danger.
2. *Cāga* (giving up). Not only giving things away, but giving up *kilesa* (defilements[27]). This includes guarding the six doors: the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind. The Venerable Sāriputta, when a monk[28] falsely accused him, felt no ill will[29]. He said he was like a duster, which wipes up everything, clean and foul, without disgust.
3. *Upasama* (calm). Not being disturbed by sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches.
4. *Paññā* (wisdom). Gained by listening to the teaching, considering it, and asking questions. Someone who thinks that listening once or twice will free him from the cycle of birth and death does not yet

have firm determination.

The great resolve. A person who aspires[30] to become a *Sammāsambuddha* (a fully enlightened[31] Buddha) needs extreme dedication and strong desire. The *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) showed it in his life as Sumedha: when people were clearing a road for the Buddha Dīpaṅkara and it was not ready, Sumedha threw himself down in the mud so that the Buddha could walk on him. If such a person heard that only one who could cross a whole world full of water by the strength of his arms could become a Buddha, he would not shrink away. Because of the Buddha's great compassion[32], nobody now has to do such things. The teaching is here to be listened to.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it
2. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
3. **unshakeable**: cannot be shaken or moved
4. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
5. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
6. **inclination**: a leaning towards something; what one tends to do
7. **observance**: keeping a rule or custom
8. **transgressed**: to break a rule; to do wrong
9. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
10. **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
11. **conch**: a big sea shell that is blown like a trumpet
12. **molasses**: thick dark syrup made from sugar
13. **fortune-teller**: a person who claims to tell the future
14. **cemetery**: a place where the dead are buried or left
15. **rejoice**: to be glad
16. **destitute**: having nothing at all; very poor
17. **charioteer**: the driver of a chariot
18. **chariot**: a cart with two wheels pulled by horses, used in old times for war and travel
19. **recluse**: a person who lives apart from the world to seek the truth
20. **exhortation**: an urging; earnest advice
21. **hermit**: a person who lives alone, away from other people
22. **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
23. **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
24. **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
25. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
26. **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
27. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
28. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
29. **ill will**: wishing someone harm
30. **aspire**: to want very much to reach something high
31. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
32. **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering

Quiz 4 (chapters 7 and 8)

The answers are at the back.

1. Deceitful speech is compared in the *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets) to bean soup. Why?
    - (a) because beans are a holy food
    - (b) because when a person speaks a great deal, some deceptive words may be mixed in, like hard uncooked beans among the cooked ones
    - (c) because lies taste bad
    - (d) because soup is served first
2. At the First Council, why did the Venerable Ānanda begin with the words *evaṃ me sutaṃ* (thus have I heard)?
3. Finish the Buddha's verse at Gayā: "Not by water is one pure, tho' many folk bathe here. In whom is … "
    - (a) gold and silver, he is pure
    - (b) truth and dhamma, he is pure and he's a brāhmin
    - (c) a strong body, he is pure
    - (d) many offerings, he is pure
4. In the story of Hārita, what did the recluse think before he answered the king, and what did he answer?
5. The Buddha said to the discontented monk: "Why should a strong wind that strikes Mount Sineru not carry off …"
    - (a) a great rock
    - (b) a withered leaf
    - (c) a palace
    - (d) an elephant
6. What truth did Kaṇhadīpāyana declare in his assertion of truth, and what happened to the boy Yaññadatta?
7. Why was the baby prince Temiya so shaken when he was one month old?
8. For how many years was Temiya tested before he was sent away to be buried?
    - (a) seven days
    - (b) one year
    - (c) sixteen years
    - (d) fifty years
9. What did Queen Candādevī ask the king for, and what did she finally get?
10. When the charioteer began to dig, Temiya thought, "This is my time for effort." What did he do next, and what picture did he give the charioteer about the tree?
11. The commentary names four firm foundations (*adhiṭṭhāna dhamma*) of all the perfections. Put them in the order the book gives.
    - *upasama* (calm)
    - *cāga* (relinquishment)

- *sacca* (truthfulness)
- *paññā* (wisdom)

12. True or false: the book says that wanting the end of rebirth is the same as the perfection of determination.

Chapter 9. Mettā (loving-kindness)



"Mettā is like the attitude of a mother towards her child who is still a baby and needs her loving care to grow up."

Mettā (loving-kindness[1]) is wishing for the welfare of living beings[2]. In the Abhidhamma it is the *cetasika* (mental factor[3]) *adosa* (non-hate), the reality[4] that is freedom from anger. When *mettā* (loving-kindness) arises[5], there is at that moment no hate and no aversion[6] at all.

	***Mettā* (loving-kindness)**
What it is	promoting the welfare of living beings
What it does	provides for their welfare, or removes resentment[7]
How it shows itself	kindliness[8]
What it needs	seeing the agreeable side of beings

Why it comes after determination. Loving-kindness follows determination[9] in the list of ten because it is loving-kindness that carries out the determination to work for the welfare of others. That work goes on steadily only when determination is unshakeable[10].

The one that is forgotten. A person may feel that he has already given enough, kept the rules well enough, is patient and speaks the truth. But has he developed *mettā* (loving-kindness) as much as the others? It is easy to forget to help, again and again, and to help strangers as readily as friends. If the wish to help others is weak, the reason should be looked for. Is it conceit[11]? Is it the thought that helping is a waste of time? Is it worrying about what the other person will think? The book says that what another person thinks of us concerns only him, not us.

No limits. True *mettā* (loving-kindness) has no limits. If it is kept for some people and not others, it may not be *mettā* (loving-kindness) at all, but *lobha* (attachment[12]), which only looks like kindness from the outside. The test is this: if there is true *mettā* (loving-kindness), a kind deed[13] for a stranger feels exactly the same as a kind deed for someone close.

A mother and her child. The *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets) compares deeds done with *mettā* (loving-kindness) to a mother's care for her child. She gives up everything for the child, and looks after it even when it is dirty. But there is a warning. A mother's attachment to her own child is not *mettā* (loving-kindness). The picture is of her selfless care. A person who can care for other people the way a good mother cares for her baby practises *mettā* (loving-kindness).

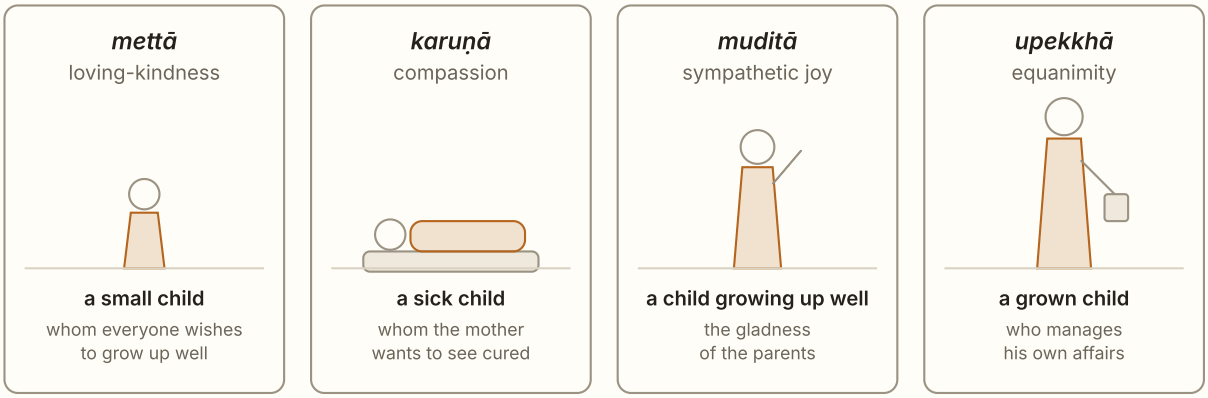
The woman in Indonesia. A monk[14] told of a woman in Indonesia whose husband was killed by a young man's reckless[15] driving. She did not take him to court, because she did not want to cause unhappiness to anyone. More than that, she said she would pay for the young man's education. The book says this was very hard for her, and she did it. Such acts can be done by someone who has built up loving-kindness and compassion[16] over a long time.

Anger lasts one moment. When anger arises towards someone, it helps to know that anger arises only for a moment and then falls away[17], and that *mettā* (loving-kindness) can arise in its place. A person who stays angry for a long time can see from that how much is still to be done.

The four divine abidings. *Mettā* (loving-kindness) is one of four *brahmavihāra* (divine abidings):

1. *Mettā* (loving-kindness): wishing beings well.
2. *Karuṇā* (compassion): wishing to take away a being's suffering[18].
3. *Muditā* (sympathetic joy[19]): being glad at another's happiness and success.
4. *Upekkhā* (equanimity[20]): being even-minded[21] towards all beings, with neither attachment nor aversion.

The *Atthasālinī* (The Expositor) gives a picture of four children. *Mettā* (loving-kindness) is like the care for a small child, whom everyone wishes to grow up well. *Karuṇā* (compassion) is like the care for a sick child, whom the mother wants to see cured. *Muditā* (sympathetic joy) is like the gladness of parents whose child is growing up well. *Upekkhā* (equanimity) is like the calm of parents whose child can now manage his own affairs.



"Mettā is like a small child, compassion is like a child who is sick, sympathetic joy is like a child who is becoming an adolescent and equanimity is like a child who manages his own affairs."

Look-alikes. Each of the four has a near enemy, a state that looks like it but is *akusala* (bad). When a person is thrilled by someone else's gain and praise, there may be *lobha* (attachment), not *muditā* (sympathetic joy). The near enemy of *upekkhā* (equanimity) is plain indifference[22]. When something is seen and there is no reaction, that is not always *kusala* (good). It may be *moha* (ignorance[23]). Only *paññā* (wisdom) can tell them apart.

Kindness at the right time. When people see someone doing a harmful deed, they are upset and hope he will get what he deserves. When later he suffers the result[24], they feel sorry for him. That is the wrong way round. The moment for *mettā* (loving-kindness) and *karuṇā* (compassion) is the moment he does the deed, because that deed is the cause of his future suffering. "If one sympathizes[25] with him when he receives an undesirable result, one sympathizes too late." A real friend helps a person to give up bad deeds.

No persons. In the ultimate[26] sense there are no beings and no persons; there are only realities arising and falling away. A person who lives by the *Dhamma* (the teaching) comes to know at once when there is no loving-kindness but *akusala* (bad states), and can then have loving-kindness at once, even for a person who behaves like an enemy.

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
2. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
3. **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
4. **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
5. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
6. **aversion**: not liking something and wanting it to go away; anger, even a little
7. **resentment**: a sore, angry feeling about being treated badly
8. **kindliness**: kindness
9. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it
10. **unshakeable**: cannot be shaken or moved
11. **conceit**: thinking oneself better than others, or worse, or just as good; pride that compares
12. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
13. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
14. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
15. **recklessness**: doing things without care for what may happen

16. **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering
17. **fall away**: to end; to stop; to be gone
18. **suffering**: pain and trouble; anything that cannot give lasting happiness
19. **sympathetic joy**: being glad when someone else is happy or does well
20. **equanimity**: an even, calm mind that is not shaken by good luck or bad
21. **even-mindedness**: having a mind that stays level and calm whatever happens
22. **indifferent**: neither pleasant nor unpleasant; in the middle
23. **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
24. **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
25. **sympathize**: to feel for someone; to share their feelings
26. **ultimate**: the deepest and most real; what is really there when all the names are taken away

Chapter 10. Upekkhā (even-mindedness)



"I slept in a cemetery, taking as a pillow the skeleton of a corpse. I had evenmindedness with regard to what is clean and what is dirty."

Upekkhā (even-mindedness[1]) is not being disturbed by the troublesome conduct of people, or by the ups and downs of life, pleasant or unpleasant: gain and loss, praise and blame. The book compares it to a pair of scales that is well balanced.

	***Upekkhā* (even-mindedness)**
What it is	taking a neutral[2] stance towards beings[3]
What it does	sees things impartially[4]
How it shows itself	the dying down of attraction and repulsion[5]
What it needs	the thought that all beings inherit the results[6] of their own *kamma* (deeds[7])

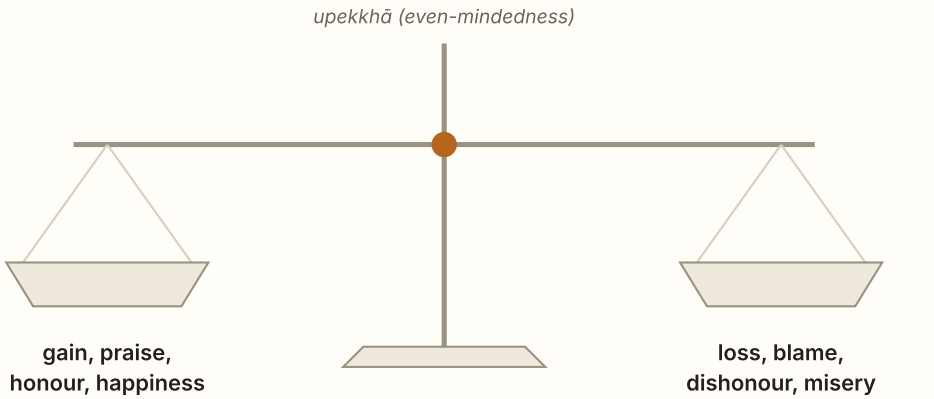
The snake and the man who kills it. When people see someone kill a snake, they believe they feel compassion[8] for the snake. In reality[9], the book says, they are disturbed by aversion[10] towards the person who kills it. There may not be loving-kindness[11] at all. But there can be *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) when it is remembered that everyone receives the results of his own deeds. And there can be compassion for the killer, who will receive the result of what he does. A person with *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) is not disturbed, and does not say unsuitable things to someone doing wrong. A disturbed *citta* (consciousness[12]) is *akusala* (bad), even when it feels righteous.

No expectations. A person should not have expectations about when the four noble truths will be seen. As long as many *kilesa* (defilements[13]) arise[14] all the time, the goal is far away. The thing to do is to develop every kind of good, patiently, so that the conditions[15] are slowly built up.

Each perfection is the enemy of attachment. The commentary[16] explains how each of the ten perfections[17] works against *lobha* (attachment[18]), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (ignorance[19]). Giving works against them because there is no attachment to the gift, no hate towards the one who receives it, and no ignorance about the result. The book gives an example. A person sees a beggar and notices that he is strong, or sees that he drags a disabled child along, and feels irritated, and so does not give. At that moment there is aversion towards the receiver, and no giving. Wisdom works against them because they make a person blind and wisdom gives back sight. Patience works against *lobha* (attachment) "by accepting the desirable, the undesirable, and emptiness". And *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) works against them by driving out attraction to pleasant things and repulsion from unpleasant ones, and by going on evenly whatever happens.

A thousand goods on the doorstep. An ancient commentary compares the Buddha's teaching to a thousand goods laid down on the doorstep of every house, for the family inside. Some people open the door and take them in. Others never open the door. Another passage compares people's confusion about cause and result to a cotton thread so tangled into a knot that nobody can undo it alone. Only two kinds of person can undo it: a *Sammāsambuddha* (a fully enlightened[20] Buddha who teaches the world) and a *Paccekabuddha* (a silent Buddha, who finds the truth alone but does not teach it).

Lomahaṃsa, who slept among the bones. The *Cariyāpiṭaka* (Basket of Conduct) calls this the Great Astounding Conduct. It is the life in which the *Bodhisatta* (the Buddha-to-be) developed *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) to the highest degree.



"I am impartial towards everything, and this is my perfection of equanimity."

"The perfection of equanimity is evenmindedness, being without happiness and anguish, like a scale that is well-balanced."

He was born into a wealthy family. When his parents died, his relatives begged him to take charge of the family's wealth. But he had thought about impermanence[21], and he felt *saṃvega* (urgency[22]). He thought of becoming a monk[23]. Then he reflected that a monk receives honour and gifts, and he did not want honour or gain. So he decided to live with just enough, as a layman[24], and to be even-minded in gain and loss and the other ups and downs of the world.

He resolved: "I shall accumulate[25] the practice of supreme patience, enduring[26] derisive[27] speech from others. I shall develop the perfection of equanimity[28] to the highest degree." He left home in the clothes he was wearing. Though he was not dumb, he behaved as if he were dumb, and people mocked him because he looked like a fool. He wandered from village to village, staying one night in each place, and where he was mocked the most, he stayed longer. When his clothes wore out he went about in a rag.

In one village he met a gang of children who were cruel and violent, and threw dust over the backs of the old and poor. He thought: here is a chance to develop the perfection of even-mindedness, and he stayed. When the children began to torment[29] him, he pretended to be afraid, so that they would follow him. He led them to the cemetery[30], lay down, and took a skeleton for a pillow. The children spat on him, poked grass into his ears and jeered, day after day. Wise people who saw it told the children to stop, and honoured him with flowers, scented oils and food.

The Buddha said of that life: "I slept in a cemetery, taking as a pillow the skeleton of a corpse[31]. I had evenmindedness with regard to what is clean and what is dirty." The children made him suffer, the wise people gave him pleasant things; he was even-minded to all of them. He had no special affection for those who helped him, and no angry words or thoughts of revenge for those who did not. "I am evenminded towards happiness and misery, towards honour and dishonour[32]; I am impartial towards everything, and this is my perfection of equanimity."

The commentary adds that in that same life he developed all ten perfections. He was not a monk, but he was a monk at heart, and his life was like the life of an *arahant* (a fully enlightened person).

All ten. The book ends with the list once more: *dāna* (giving), *sīla* (good conduct), *nekkhamma* (letting go), *paññā* (wisdom), *viriya* (energy[33]), *khanti* (patience), *sacca* (truthfulness[34]), *adhiṭṭhāna* (determination[35]), *mettā* (loving-kindness) and *upekkhā* (even-mindedness). None of them should be left out. All of them are needed, and developing them is the way to develop *paññā* (wisdom).

HARD WORDS IN THIS CHAPTER

1. **even-mindedness**: having a mind that stays level and calm whatever happens
2. **neutral**: neither one thing nor the other; in the middle
3. **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
4. **impartial**: fair to all sides; not taking sides
5. **repulsion**: strong dislike; being pushed away
6. **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
7. **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
8. **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering
9. **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
10. **aversion**: not liking something and wanting it to go away; anger, even a little
11. **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone
12. **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
13. **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest
14. **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
15. **condition**: something that has to be there before another thing can happen
16. **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
17. **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
18. **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
19. **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
20. **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
21. **impermanent**: not lasting; passing away

22. **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
23. **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
24. **lay**: an ordinary person who follows the teaching while living at home
25. **accumulate**: to gather up bit by bit, so that there is more and more of it
26. **endure**: to bear something hard without giving up
27. **derisive**: laughing at someone unkindly
28. **equanimity**: an even, calm mind that is not shaken by good luck or bad
29. **torment**: to cause great pain to
30. **cemetery**: a place where the dead are buried or left
31. **corpse**: a dead body
32. **dishonour**: loss of respect; shame
33. **energy**: effort; the strength that keeps on going
34. **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
35. **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it

Quiz 5 (chapters 9 and 10)

The answers are at the back.

1. In the Abhidhamma, *mettā* (loving-kindness) is which *cetasika* (mental factor)?
    - (a) *lobha* (attachment)
    - (b) *adosa* (non-hate)
    - (c) *viriya* (energy)
    - (d) *saññā* (memory)
2. What is the book's test for finding out whether kindness is true *mettā* (loving-kindness) or only *lobha* (attachment)?
3. What did the woman in Indonesia do after her husband was killed by a reckless young driver?
4. The four *brahmavihāra* (divine abidings) are compared to four children. Put the four in the order the ancient texts give.
    - *muditā* (sympathetic joy): a child growing up well
    - *karuṇā* (compassion): a sick child
    - *mettā* (loving-kindness): a small child
    - *upekkhā* (equanimity): a child who manages his own affairs
5. According to the book, when is the right moment to feel *mettā* (loving-kindness) and *karuṇā* (compassion) for a person who does a harmful deed?
    - (a) only after he has been punished
    - (b) at the moment he does the deed, because that deed is the cause of his future suffering
    - (c) never, because he deserves what he gets
    - (d) only if he says sorry
6. When people see someone kill a snake, what do they think they feel, and what does the book say is really there?
7. What is the thousand goods on the doorstep, and what are the two kinds of people?
8. Why did Lomahaṃsa decide not to become a monk?
    - (a) because he was too poor
    - (b) because a monk receives honour and gifts, and he did not want honour or gain
    - (c) because he did not believe the teaching
    - (d) because his parents forbade it
9. What did Lomahaṃsa use as a pillow, and what did the Buddha say about his mind at that time?
10. True or false: the book says that when something is seen and there is no reaction at all, that is always *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) and always good.
11. What is the defilement of the perfection of *sīla* (good conduct), according to the commentary? Give one of the two examples in the book.

The defilements of the perfections

The book ends with a short chapter on what makes each perfection imperfect. The commentary calls this the *kilesa* (defilement) of the perfections. The rule is simple: “When attachment arises, when we have enjoyment and clinging, the ten perfections are defiled.” What makes each one imperfect is a thought that picks and chooses where there should be no picking and choosing.

Perfection	What makes it imperfect
dāna (giving)	picking and choosing over gifts and over who receives them
sīla (good conduct)	picking and choosing over which people and which days the rules are kept for
nekkhamma (letting go)	delighting in sense pleasures and in being born again
paññā (wisdom)	thoughts of “I” and “mine”, even the thought “my wisdom”
viriya (energy)	leaning towards laziness or towards restlessness
khanti (patience)	thoughts of oneself and of others
sacca (truthfulness)	claiming to have seen what was not seen
adhiṭṭhāna (determination)	seeing faults in the things that lead to enlightenment, and good in their opposites
mettā (loving-kindness)	confusing what is harmful with what is helpful
upekkhā (even-mindedness)	picking and choosing between the pleasant and the unpleasant

The book gives two examples for *sīla* (good conduct). Some people keep the rules of respect towards particular persons, such as their parents, but not towards other people. Some keep the rules only on the *Uposatha* (observance) day, the full-moon and new-moon days, and think they are perfect in conduct, although on the other days they do not keep them. And for *upekkhā* (even-mindedness) she notes that a person may be even-minded about the unpleasant but not about the pleasant.

The last words of the book are these. The more the *Dhamma* (the teaching) is understood, the more a person will want to practise it. The perfections may have seemed beyond reach. But if the benefit of each one is seen, and they are developed little by little, they will in the end be accomplished. Listening to the Dhamma and studying it is of the greatest benefit, because it makes it possible to apply the Dhamma in daily life, and to develop *satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness of realities) together with all ten perfections.

Word list

Every Pali word in this book, with the English used for it. The words are in the order of the English alphabet, ignoring the marks on the letters.

Pali	English
abhaya dāna	giving freedom from fear
Abhidhamma	the higher teaching
adhiṭṭhāna	determination
adhiṭṭhāna dhamma	foundations
adhivāsanā khanti	patience with one's surroundings
adosa	non-hate
akusala	bad
akusala citta	bad consciousness
akusala kamma	bad deed
āmisa dāna	giving things
anāgāmī	non-returner, the third stage of enlightenment
anattā	non-self
anumodana	rejoicing in another's good deed
arahant	fully enlightened
ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga	the noble eightfold path
Atthasālinī	The Expositor, an ancient commentary
avijjā	ignorance
Bodhisatta	the Buddha-to-be
brahma	highest heavenly
brahmavihāra	divine abidings
cāga	giving up
cāritta sīla	conduct as doing
Cariyāpiṭaka	Basket of Conduct
cetanā	intention
cetasika	mental factors
citta	consciousness
Cūḷaniddesa	a book of the Tipiṭaka
dāna	giving

Pali	English
deva	heavenly being
devaputta	son of a heavenly being
Dhamma	the teaching
dhamma dāna	giving the teaching
dosa	anger
dukkha	suffering
evaṃ me sutaṃ	thus have I heard
hiri	shame
Jātaka	birth stories
jhāna	deep calm of mind
kāma vitakka	thinking about sense pleasures
kamma	deeds and their results
karuṇā	compassion
kassapamandiya jātaka	birth story number 312
khaṇika maraṇa	momentary death
khanti	patience
kilesa	defilements
kusala	good
kusala citta	good consciousness
lobha	attachment
mahā-dāna	a great offering of gifts
mettā	loving-kindness
moha	ignorance
muditā	sympathetic joy
Mūgapakkha Jātaka	birth story number 538
nāma	mind
nekkhamma	letting go
nekkhamma vitakka	thinking of letting go
nibbāna	the end of all troubles
ottappa	fear of blame
ovāda-pāṭimokkha	the exhortation that sums up the teaching

Pali	English
Paccekabuddha	a silent Buddha, who finds the truth alone but does not teach it
pañca sīla	five precepts
paññā	wisdom
pāramī	perfections
rūpa	matter
sacca	truthfulness
saccakiriyā	an assertion of truth
sakkāya-diṭṭhi	personality belief, the wrong view that there is a self
samādhi	a steady mind
sammā-ppadhāna	right efforts
sammā-vāyāma	right effort
Sammāsambuddha	a fully enlightened Buddha
sammuti maraṇa	conventional death
samuccheda maraṇa	final death
Saṃvara Jātaka	birth story number 462
saṃvega	urgency
Saṅgha	the enlightened disciples
sati	mindfulness
satipaṭṭhāna	mindfulness of realities
sīla	good conduct
sobhana cetasika	beautiful mental factors
sotāpanna	stream-enterer
tapa	burning away
Tipiṭaka	the Three Baskets
Tiratana	the Triple Gem: the Buddha, his teaching and his enlightened disciples
upasama	calm
upekkhā	even-mindedness
Uposatha	observance
vāritta sīla	conduct as avoiding
vihiṃsā vitakka	thinking about hurting
vipassanā	insight

Pali	English
vīra	a hero
viriya	energy
vyāpāda vitakka	thinking with hate
yakkha	a spirit

Hard words

Every hard English word in this book has a small number after it the first time it is met in a chapter, and its meaning is given at the end of that chapter. Here are all of them together, in alphabetical order.

- **abuse**: to treat or speak to someone cruelly and rudely
- **accumulate**: to gather up bit by bit, so that there is more and more of it
- **aeon**: a huge stretch of time, far longer than anyone can count
- **agony**: very great pain
- **arise**: to come up; to begin; to happen
- **ascetic**: a person who gives up home and comfort to live simply and seek the truth; or that hard way of living
- **aspire**: to want very much to reach something high
- **attachment**: wanting something and holding on to it; liking that will not let go
- **aversion**: not liking something and wanting it to go away; anger, even a little
- **awareness**: noticing what is really there right now; another word for mindfulness
- **being**: any living creature: a person, an animal, a heavenly being
- **benefactor**: a person who gives help or money
- **brahmin**: a man of the priestly class in ancient India
- **cemetery**: a place where the dead are buried or left
- **censure**: blame; telling someone off
- **cessation**: stopping; coming to an end
- **chariot**: a cart with two wheels pulled by horses, used in old times for war and travel
- **charioteer**: the driver of a chariot
- **clinging**: holding on tightly; not wanting to let go
- **coarse**: rough; not fine
- **commentary**: an old explanation of a text, written to make it clear
- **compassion**: wanting to help someone who is suffering
- **conceit**: thinking oneself better than others, or worse, or just as good; pride that compares
- **conch**: a big sea shell that is blown like a trumpet
- **condition**: something that has to be there before another thing can happen
- **consciousness**: a moment of mind that knows something, such as seeing or hearing
- **conventional**: the ordinary everyday way of talking, as when a pile of parts is called a chariot
- **corpse**: a dead body
- **council**: a big meeting of the elder monks to settle something
- **counsellor**: a person who gives advice to a king
- **courtier**: a person who serves at a king’s court
- **deceive**: to fool someone; to make them believe what is not true
- **deed**: something done; an act, good or bad
- **defilement**: something that makes the mind dirty: wanting, anger, not knowing and the rest

- **delusion**: being fooled; not seeing things as they are
- **derisive**: laughing at someone unkindly
- **destitute**: having nothing at all; very poor
- **determination**: making up one's mind firmly and keeping to it
- **disciple**: a pupil; someone who follows a teacher
- **discourse**: a talk or sermon; here, one of the Buddha's talks written down
- **dishonour**: loss of respect; shame
- **earthenware**: made of baked clay
- **element**: one of the basic parts that everything is made of
- **endure**: to bear something hard without giving up
- **energy**: effort; the strength that keeps on going
- **enlightenment**: the moment when the truth is seen fully and for good, and the dirt of the mind is cut away
- **envy**: being unhappy because someone else has something good
- **equanimity**: an even, calm mind that is not shaken by good luck or bad
- **even-mindedness**: having a mind that stays level and calm whatever happens
- **exhortation**: an urging; earnest advice
- **fall away**: to end; to stop; to be gone
- **fortune-teller**: a person who claims to tell the future
- **generosity**: giving freely and gladly
- **gravely**: seriously
- **grief**: deep sadness, as when someone dies
- **grudged**: to give unwillingly
- **hermit**: a person who lives alone, away from other people
- **ignorance**: not knowing; not understanding what is really there
- **ill will**: wishing someone harm
- **immeasurable**: too big to measure
- **impartial**: fair to all sides; not taking sides
- **impermanent**: not lasting; passing away
- **inclination**: a leaning towards something; what one tends to do
- **indifferent**: neither pleasant nor unpleasant; in the middle
- **infatuated**: foolishly carried away by liking something
- **insight**: seeing into something; here, seeing clearly for oneself that there is only mind and matter
- **intention**: what the mind means to do; the mind's choosing
- **kindliness**: kindness
- **lay**: an ordinary person who follows the teaching while living at home
- **lotus**: a water flower that grows up from the mud and opens clean above the water
- **loving-kindness**: wishing others well; friendliness to everyone

- **lust**: strong wanting, especially for pleasure
- **matter**: the kind of reality that does not know or feel anything, such as hardness, colour or sound
- **meditation**: developing the mind; people use this word in many different ways
- **mental**: to do with the mind
- **mental factor**: something that goes along with each moment of mind and does its own small job, such as feeling or remembering
- **merit**: goodness earned by a good deed, which brings a good result later
- **middling**: in the middle; neither good nor bad
- **mindfulness**: noticing what is really there right now, without forgetting
- **misdeed**: a wrong act
- **molasses**: thick dark syrup made from sugar
- **momentary**: lasting only a moment
- **monk**: a man who has left home to follow the Buddha's rule of life
- **neutral**: neither one thing nor the other; in the middle
- **non-self**: not a self; not a person; not anyone's
- **novice**: a boy or young man who has begun training to be a monk
- **object**: the thing that a moment of mind knows: a colour, a sound, a thought
- **observance**: keeping a rule or custom
- **ordained**: made a monk
- **perfection**: a good quality made as full and strong as it can be
- **precept**: a rule of good conduct
- **prospered**: to do well; to grow rich
- **purify**: to make clean; cleanness
- **reality**: something that is really there, not only a name or an idea
- **rebirth**: being born again in a new life after this one ends
- **recite**: to say a text aloud from memory
- **recklessness**: doing things without care for what may happen
- **recluse**: a person who lives apart from the world to seek the truth
- **reign**: the time during which a king rules
- **rejoice**: to be glad
- **repulsion**: strong dislike; being pushed away
- **resentment**: a sore, angry feeling about being treated badly
- **result**: what comes later from a deed done before, as fruit comes from a seed
- **rumour**: a story passed from person to person that may not be true
- **sage**: a wise person
- **seer**: a wise person who sees the truth
- **sensual**: to do with the pleasures of the senses: nice sights, sounds, tastes and so on
- **stinginess**: not wanting to give or share; meanness

- **strenuous**: needing great effort
- **studiously**: carefully, like a hard-working student
- **suffering**: pain and trouble; anything that cannot give lasting happiness
- **sympathetic joy**: being glad when someone else is happy or does well
- **sympathize**: to feel for someone; to share their feelings
- **tolerant**: putting up with things and people one does not like
- **torment**: to cause great pain to
- **transgressed**: to break a rule; to do wrong
- **truthfulness**: always telling the truth and keeping to it
- **ultimate**: the deepest and most real; what is really there when all the names are taken away
- **unimpeded**: not held back by anything
- **universal**: found in every one; here, mental factors that come with every moment of mind
- **unshakeable**: cannot be shaken or moved
- **untempered**: not softened
- **urgency**: the feeling that something must be done now, without delay
- **wrong view**: a wrong idea about what is real, such as the idea that there is a lasting self
- **wrong-doer**: a person who does wrong

Where the stories come from

This book follows *The Perfections Leading to Enlightenment* by Sujin Boriharnwanaket, translated from the Thai by Nina van Gorkom (Zolag, London, 2007). The whole book can be read free of charge on abhidhamma.org, as a PDF or as an interactive book with questions. The ten chapters here keep to her order, her stories and, as far as a book for young readers allows, her words.

Her book draws on these ancient texts:

- The *Cariyāpiṭaka* (Basket of Conduct), a book of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* (the Minor Collection) in the *Tipiṭaka* (the Three Baskets), and its commentary, the *Paramatthadīpanī*, written by Dhammapāla. The definitions of the ten perfections (what each one is, what it does, how it shows itself and what it needs) come from this commentary, in the translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The All-Embracing Net of Views* (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy).
- The *Jātaka* (birth stories) and their commentary. The stories retold here are, by number: Akitti (480), Sona Nanda (532), Susīma (411), Yudañjaya (460), Dasaṇṇaka (401), Saṃvara (462) and Mūgapakkha, the story of Temiya (538), with others named in their chapters.
- The *Ghaṭīkāra Sutta* (Middle Length Sayings 81) and its commentary, for Jotipāla.
- The *Mahāniddesa* and *Cūḷaniddesa* (ancient commentaries in the Khuddaka Nikāya), for Piṅgiya, Jatukaṇṇi, the two cities and the hero.
- The *Atthasālinī* (The Expositor), the commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the first book of the Abhidhamma, for the pictures of energy and of shame and fear of blame.
- The *Vibhaṅga* (Book of Analysis) and its commentary, the *Sammohavinodanī* (Dispeller of Delusion).
- The *Anumāna Sutta* (Middle Length Sayings 15), the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (Gradual Sayings) and the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Kindred Sayings), for the suttas quoted.

Where this book quotes a sentence in quotation marks, the words are those of Sujin's book or of the translation it uses. Everything else is retold in plainer English for readers of about ten years old. Where the ancient texts and modern scholars differ, this book follows the ancient texts.

Answers

Quiz 1 (chapters 1 and 2)

1. (b) a quality that crosses over to the further shore, the eradication of defilements. The perfections are conditions to cross over to the further shore, namely the eradication of defilements.
2. (b) *lobha* (attachment). The ten perfections have *lobha* (attachment) as their opposite, so they are developed without expecting a result.
3. (b) freedom from fear, freedom from hostility and freedom from oppression. This is *abhaya dāna* (the giving of freedom from fear). The same is said of giving up stealing, wrong conduct, wrong speech and intoxicants.
4. (c) weapons, poisons and intoxicants. He does not give things that lead to affliction for others. The other three he does give.
5. He reflects that it is the nature of material possessions to be subject to loss and passing away, and that his possessions are depleted because he did not give in the past. Then he gives whatever he has, limited or abundant. This destroys the fourth shackle to giving.
6. "… eradicate defilements." Giving is a perfection only when nothing is expected in return, not even rebirth in a heavenly plane.
7. Sakka came in the guise of a brahmin. Akitti gave him all his sodden Kāra leaves, on three consecutive days.
8. He said he might transgress his vow of asceticism when he saw the appearance of *devas* (heavenly beings), who are full of glory and delightful to the senses.
9. *Hiri* (shame) has respect for oneself as its cause. *Ottappa* (fear of blame) has respect for someone else as its cause. They always arise together.
10. False. The book says the streamwinner observes the five precepts perfectly and cannot transgress them any more.
11. To a brightly shining fire that came into contact with water and was extinguished, so that only black charcoal was left.

Quiz 2 (chapters 3 and 4)

1. (b) not wishing to buy more clothing that only beautifies the body, because what one has is more than sufficient. The book says of the clothing: "we may consider what we have as more than sufficient. In that case we have renunciation in daily life." Of the extra morsel: "This shows that he does not have renunciation." Of the warm bath: "we may be attached to the temperature of the water."
2. *Kāma vitakka* (thinking about sense pleasures), *vyāpāda vitakka* (thinking with hate) and *vihiṃsā vitakka* (thinking about hurting).
3. Nanda kept serving fruit gathered the day before, some of it spoilt or unripe, which would shorten the old parents' lives. He would not wait for Sona, because he wanted the merit of feeding them for himself.
4. He brought King Manoja of Brahmavaddhana. He had first thought of bringing Sakka, the king of the *devas* (heavenly beings), but decided that was not fitting.
5. It lets him turn over, so his body gets a little comfort. It gives his mind no ease at all.

6. He taught the *Dhamma* (the Buddha's teaching), showing the delight and the misery of sense pleasures, handed the kingdom back to the viceroy, and went to the forest as an ascetic.
7. Dewdrops on the trees, grass tips and spiders' webs, vanishing as the sun rose. He compared them to all conditioned things, including the lives of all beings.
8. An arrow shot by a skilled archer (sure penetration), a lamp (it lights things up), and a good guide in a forest (no confusion).
9. *Sammuti maraṇa* (conventional death), *samuccheda maraṇa* (final death, of the *arahant*) and *khaṇika maraṇa* (momentary death). The last one: each moment of *citta* (consciousness) arises and dies.
10. 1. saying "I shall give this away" (Āyura); 2. really giving the thing away (Pukkusa); 3. giving and never regretting it afterwards (Senaka). Saying is easiest, giving is harder, and giving without regret is hardest of all. That last answer cured the king.
11. False. He asked only for the teaching that makes an end of birth and old age.

Quiz 3 (chapters 5 and 6)

1. (b) effort or endeavour for *kusala* (good). *Viriya* (energy) arises with good and bad *citta* (consciousness) alike. Only effort for *kusala* (good) can become a perfection.
2. True. The book says that in a lazy person *viriya* (energy) applies itself to laziness again and again.
3. An old house is strengthened by new pillars: energy supports a person so that good states do not decline. A small army is reinforced by the king and wins: energy does not let the states arising with it retreat. An ox pulling a load out of a marsh presses its knees to the ground and does not drop the load: energy takes up the burden of doing good and does not drop it.
4. (b) *sakkāya-diṭṭhi* (personality belief, the wrong view that there is a self). The city of bandits is personality belief, the city of peace is *nibbāna* (the end of all troubles), and the general is the person who develops the mind.
5. He had perseverance; he was valiant; he caused others to persevere; he had great capacities; he was brave and always progressing, not a coward, not frightened; he did not flee.
6. To avoid *akusala* (bad states) not yet arisen; to overcome *akusala* (bad states) that have arisen; to develop *kusala* (good states) not yet arisen; to keep and complete *kusala* (good states) that have arisen.
7. (b) three times a day, or twice, or at least once; never not at all. Morning, daytime and evening; if not three times then twice; if not twice then once. Not to examine oneself at all is improper.
8. He left at nine in the morning and arrived at two in the afternoon, with no time for lunch. He went to the Dhamma Study and Support Foundation to make a donation, after hearing a radio programme about *vipassanā* (insight).
9. The youngest of a hundred sons of the King of Vārāṇasī. He never grudged honour to the great sages but fell at their feet with a humble mind; he liked to listen to the wise and had no envy; he did not cut his soldiers' pay; he protected the merchants so that the city prospered.
10. False. There is only mental energy. Even walking up and down to stay awake happens because of *viriya* (energy), a *cetasika* (mental factor).
11. (b) both the unpleasant and the pleasant, so that *lobha* (attachment) does not arise. Patience is to be developed not merely towards an undesirable object, but also towards a desirable object.

12. *Akusala citta* (bad consciousness) has probably already arisen. Patience with one's living conditions, the weather and the place is *adhivāsanā khanti* (patience with one's surroundings).
13. The unimpeded weapon of the good; the adornment of those who vanquish the foe; a stream of water extinguishing the fire of anger; a mantra against the poisonous speech of evil people; an ocean in its depth; a panel closing the door to the plane of misery; a staircase to the worlds of the gods and Brahmas.
14. (b) to kill the monkey; he did not give in to anger and spared it. He wanted to keep his *sīla* (good conduct) pure, and he aspired to become a Buddha.
15. He said that iron beats gold and gold never beats iron, so if Wrong won against Right that day, iron would be as beautiful as gold. Dhamma gave him the way, and the earth opened and swallowed Adhamma. Adhamma was Devadatta.
16. A sheet of gold engraved with the qualities of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, the ten perfections and mindfulness of breathing, packed in box within box. Pukkusāti read it with such joy that he reached *jhāna* (deep calm of mind); after a month he cut off his hair, put on yellow robes, took a bowl and walked out of his palace to find the Buddha.
17. (b) he had never seen the Buddha, and the Buddha hid his glory and came as an ordinary monk. The Buddha hid his glory like the full moon behind a cloud. Pukkusāti recognised him only while listening to the teaching, and then asked forgiveness for the word "friend".
18. "*Khantī paramaṃ tapo titikkhā*": patience, endurance, is the highest austerity.
19. The old monk, the father. In the past life the Bodhisatta told him that young boys are like earthen vessels, broken in a moment and impossible to mend, so old men should bear with them patiently.

Quiz 4 (chapters 7 and 8)

1. (b) because when a person speaks a great deal, some deceptive words may be mixed in, like hard uncooked beans among the cooked ones. Some beans cook and some stay hard. Or it may be that everything a person says is true, from the first word to the last.
2. Some *devas* (heavenly beings) thought he must have become a Buddha himself. He would not accept praise for a quality he did not have, so by those words he showed that he was only a disciple, repeating what he had heard from the Buddha.
3. (b) truth and dhamma, he is pure and he's a brāhmin. Water does not destroy the roots of evil, so water cannot wash evil away. Truth and the Dhamma make a person pure.
4. He thought that if he denied it the king would believe him, but that in this world there is no surer foundation than truthful speech, and that one who forsakes the truth cannot attain Buddhahood. So he answered that the rumours were true: infatuated by the objects of delusion, he had done wrong.
5. (b) a withered leaf. Nobody is as steady as Mount Sineru; people are withered leaves, and the wind is *lobha* (attachment), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (ignorance).
6. That for only seven days he had lived the holy life gladly, and for more than fifty years unwillingly. By that truth the poison was destroyed: the boy shook himself, stood up and was well.
7. He heard his father the king pass terrible sentences on four robbers, and he was afraid of doing such deeds himself and being reborn in hell. The next day he remembered his past lives, including a life in the Ussada hell.

8. (c) sixteen years. The nurses tested him in great ways and small from the day he was a month old until he was sixteen.
9. She asked that the kingdom be given to her son. The king refused, so she asked for seven years, then six down to one, then seven months down to one, then half a month, then seven days. The king agreed to seven days.
10. He stepped down, walked up and down, and lifted the chariot by its back as if it were a toy cart. He told the charioteer that a person resting in the shade of a tree does not break its branches: the king was the tree, the prince the branch, and the charioteer the traveller in its shade.
11. 1. *sacca* (truthfulness); 2. *cāga* (relinquishment); 3. *upasama* (calm); 4. *paññā* (wisdom). Truthfulness, relinquishment, calm and wisdom. Without the four, the book says, the far shore cannot be reached.
12. False. Desiring the end of rebirth is not the same as being steadfast in one's determination to develop *paññā* (wisdom).

Quiz 5 (chapters 9 and 10)

1. (b) *adosa* (non-hate). *Mettā* (loving-kindness) is *adosa* (non-hate), the reality that is freedom from anger.
2. If there is true *mettā* (loving-kindness), a kind deed for a stranger is exactly the same as a kind deed for someone close. When kindness is limited to some people, the *citta* (consciousness) should be examined to see whether it is *kusala* (good) or *akusala* (bad).
3. She did not take him to court, because she did not want to cause unhappiness to anyone, and she said she would pay for the young man's education.
4. 1. *mettā* (loving-kindness): a small child; 2. *karuṇā* (compassion): a sick child; 3. *muditā* (sympathetic joy): a child growing up well; 4. *upekkhā* (equanimity): a child who manages his own affairs. Loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, each a support for the next.
5. (b) at the moment he does the deed, because that deed is the cause of his future suffering. "If one sympathizes with him when he receives an undesirable result, one sympathizes too late."
6. They believe they feel compassion for the snake, but in reality they are disturbed by aversion towards the person who kills it. A disturbed *citta* (consciousness) is *akusala* (bad).
7. The Buddha's teaching, laid down like a thousand goods on the doorstep of every house. Some people open the door and take them in; others never open the door.
8. (b) because a monk receives honour and gifts, and he did not want honour or gain. He lived as a layman with just enough, and the commentary says he was a monk at heart.
9. The skeleton of a corpse, in the cemetery. He said he had even-mindedness towards what is clean and what is dirty, towards happiness and misery, honour and dishonour, and towards the children who tormented him and the wise people who honoured him alike.
10. False. That may be indifference "based on the home life", which is *moha* (ignorance), the near enemy of equanimity.
11. Picking and choosing over which people and which days the rules are kept for: keeping the rules of respect only towards one's parents, or only on the *Uposatha* (observance) day and not on other days.