



## Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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## September 2024 Newsletter



### Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī)

The perfections (pāramīs) are a set of ten virtues that are cultivated in order to progress on the path to nibbāna, liberation from suffering (dukkha). An overview of the Ten Perfections are presented in the January 2024 Newsletter - The Perfection of Giving (dāna pāramī). The Ten Perfections (pāramīs) are:

1. Giving (dāna pāramī) discussed in the January 2024 Newsletter,
2. Virtue (sīla pāramī) discussed in the February 2024 Newsletter,
3. Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) discussed in the March 2024 Newsletter,
4. Wisdom (paññā pāramī) discussed in the April 2024 Newsletter,
5. Energy (vīriya pāramī) discussed in the May 2024 Newsletter,
6. Patience (khanti pāramī) discussed in the June 2024 Newsletter,
7. Truthfulness (saccā pāramī) discussed in the July 2024 Newsletter,
8. Determination (adhiṭṭhāna pāramī) discussed in the August 2024 Newsletter,
9. Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) will be discussed in the October 2024 Newsletter.

The Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is the cultivation of a boundless and unconditional friendliness, compassion, and goodwill towards all sentient beings, without discrimination or attachment. The mind has a compassionate and loving attitude, wishing happiness, well-being, and freedom from suffering for all sentient beings, including oneself, friends, enemies, strangers, and all life forms. The practice is to train the mind to be constant and continuous in radiating love and compassion, to have an understanding and feeling for the connection with all of life; actively expressing loving actions with kindness, gentleness, generosity, and helpfulness. The trained mind transcends selfishness and self-centeredness, breaks down defensive barriers established by the ego, and cultivates a heart full of love for the welfare of all beings.

The cultivation of loving-kindness requires a focused intention that develops the mental faculties of concentration (samādhi) and mindfulness (sati). The heightened awareness achieved by training the mind with loving-kindness contributes to a stable and balanced mind that is able to ward off ill will and hatred.

Ill will, malice and hostility is the meaning of the Pāli word vyāpāda. This is a mind that has a desire to cause harm to others and has an active wish to inflict suffering or see others suffer. Ill will arises or is born from hatred or aversion; is one of the Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) that obstruct progress in meditation (bhāvanā) and progress towards liberation from suffering, nibbāna; and is also listed as one of the Ten Fetters (saṃyojana) that bind beings to the cycle of rebirth (saṃsāra). The Five Hindrances are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter-Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā) and are listed as follows:

1. sensual desire (kāmacchanda),
2. ill will (vyāpāda),
3. sloth and torpor (thīna middha),
4. restlessness and remorse (uddhaccakukkucca), and
5. doubt (vicikicchā).

The Ten Fetters are discussed in the May 2023 Newsletter-Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering and are listed as follows:

1. sakkāya diṭṭhi: personality belief,
2. vicikicchā: doubt,
3. sīlabbata parāmāsa: clinging to rites and rituals,
4. kāma rāga: sensuous desire,
5. vyāpāda: ill will,
6. rūpa rāga: craving for existence in the Form World, fine material existence,
7. arūpa rāga: craving for existence in the Formless World, immaterial existence,
8. māna: conceit,
9. uddhacca: restlessness, and
10. avijjā: ignorance.

Hatred, aversion, and anger is the meaning of the Pāli word dosā. The mind consumed with hatred has aversion towards people, other sentient beings, objects, or situations; broader in scope than ill will and can include irritation, annoyance, and anger; and not necessarily involving a wish to harm. Hatred is one of the Three Unwholesome Roots (akusala mūla) which are the root causes for suffering (dukkha), unwholesome kamma, unethical behavior and the repeated cycle of rebirth (saṃsāra).

The Three Unwholesome Roots are discussed in the August 2023 Newsletter-kamma and are listed as follows:

1. delusion (moha) = ignorance (avijjā),
2. greed (lobha), and
3. hatred (dosa).

Ill will is more specific and intense than hatred, involving an active intention to cause harm. Hatred, on the other hand, is a broader term that includes a range of aversive feelings from mild irritation to intense hatred. Hatred is like the fertile ground where negative emotions can grow, while ill will is a specific weed that can sprout from that ground.

The loving and kind mind resists, counters and can eventually uproot both ill-will and hatred. When ill will is mentioned, hatred is also implied in the following benefits for cultivating loving-kindness.

- The active and continuous cultivation of love, kindness, and compassion will prevent ill will from arising and will remove ill will that has already arisen.
- Loving-kindness produces a shift in perspective from self-centeredness to a view that welcomes and includes others. The mind extends feelings and thoughts of love and goodwill not only to themselves but also to relatives, friends, acquaintances, strangers, and to others in conflicting relationships. This expanded perspective dissolves the boundaries that fuel ill will.
- Ill will may be a cycle of negativity and reactivity, arising from unwholesome thoughts, judgments, or resentments towards oneself or others. Loving-kindness interrupts this cycle by replacing unwholesome thoughts with wholesome ones, fostering wholesome emotions and perceptions where ill will has no room to thrive. Instead of reacting with hatred or resentment, the mind responds with love and understanding, disrupting the perpetuation of ill will.
- The practice of loving-kindness also develops equanimity: a balanced and non-reactive mind. The mind that creates the habit of radiating loving-kindness will then be able to face challenging situations with a calm and compassionate view, and not react with ill will.
- The mind of loving-kindness is conducive to inner peace and tranquility. As the mind experiences the soothing effects of love and goodwill, the agitations of the mind that contribute to ill will naturally diminish.
- The cultivation of loving-kindness is a means of purifying the mind. As the mind consistently engages in this practice, the defilements (kilesa), including ill will, are gradually uprooted, leading to a wholesome and purified state of mind.

Loving-Kindness is one of the Four Divine Abodes (brahmavihāra), also known as the Four Immeasurables and Sublime Attitudes.

1. Loving-kindness (mettā),

2. Compassion (karuṇā),
3. Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy (muditā), and
4. Equanimity (upekkhā).

The Four Divine Abodes are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter - Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā).

See the July 2022 Newsletter - The Practice of Metta (Loving-Kindness) for additional discussion on the development and practice of loving-kindness.

Examples of how the Perfection of Loving-Kindness (mettā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections follow.

- Loving-kindness is balanced by the Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī) as generosity arises from a heart filled with loving-kindness. Practicing generosity creates a sense of goodwill and compassion toward others, laying the foundation for cultivating loving-kindness. When the mind is generous, a positive and benevolent view arise which aligns with the intentions of loving-kindness.
- The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) is crucial for the cultivation of loving-kindness, especially when faced with challenges or difficulties. Being patient allows the mind to respond to others with understanding and tolerance, creating an environment conducive to the growth of loving-kindness.
- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) aims to reduce and eliminate attachment to personal desires and cravings, thereby the mind will develop a selfless and compassionate attitude. The reduction in selfish desires results in the expansion of loving-kindness towards all beings.
- The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) guides the cultivation of loving-kindness by providing insight into the interconnectedness of all beings.

Loving-Kindness is discussed in the following sutta excerpts.

The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

#### 42.8 The Conch Blower

... “Then, headman, that noble disciple—who is thus devoid of covetousness, devoid of ill will, unconfused, clearly comprehending, ever mindful—dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, likewise the second quarter, the third quarter, and the fourth quarter. Thus above, below, across, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the entire world with a mind imbued with lovingkindness, vast, exalted, measureless, without hostility, without ill will. ...

The Suttanipata: An Ancient Collection of the Buddha's Discourses Together with Its Commentaries translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

#### I.8 Loving-Kindness (Metta Sutta)

143. This is what should be done by one skilled in the good, having made the breakthrough to that peaceful state: he should be able, upright, and very upright, amenable to advice and gentle, without arrogance. (1)

144. [He should be] content and easily supported, of few duties and a frugal way of living; of peaceful faculties and judicious, courteous, without greed when among families. (2)

145. He should not do anything, however slight, because of which other wise people might criticize him. May all beings be happy and secure; may they be inwardly happy! (3)

146. Whatever living beings there are whether frail or firm, without omission, those that are long or those that are large, middling, short, fine, or gross; (4)

147. whether they are seen or unseen, whether they dwell far or near, whether they have come to be or will come to be, may all beings be inwardly happy! (5)

148. No one should deceive another, nor despise anyone anywhere. Because of anger and thoughts of aversion no one should wish suffering for another. (6)

149. Just as a mother would protect her son, her only son, with her own life, so one should develop toward all beings a state of mind without boundaries. (7)

150. And toward the whole world one should develop loving-kindness, a state of mind without boundaries — above, below, and across — unconfined, without enmity, without adversaries. (8)

151. Whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, as long as one is not drowsy, one should resolve on this mindfulness: they call this a divine dwelling here. (9)

152. Not taking up any views, possessing good behavior, endowed with vision, having removed greed for sensual pleasures, one never again comes back to the bed of a womb. (10)

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: A Complete Translation of the Anguttara Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

#### 11.15 (5) Loving-Kindness

“Bhikkhus, when the liberation of the mind by loving-kindness has been pursued, developed, and cultivated, made a vehicle and basis, carried out, consolidated, and properly undertaken, eleven benefits are to be expected. What eleven?

(1) “One sleeps well; (2) one awakens happily; (3) one does not have bad dreams; (4) one is pleasing to human beings; (5) one is pleasing to spirits; (6) deities protect one; (7) fire, poison, and weapons do not injure one; (8) one’s mind quickly becomes concentrated; (9) one’s facial complexion is serene; (10) one dies unconfused; and (11) if one does not penetrate further, one fares on to the brahmā world.

“When, bhikkhus, the liberation of the mind by loving-kindness has been repeatedly pursued, developed, and cultivated, made a vehicle and basis, carried out, consolidated, and properly undertaken, these eleven benefits are to be expected.”

## Announcements

- Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center has a presence on Meet-Up social media and we ask that you please sign-up for every event that you are planning to attend at [www.MeetUp.com](http://www.MeetUp.com). Some people are intimidated by a small number of attendees and a larger number will be encouraging.
- Please help advertise Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center by providing a review at [www.google.com/maps](http://www.google.com/maps).

## Activities of the Meditation Center

- Sitting meditation is held everyday at 6:30AM and 5:30PM. After meditation, Ajahn Kumāro is available to answer questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) on the days and time you would like to participate.
- The days of the full moon, new moon and the two half moons are called in Pāli: The Uposatha, and is a Buddhist day of observance. A lunar calendar is available at <https://cal.forestsangha.org>. Ajahn Kumāro will perform the ceremony of giving the five precepts on the full and new moon days after the 5:30PM meditation. You may elect to keep the precepts as long as you see fit (one night, a week, a lifetime, etc).
- Meditation Workshop is held on the first Sunday of each month between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. The workshop will provide instruction and practice for sitting and walking meditation. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the Dhamma. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) if you are planning to participate.
- A recording of a Dhamma Talk from an experienced Thai Forest Teacher will be played on the third Sunday of each month. Sitting meditation starts at 4:30PM and the Dhamma Talk will be played afterwards. Please sign up on Meet-Up or send an email [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com) if you are planning to participate.
- Every Saturday at 4:15PM the Meditation Center will be cleaned. Please join us in maintaining a clean space for practicing and discussing the Dhamma.
- There is a Library at the Meditation Center. You may browse for books to borrow at 5:00PM and check out the books for three weeks.
- Everyday at 8:40AM Ajahn Kumāro leaves for alms-round in order to give residents of Asheville the opportunity to earn merit by practicing generosity of giving food and placing it into the alms bowl. Ajahn does not accept or handle money. Ajahn usually arrives at the Whole Foods Market, 70 Merrimon Ave. just before 9:00AM and stands in front of the store for alms.
- Ajahn is available at other times during the day to meet with individuals or groups when requested.
- For more additional information please send an email to [mittameditation@gmail.com](mailto:mittameditation@gmail.com). We also have a presence on Facebook and Meet-Up social media.

## Request for Support

The Meditation Center is in need of support in order to accomplish its’ mission and vision. The support may take various forms. You will support the Meditation Center by:

- Being present at the Meditation Center for group meditation.
- Giving alms during alms-round.

- Bringing to the Meditation Center items that are listed on the support page of the website [www.mittameditation.com](http://www.mittameditation.com).
- Volunteering your skills, energy and time at the Meditation Center.
- Informing your family and friends about the Meditation Center and encouraging them to participate in the activities.
- Donating financial contributions for the Meditation Center's expenses. Kalyana-Mitta Meditation Center is recognized as a tax-exempt organization by the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Donations are deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. Financial contributions may be made on the support page of the website [www.mittameditation.com](http://www.mittameditation.com) and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.