



Kalyāṇa-Mitta Meditation Center

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Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā 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) discussed in the September 2024 Newsletter, and
10. Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is discussed in this Newsletter.

The Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is to maintain mental balance and impartiality in all situations. The mind with equanimity is balanced and undisturbed by the ups and downs of life represented by The Eight Worldly Concerns (lokadhamma):

1. Hope for gain (lābha) is attachment to gaining material possessions, wealth, and favorable circumstances.
2. Fear of loss (alābha) is aversion to loss, poverty, and unfavorable conditions.
3. Hope for fame (yasa) is attachment to gaining recognition, praise, and popularity.
4. Fear of disrepute (ayasa) is aversion to insignificance and a negative reputation.
5. Hope for praise (pasamsā) is attachment to receiving praise, compliments, and positive feedback.
6. Fear of criticism (nindā) is aversion to criticism, negative feedback, and blame.
7. Hope for pleasure (sukha) is attachment to experiencing pleasure, comfort, and happiness.
8. Fear of pain (dukkha) is aversion to misery, discomfort, and suffering.

The mind with equanimity goes beyond indifference or apathy but is calm and steady under various circumstances. The mind is not disturbed by and is detached from internal or external impermanent phenomena.

Equanimity is a great virtue, as it is a state of mind that is not swayed by the above worldly concerns. The mind is compassionate (karuṇā) and has understanding (paññā) of the impermanence (anicca) and inherent unsatisfactoriness (dukkha) of all conditioned phenomena.

Equanimity is one of the Four Divine Abodes (brahma-vihāra), and one of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (bojjhaṅga). The Four Divine Abodes, also known as the Four Immeasurables and Sublime Attitudes are discussed in the September 2023 Newsletter - Tranquility Meditation (samatha) and The Five Hindrances (pañca nīvaraṇā). The Four Divine Abodes are the following:

1. Loving-kindness (mettā),
2. Compassion (karuṇā),
3. Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy (muditā), and
4. Equanimity (upekkhā).

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are the following:

1. Mindfulness (sati),
2. Investigation of Dhamma (dhamma-vicaya),
3. Energy (viriya),
4. Joy (pīti),
5. Tranquility (passaddhi),
6. Concentration (sāmādhī), and
7. Equanimity (upekkhā).

Examples of how the Perfection of Equanimity (upekkhā pāramī) is balanced and assisted by the other perfections follow.

- The Perfection of Generosity (dāna pāramī) provides a foundation for the development of equanimity by reducing attachment to material possessions and fostering a sense of interconnectedness with others.
- The Perfection of Equanimity is supported by the Perfection of Virtue (sīla pāramī), as the mind will tolerate the ups and downs of life with a clear conscience and a sense of inner stability.
- The Perfection of Renunciation (nekkhamma pāramī) supports the development of equanimity by not clinging to worldly pleasures and outcomes, resulting in a mind that is nonreactive to the changing conditions of life, thereby promoting mental balance.
- The Perfection of Wisdom (paññā pāramī) conditions equanimity with insight into the nature of reality, allows the mind to accept the impermanent and conditional nature of all things, leading to a balanced response to life's challenges.
- The Perfection of Equanimity is balanced by the Perfection of Energy (viriya pāramī). Effort is balanced and sustained in practice, meeting difficulties with resilience and patience, and energy applied wisely without the mind overwhelmed with tension and stress.
- The Perfection of Patience (khanti pāramī) conditions equanimity by allowing the mind to endure difficulties with calm acceptance and without agitation or resentment.

The following sutta excerpts provide teachings on equanimity.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

118 Ānāpānasati Sutta: Mindfulness of Breathing

... 36. “He closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated. On whatever occasion a bhikkhu closely looks on with equanimity at the mind thus concentrated — on that occasion the equanimity enlightenment factor is aroused in him, and he develops it, and by development it comes to fulfillment in him.

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

36.31 (11) Spiritual

... “And what, bhikkhus, is carnal equanimity? There are, bhikkhus, these five cords of sensual pleasure. What five? Forms cognizable by the eye, sounds cognizable by the ear, odors cognizable by the nose, flavors cognizable by the tongue, and tactile objects cognizable by the body that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tantalizing. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure. The equanimity that arises in dependence on these five cords of sensual pleasure: this is called carnal equanimity.

“And what, bhikkhus, is spiritual equanimity? With the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous passing away of joy and displeasure, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the fourth jhāna, which is neither painful nor pleasant and includes the purification of mindfulness by equanimity.

“And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity more spiritual than the spiritual? When a bhikkhu whose taints are destroyed reviews his mind liberated from lust, liberated from hatred, liberated from delusion, there arises equanimity. This is called equanimity more spiritual than the spiritual.

The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

137 Saḷāyatanavibhanga Sutta: The Exposition of the Sixfold Base

... 14. “Herein, what are the six kinds of equanimity based on the household life? On seeing a form with the eye, equanimity arises in a foolish infatuated ordinary person, in an untaught ordinary person who has not conquered his limitations or conquered the results [of action] and who is blind to danger. Such equanimity as this does not transcend the form; that is why it is called equanimity based on the household life.¹²⁴¹

“On hearing a sound with the ear... On smelling an odour with the nose... On tasting a flavour with the tongue... On touching a tangible with the body... On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, equanimity arises in a foolish infatuated ordinary person, in an untaught ordinary person who has not conquered his limitations or conquered the results [of action]

and who is blind to danger. Such equanimity as this does not transcend the mind-object; that is why it is called equanimity based on the household life. These are the six kinds of equanimity based on the household life.

15. "Herein, what are the six kinds of equanimity based on renunciation? When, by knowing the impermanence, change, fading away, and cessation of forms, one sees as it actually is with proper wisdom that forms both formerly and now are all impermanent, suffering, and subject to change, equanimity arises. Such equanimity as this transcends the form; that is why it is called equanimity based on renunciation.¹²⁴²

"When, by knowing the impermanence, change, fading away, and cessation of sounds... of odours... of flavours... of tangibles... of mind-objects, one sees as it actually is with proper wisdom that mind-objects both formerly and now are all impermanent, suffering, and subject to change, equanimity arises. Such equanimity as this transcends the mind-object; that is why it is called equanimity based on renunciation. These are the six kinds of equanimity based on renunciation.

... 17. "There is, bhikkhus, equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity; and there is equanimity that is unified, based on unity.¹²⁴³

18. "And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity? There is equanimity regarding forms, sounds, odours, flavours, and tangibles. This, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity.

19. "And what, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is unified, based on unity? There is equanimity regarding the base of infinite space, the base of infinite consciousness, the base of nothingness, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This, bhikkhus, is equanimity that is unified, based on unity.

20. "Here, bhikkhus, by depending and relying on equanimity that is unified, based on unity, abandon and surmount equanimity that is diversified, based on diversity. It is thus this is abandoned; it is thus this is surmounted.¹²⁴⁴

"Bhikkhus, by depending and relying on non-identification,¹²⁴⁵ abandon and surmount equanimity that is unified, based on unity. It is thus this is abandoned; it is thus this is surmounted.

"So it was in reference to this that it was said: 'Therein, by depending on this, abandon that.'

Notes:

1241 MA: This is the equanimity of unknowing that arises in one who has not conquered the limitations imposed by the defilements or the future results (of action). It "does not transcend the form" because it is stuck, fastened to the object like flies to a ball of sugar.

1242 MA: This is the equanimity associated with insight knowledge. It does not become lustful towards desirable objects that come into range of the senses, nor does it become angry because of undesirable objects.

1243 MA says that previously worldly equanimity was discussed, but here the contrast is between the equanimity in differentiated sense experience and the equanimity of the meditative attainments.

1244 MA paraphrases: "By the equanimity of the immaterial attainments, abandon the equanimity of the fine-material attainments; by insight into the immaterial sphere, abandon insight into the fine-material sphere."

1245 MA says that non-identification (atammayatā) here refers to "insight leading to emergence," i.e., the insight immediately preceding the arising of the supramundane path; for this effects the abandonment of the equanimity of the immaterial attainments and the equanimity of insight.

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. 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.

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 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 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 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. 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.
- 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 and additional means for making financial donations may be discussed with Elisha Buhler at (910) 922-1549.