

# THE SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING

Satta Sambojjhanga



**1. Mindfulness (Sati)**

**2. Investigation of Dhammas  
(Dhamma Vicaya)**

**3. Energy (Viriya)**

**4. Joy (Piti)**

**5. Tranquility (Passaddhi)**

**6. Concentration (Samadhi)**

**7. Equanimity (Upekkha)**

# THE PROGRESSION IS A NATURAL AND SYSTEMATIC UNFOLDING:

- 1. Mindfulness** is the starting point, creating a stable and attentive awareness.
- 2. Investigation of Dhamma** arises from mindfulness, leading to insight and understanding.
- 3. Energy** is generated from the interest and insights gained through investigation.
- 4. Joy** arises as a result of sustained practice and the insights gained.
- 5. Tranquility** follows as joy becomes more refined and leads to inner peace.
- 6. Concentration** develops from the calm and stable foundation of tranquility.
- 7. Equanimity** is the final factor, representing a balanced and undisturbed state of mind.

Each factor supports and enhances the others, creating a harmonious and comprehensive path to enlightenment.

In the Samyutta Nikaya among the "connected sayings on causality" (*Nidanasamyutta*) is a short formalized text entitled the *Upanisa Sutta*, the "Discourse on Supporting Conditions."

"The knowledge and vision of things as they really are, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for the knowledge and vision of things as they really are? 'Concentration' should be the reply.

"Concentration, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for concentration? 'Happiness' should be the reply.

"Happiness, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for happiness? 'Tranquillity' should be the reply.

"Tranquillity, monks, also has a supporting condition, I say, it does not lack a supporting condition. And what is the supporting condition for tranquillity? 'Rapture' should be the reply.

# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- Tranquility (Calm) - Factor of Awakening
- Translated as serenity, calm, tranquility, composure.
- Soothes and quiets disturbances.
- Manifests as peacefulness or coolness in mind and body.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- Cool Shade on a Hot Day:
  - Feeling of ease like sitting under a cool tree on a sweltering day.
- Soothing a Feverish Child:
  - Calming effect similar to a mother soothing a child.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- It's tempting to overlook the importance of calm in developing concentration



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- Awakening Factor of Calm
- Cooling the Desiring Mind:
  - Tranquility has the power to abandon desire.
  - Developed tranquility leads to happiness.
  - Happiness naturally leads to concentration.
- Sequence of Development:
  - Calm -> Happiness -> Concentration.





# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - CULTIVATE

- Observing Calm:
  - Recognize when calm is present.
  - Notice freedom from desire, restlessness, and agitation.
- Greater familiarity leads to greater access.
- Subtle Happiness:
  - Calm brings happiness.
  - More refined and peaceful than energetic rapture.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - PRACTICE

The four-step breath meditation practice referred to is outlined in the Satipatthana Sutta by the Buddha

1. Breathing in, knowing "I am breathing in"; breathing out, knowing "I am breathing out"
2. Breathing in long, knowing "I am breathing in long"; breathing out short, knowing "I am breathing out short"
3. Training to breathe in experiencing the whole body; training to breathe out experiencing the whole body
4. Training to breathe in calming the bodily formations; training to breathe out calming the bodily formations



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - PRACTICE

- Practicing Tranquility Beyond Sitting
- In Movement:
  - Practice tranquility while moving about.
  - Opposite of tranquility: Agitation, rushing (energetic toppling forward).
- Mind Ahead of Self:
  - Rushing can occur regardless of speed.
  - Anticipation creates energetic excitability, hindering ease and composure.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - PRACTICE

- Cultivating Calmness through Simple Awareness
- Simplicity in Actions
- Phrase for Practice:
  - "When walking, just walk."
  - Reminds to be aware of movement without wanting to achieve something or get somewhere.
- Letting Go:
  - Release efforting and striving.
  - Settle back into the moment.
  - Feel ease and greater calm.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - PRACTICE

- Extending Simplicity
- Other Activities:
  - "When eating, just eat."
  - "When showering, just shower."
  - "When seeing, just see."
- Mind's Complexity:
  - Mind complicates practice.
  - Reminder of simplicity connects with calm and tranquility.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) - PRACTICE

- Letting Go through Reminders
- Repeated Reminders:
  - Reminding to calm bodily formations.
  - Leads to letting go and settling back.
  - Creates a tranquil state free of wanting.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI) – AWAKENING FACTOR

- Conditioning Factor for Concentration
- Calm as a Conditioning Force:
  - Essential for concentration to arise easily.
- Common Mistake:
  - Emphasis on developing concentration (Samadhi) through effort.
  - Striving and effort can hinder concentration by cultivating desire.



# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- **Struggle with Concentration:**
  - Strong effort to concentrate can foster desire.
  - Effort to concentrate may unknowingly cultivate wanting, hindering true concentration.
- **Hindrance of Desire:**
  - Desiring mind obstructs concentration.
  - Effortful concentration leads to struggle.





# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

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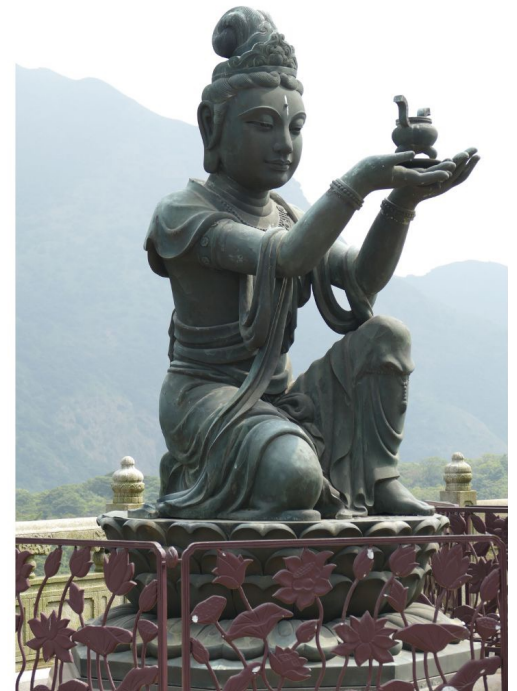
# TRANQUILITY (PASSADDHI)

- Dialogue between Ananda and the Buddha
- Sequence of Rewards and Blessings:
  - Reward of rapture: Tranquility.
  - Reward of tranquility: Happiness.
  - Reward of happiness: Concentration.
  - Continues to enlightenment.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

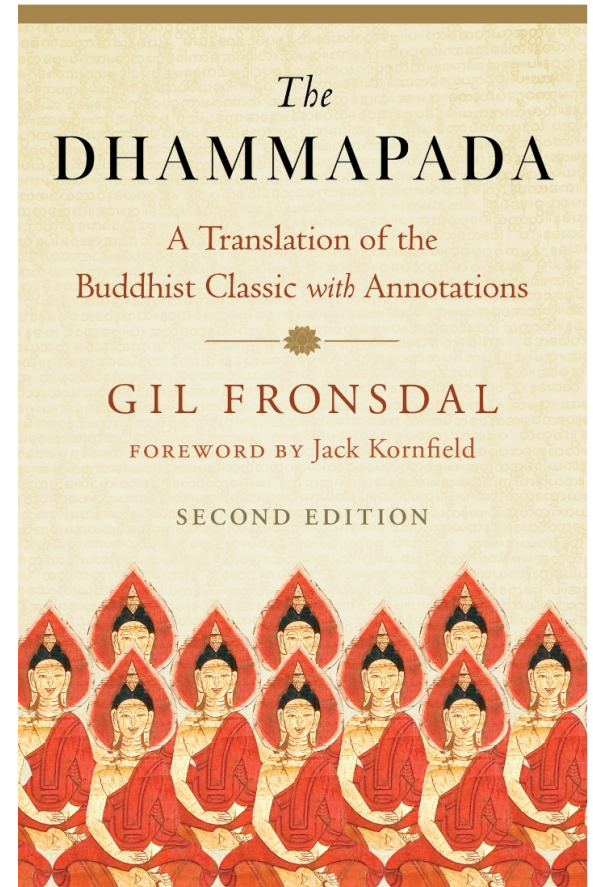
- Definition of Samadhi:
- Understanding the Two Meanings of Samadhi:
  - Specific Meaning: Particular factor of one-pointedness.
  - General Meaning: Meditative states of concentration on various levels.



# THE BUDDHA'S WORDS: DHAMMAPADA – TL – GIL FRONSDAL – III

The restless, agitated mind,  
Hard to protect, hard to control,  
The sage makes straight,  
As a fletcher the shaft of an arrow.

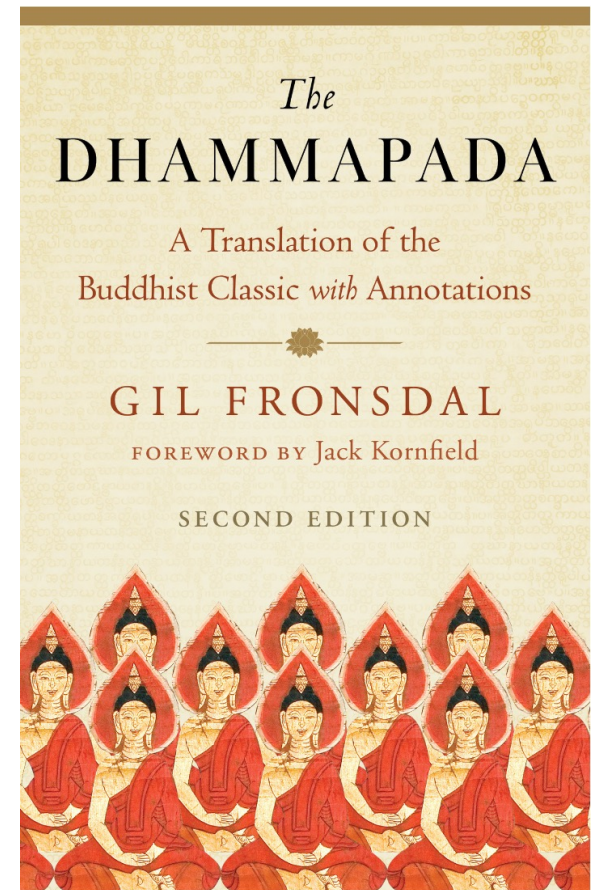
Like a fish out of water,  
Thrown on dry ground,  
This mind thrashes about,  
Trying to escape Mara's command.



# THE BUDDHA'S WORDS: DHAMMAPADA – TL – GIL FRONSDAL – III

The mind, hard to control,  
Flighty-alighting where it wishes—  
One does well to tame.  
the disciplined mind brings happiness.

The mind, hard to see,  
Subtle-alighting where it wishes—  
The sage protects.  
The watched mind brings happiness.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

Experiencing One-Pointedness:

- Strong one-pointedness leads to non-distractedness.
- Mind becomes unwavering, like a candle flame burning in a windless place.
- Results in a quality of peace in both life and practice.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- Samadhi in Buddhist Psychology:
- In the Abhidharma, one-pointedness is considered a common factor.
- Arises to some degree in every moment of consciousness.
- Always present to some degree, enabling connection with arising objects.
- Without one-pointedness, there would be no basis for connecting with or knowing anything, as the mind wouldn't land on any object.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- The mind has the capacity to be trained.
- It has the capacity to develop and strengthen this factor of concentration through skillful practice.





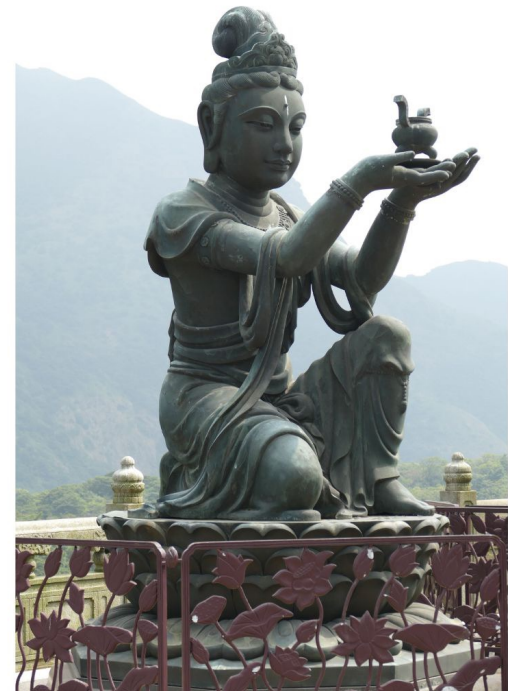
# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – FIXED OBJECT

- Two Types of Concentration:
  - Fixed Object Concentration:
    - Training the mind to stay steady on a single object.
    - 40 traditional subjects or objects of concentration.
    - Examples include:
      - Breath: Focusing on breathing.
      - Brahma Viharas: Loving-kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity.
      - Kasinas: Disks (usually colored) representing elements like Earth or water.
      - 32 Parts of the Body: Concentration practices on different body parts.
      - Stages of Decaying Corpses: Practices reflecting on various stages of decay.
      - Contemplative Meditations: Reflecting on the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, generosity, morality, peace.
- Development of One-Pointedness:
  - Achieved by focusing on any of these subjects.
  - Leads to different levels of meditative absorption.



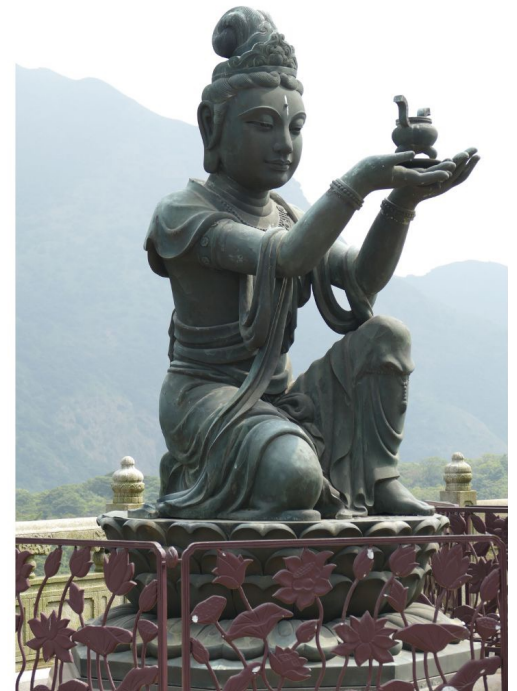
# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – MOMENTARY CONCENTRATION

- **Second Type of Concentration: Momentary Concentration:**
  - Strongly developed factor of one-pointedness.
  - Arises continuously, moment after moment.
  - Focuses on changing objects, not a single object.
- **Characteristics of Momentary Concentration:**
  - Mind stays steady and one-pointed on whatever arises in each moment.
  - Continuity of mindfulness is key to developing this concentration.
  - Leads to very steady and stable momentary Samadhi.
  - Increases in strength, creating a natural and easeful momentum in practice.
- **Effects of Momentary Concentration:**
  - Prevents the mind from wavering or being distracted.
  - Forms the basis for different kinds and levels of Vipassana insights.
- **Two ways to develop Mental factor of one-pointedness.**
  - Developed through fixed object concentration or momentary concentration on changing objects.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

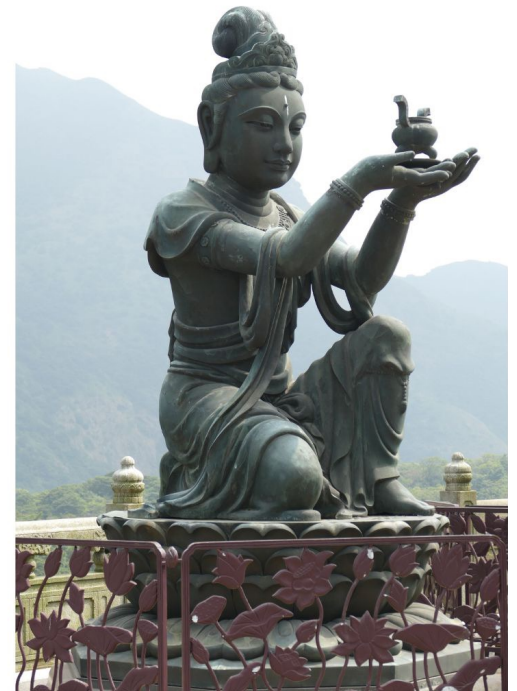
- **Second Meaning of Samadhi:**
  - Refers to the whole range of meditative states.
  - Not limited to just the factor of one-pointedness.
  - Includes different levels of deepening concentration.
- **Inclusion of Various States of Mind:**
  - As concentration deepens, many different states of mind arise.
  - Samadhi in this sense includes all the factors of these states.
  - Factors can include:
    - Rapture
    - Joy
    - Calm
    - Tranquility
    - Many other meditative factors
- **Understanding the Two Meanings of Samadhi:**
  - Specific Meaning: Particular factor of one-pointedness.
  - General Meaning: Meditative states of concentration on various levels.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – TWO TYPES OF CONTEMPLATION

- Jhana and Concentration:
  - Used to describe different levels of Samadhi (concentration).
- Buddhaghosa's Definition:
  - Great Buddhist commentator, Buddhaghosa, described jhana.
  - Characterized by contemplation.
  - Two types of contemplation in jhana:
    - Single Object: Leads to absorption, often called jhana.
    - Characteristics of Phenomena: Leads to meditative insights (Vipassana jhanas).

Buddhaghosa was a 5th-century Theravada Buddhist scholar and commentator. He is best known for compiling and systematizing Buddhist teachings in his work, the **Visuddhimagga** (Path of Purification), which is a comprehensive manual on meditation and ethics. Buddhaghosa's contributions significantly shaped the Theravada tradition.



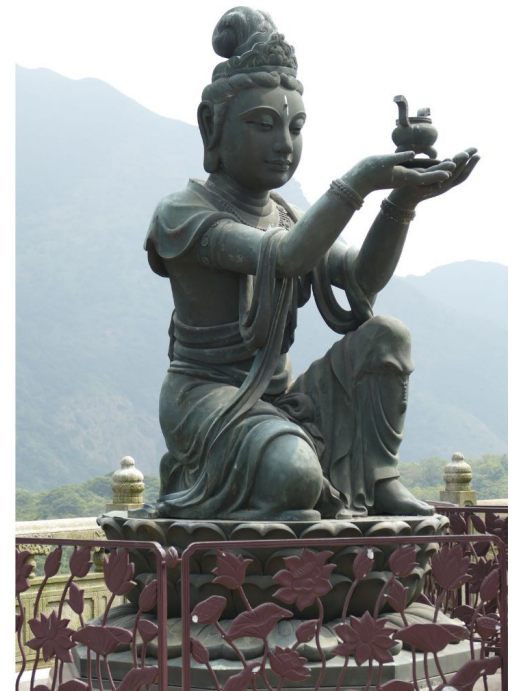
# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – JHANA DEBATE

- Growing Interest in Jhana Practice:
  - Increasing focus on jhana practice, especially absorption states.
  - Different teachers have varying views on jhana and absorption.
- Differing Views on Jhana:
  - Depth of Absorption:
    - Debate on the necessary depth for a state to be considered jhanic.
    - Some believe one loses all awareness of the body and physical senses.
    - Others maintain awareness of subtle bodily energies in jhanic states.
  - Role of Nimitta (Mental Sign):
    - Some teachers emphasize the arising of nimitta, which becomes the object of concentration.
    - Nimitta can be a mental sign or image.
  - Jhana Factors as Nimitta:
    - Other teachers consider factors like rapture or joy as nimitta.
    - Practice involves focusing on the feeling of rapture or joy.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) - AGREEMENT

- **Diverse Interpretations of Jhana:**
  - Different teachers, schools, and traditions have varying understandings of the Buddha's emphasis on jhana.
  - Despite differences, there is fundamental agreement on key aspects.
- **Fundamental Agreement on Concentration:**
  - Deepening states of concentration (Samadhi):
    - Unification of mind
    - Steadiness
    - Non-distractedness
  - These states are skillful and powerful in supporting the development of wisdom.
- **Exploring Different Practices:**
  - Encouragement to explore and learn from different teachers.
  - Experience the variety of practices and their effects.
  - Avoid attachment to a single opinion or view on jhana.
- **Unquestioned Importance of Deepening Concentration:**
  - The value of deepening concentration is universally acknowledged.
  - Important regardless of the specific practice or interpretation.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- Importance of Concentration:
  - Concentration (Samadhi) brings clarity and steadiness of mind.
  - Essential for seeing the impermanence of feelings, thoughts, and perceptions.
  - Prevents clinging and leads to non-agitation and ultimately nirvana.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – SWIM OR BOAT

- Insight Practices and Samadhi
- Forms of Concentration for Insight:
  - Momentary Concentration:
    - Like swimming across a lake.
    - Accessible and useful for continuous mindfulness.
  - Jhanic Absorption:
    - Like having a motorboat.
    - Quickens and enhances the journey.
    - Levels of accessibility vary among individuals.
- Personal Practice Considerations:
  - Recognize and leverage personal strengths in practice.
  - Balance between momentary concentration and jhanic absorption.
  - Avoid attachment to one method; both are valid paths.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- **Path of Dry Insight:**
  - Practiced by monks attaining liberation through wisdom alone.
  - Emphasizes the development of strong concentration without deep absorption states.
- **Rhythm in Practices:**
  - Alternating between absorption and momentary concentration.
  - Concentration is impermanent and fluctuates.
  - Continued practice strengthens the base of steadiness and ease.
- **Support for Practice:**
  - A strong base of concentration supports through ups and downs.
  - Ensures steadiness amidst the changing nature of practice.



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- Morality (sila) as the foundation for concentration, leading to non-remorse and happiness
- Commit to the precepts and non-harm
- Purify past reflections of harm
- Do not add to further agitations going forward with immoral action



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- Purifying the mind by recognizing and letting go of unwholesome and unnecessary thoughts



# CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) – PRACTICE

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## COMMENTARY: DZIGAR KONGTRUL RINPOCHE

"The potential for realization is universal and present for all of us. True benefit will come from your own efforts and realization. For your efforts to bring benefit, you must take your life into your own hands and examine your mind and experience. From this point of view, nobody could be kinder to you than yourself. Nobody could have a greater effect on you or actually do more for you than yourself. The Buddha said, "I have shown you the path of liberation. Now liberation depends on you." This is really true. If you don't take your life into your own hands, not even the buddhas can make a difference. It's up to you."

— Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche

# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity defined as a key enlightenment factor that supports liberation and is born from concentration



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Concentration leads to equanimity.
- Keeps mind secluded from hindrances.
- Natural place of equilibrium.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity brings balance and ease in facing life's changing conditions like gain/loss, praise/blame, fame/disrepute, pleasure/pain





# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Even the Buddha was criticized



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Qualities always present in wholesome consciousness.
- Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation: "There in the middleness."



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Evenness of mind.
- Manifests as unshakable balance.
- Prevents excess or deficiency in other awakening factors.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Neutrality does not mean indifference or disconnectedness.
- Equanimity brings peace and balance.
- Helps ride the waves of life's changes.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Mind remains unmoved like a solid rock.
- Or a tree staying rooted in a storm



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity helps remain unaffected by external projections.
- Fame and disrepute are just ideas in other people's minds.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Conditioned mind holds on to pleasant and avoids unpleasant.
- Equanimity helps transcend this conditioning.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity in Daily Life
- Practice of equanimity in the face of life's vicissitudes.





# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Cultivating equanimity in daily life by seeing all things as already changed/broken and acting without attachment to outcomes



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity in Brahma Viharas
- Loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity.
- Impartiality towards all beings.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity in Meditative Awareness
- Leads to deeper insight into impermanence, dukkha, and selflessness.
- Experience of phenomena as arising and passing away.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Phenomena seen as insubstantial, empty, and changing like a rainbow through equanimity
- The rainbow is there and not there, a momentary appearance, not solid



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Associate with balanced, wise people.
- Incline the mind towards equanimity.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- The Gift of Wisdom
- Equanimity as a gift of understanding.
- Happiness depends on one's actions.



# EQUANIMITY (UPEKKHA )

- Equanimity is a state of profound peace and balance embracing all experiences impartially
- Peace is the greatest happiness

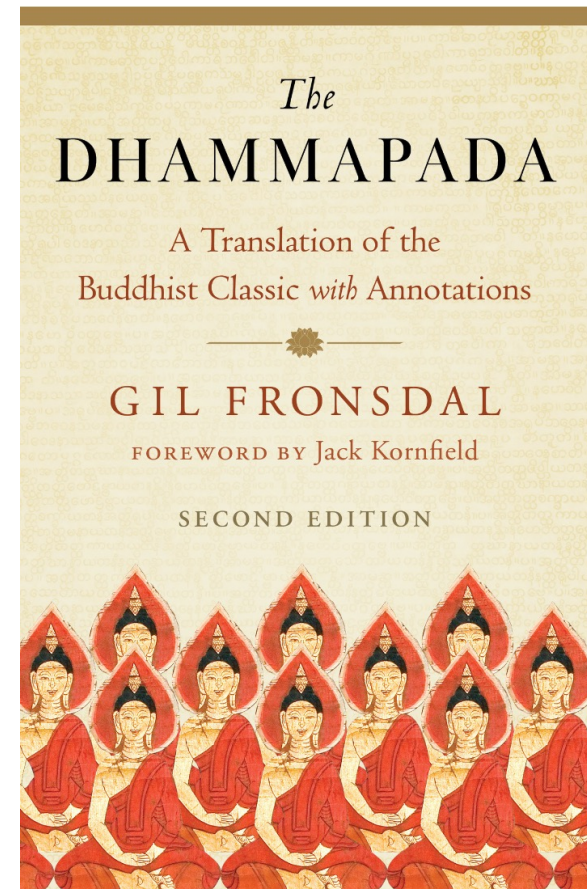


# THE BUDDHA'S WORDS: DHAMMAPADA – TRNS – GIL FRONSDAL – VI

One who drinks in the Dharma  
Sleeps happily with a clear mind.  
The sage always delights in the Dharma  
Taught by the noble ones.

Irrigators guide water;  
Fletchers shape arrows;  
Carpenters fashion wood;  
Sages tame themselves.

As a solid mass of rock  
Is not moved by the wind,  
So a sage is unmoved  
By praise or blame.





# THE BUDDHA'S WORDS: DHAMMAPADA – GIL FRONSDAL – IV

As a deep lake  
Is clear and undisturbed,  
So a sage becomes clear  
Upon hearing the Dharma.

Virtuous people always let go.  
They don't prattle about pleasures and desires.  
Touched by happiness and then by suffering,  
The sage shows no sign of being elated or depressed.

Those who cultivate the Factors of Awakening,  
Give up grasping,  
Enjoy non-clinging,  
And have destroyed the toxins,  
Are luminous,  
And completely liberated in this life.

