

Buddhism-in-a-Nutshell



Session 1

1. Welcome everyone [15 minutes] Jim

- Introduce Facilitators
- Why we are here – *plan on 10 more sessions*
- Overview of the course – ***The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding or in Pali words Samma-ditthi.***

2, What is suffering (Dukkha in Pali)? [30 minutes] Tom

- The meaning of Dukkha
- The 8 types of suffering

3.What is the cause of Suffering? [30 minutes] Jim

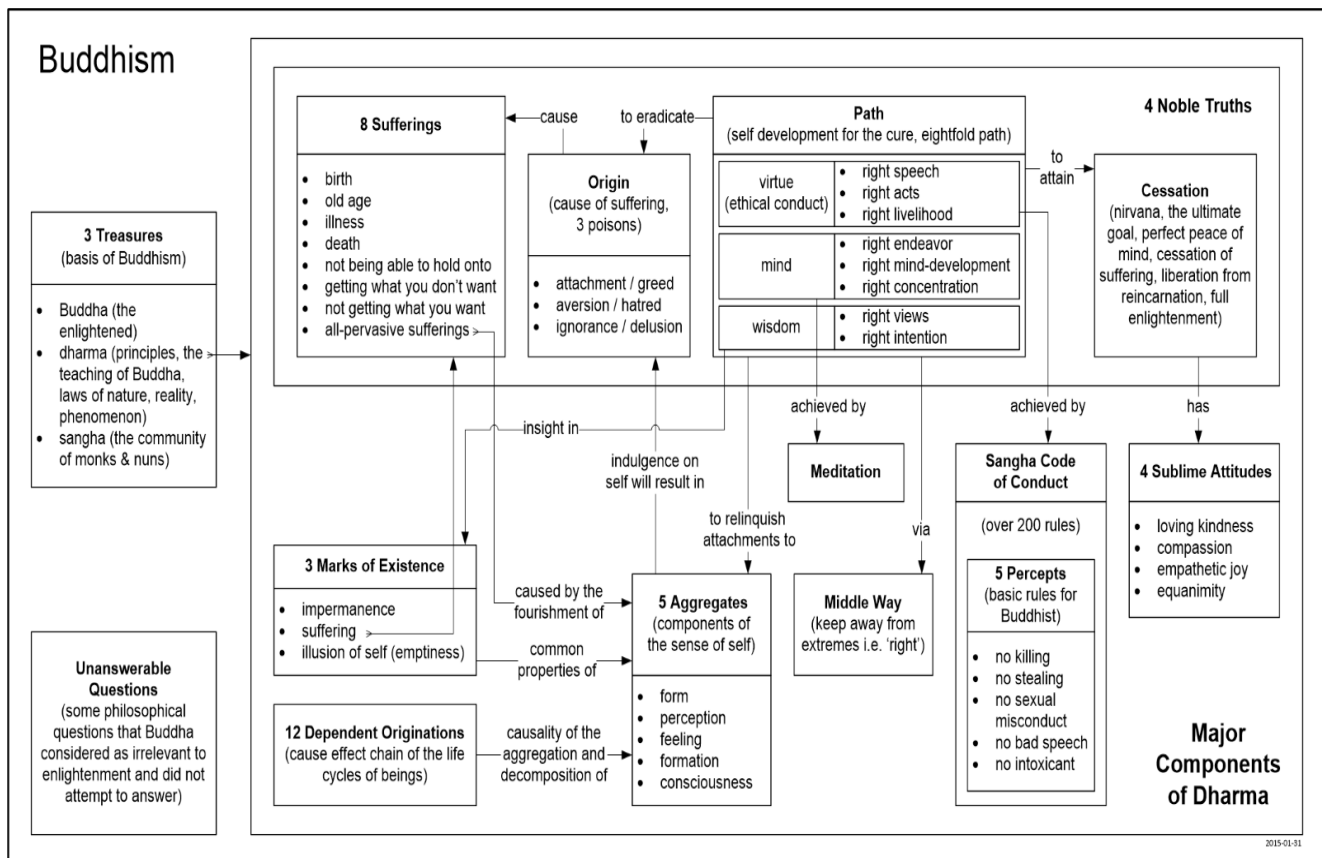
- In the Khandasutta, the Buddha tells us “*And what, monks, the noble truth of the origin of suffering? It is this craving, causing renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, delighting here and there – that is, craving for sensual pleasures , craving for existence, craving for non-existence. This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering*”

- The 3 poisons – attachment to greed, attachment to hatred & ignorance (not understanding the Four Noble Truths).

4. Closing Both [15 minutes] Tom & Jim

- Questions?
- Our next scheduled session –

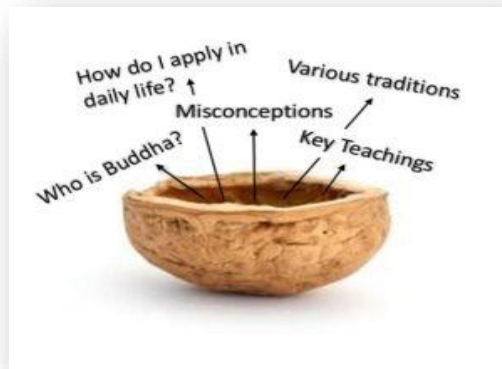
Chart of Major Course Components:



The Four Foundations

Four themes	Categories	Meanings	Purpose
Body	The entire physical body including the inside and the outside.	Meditate on the body in order to realize its true nature of impermanence and impurity.	Leaving afar or renunciation of the cravings of the senses-sphere realm, fine form realm, and formless realm.
Feelings	Feelings of pleasantness, pain, and neutral.	Meditate on the feelings in order to clearly see that they are actually conditions (foods) of the mind.	Cutting off the roots of all kinds of cravings.
The mind	The current of mental energy, which is endlessly flowing.	Meditate on the mind in order to recognize its operation and manifestations through various kinds of thoughts, such as greed, hatred, ill will, self-pride, self-attachment, and doubt.	Removing all kinds of attachment and false views of self in order to reach pure states and develop wisdom.
The mind and mind's objects	All kinds of forms (mental and physical), sounds, smells, tastes, touch, and objects of the mind (all things recognized by the mind).	Meditate on forms or existing beings in order to see their status of changing, such as institution, existence, deterioration, and destruction.	Attaining pure wisdom, blissfulness, and ultimate liberation.

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Session 2

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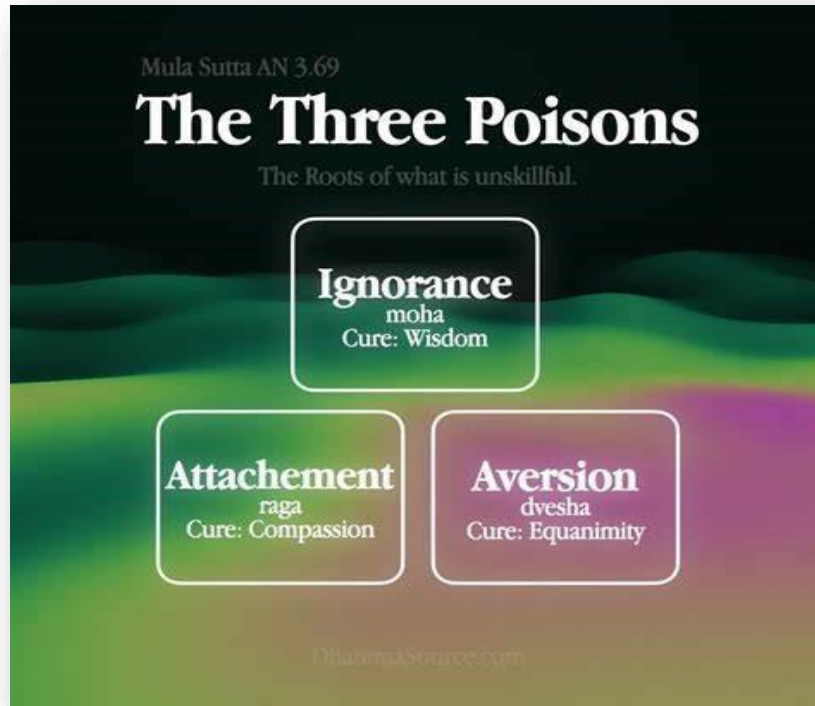
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4. Closing Both [15 minutes] Tom & Jim

- Questions?
- Our next scheduled session

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Session 3

1. Welcome everyone [10 minutes] Jim

- Introduce Facilitators
- Why we are here – Brief summary of past sessions
- Overview of the course – The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding or in Pali words Samma-ditthi

2, What is the Fourth Noble Truth, the Noble 8-Fold Path [20 minutes] Tom

- The importance of Path
- How to use the 8 Factors of the Path (i.e. grouping, non-linear, ref Dependent Origination ...)

3.The first Factor “Right View” [15 minutes] Jim

4. The second Factor “Intention” [15 minutes] Jim

5. The third Factor “Speech” [15 minutes] Tom

6.Closing Both [15 minutes] Tom & Jim

- Questions?
- Our next scheduled session –

Essences of Right View

Right View (Samma Ditthi) is the first element of the Noble Eightfold Path and lays the foundation for all other elements. Here are its essential points:

1. Understanding the Four Noble Truths: Recognizing the reality of suffering (dukkha), its origin (samudaya), its cessation (nirodha), and the path leading to its cessation (maggā).

2. Law of Karma: Understanding that actions have consequences. Good actions lead to positive outcomes, while negative actions lead to suffering. This understanding guides ethical behavior and decision-making.

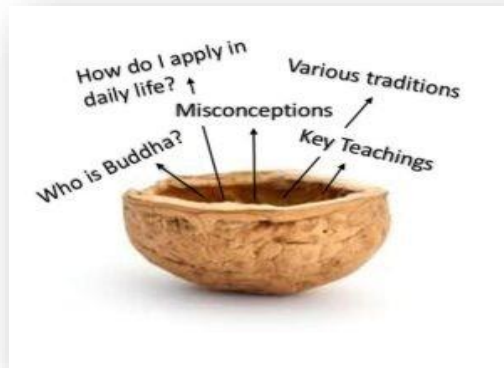
3. Impermanence (Anicca): Acknowledging that all conditioned phenomena are transient and subject to change. This realization helps reduce attachment and promotes acceptance of change.

4. Non-Self (Anatta): Understanding that there is no permanent, unchanging self. This insight helps reduce ego and self-centeredness, leading to greater compassion and wisdom.

5. Interdependence (Paticca sam uppada): Recognizing the interconnectedness of all things and how various conditions give rise to experiences. This understanding fosters a sense of responsibility and mindfulness in our actions.

Right Understanding provides the wisdom needed to guide one's thoughts, actions, and speech in accordance with the principles of the Eightfold Path. It serves as the compass for the journey toward enlightenment and liberation from suffering.

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Session 4

1. Welcome everyone [15 minutes] Jim
 - A 5 minute Meditation
 - Introduce Facilitators
 - Why we are here
 - Overview of the course – The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding or in Pali words Samma-ditthi.
 - A quick Review of previous sessions
2. The fourth Factor “Right Action” [15 minutes] Tom
4. The fifth Factor “Livelihood” [15 minutes] Tom
5. The sixth Factor “Mindfulness” [15 minutes] Jim
6. Closing [15 minutes] Tom & Jim
 - Questions?
 - Our next scheduled session – February 18th 2025

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Session 5

1. Welcome everyone [20 minutes] Jim
 - A 5 minute Meditation
 - Introduce Facilitators
 - Overview of the course – The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding or in Pali words Samma-ditthi.
 - A quick Review of previous sessions [Chart]
2. The seventh Factor “Effort” [20 minutes] Tom
4. The eighth Factor “Concentration” [20 minutes] Jim
6. Closing [15 minutes] Tom & Jim
 - Questions?
 - Our next scheduled session –

Core concepts

Four Noble Truths:

1. Suffering exists
2. Suffering arises from attachment to desires
3. Suffering ceases when attachment to desire ceases
4. Freedom from suffering is possible by practicing the Eightfold Path

Noble Eightfold Path:[Text Wrapping Break]

Three Qualities	Eightfold Path
Wisdom (<i>panna</i>)	Right View
	Right Thought
Morality (<i>sila</i>)	Right Speech
	Right Action
	Right Livelihood
Meditation (<i>samadhi</i>)	Right Effort
	Right Mindfulness
	Right Contemplation



Three Characteristics of Existence:[Text Wrapping Break]

1. Transiency (*anicca*)
2. Sorrow (*dukkha*)
3. Selflessness (*anatta*)

Hindrances:[Text Wrapping Break]

1. Sensuous lust
2. Aversion and ill will
3. Sloth and torpor
4. Restlessness and worry
5. Sceptical doubt

Factors of Enlightenment:[Text Wrapping Break]

1. Mindfulness
2. Investigation
3. Energy
4. Rapture
5. Tranquillity
6. Concentration
7. Equanimity

Aggregates

What we are made up of [Text Wrapping Break]

The five aggregates (*skandhas*) are[Text Wrapping Break]

Form (*rupa*) is made up of [Text Wrapping Break]

- earth
- water
- fire
- wind

Feeling (*vedana*) is one of [Text Wrapping Break]

- pleasant,

- unpleasant
- neutral

Feelings arise when there is contact between the six internal organs and the six external objects.[Text Wrapping Break]

Internal Organ	External Object
Eye	Sight
Ear	Sound
Nose	Odor
Tongue	Taste
Body	Touch
Mind	Mental Object

Perception (*samjna*) a is related to the six external objects

- **Volition** (*samskara*) is the response of the will to the six external objects
- **Consciousness** (*vijnana*) grasps the characteristics of the six external objects
- Visual consciousness
- Auditory consciousness
- Olfactory consciousness
- Gustatory consciousness
- Tactile consciousness
- Mental consciousness

Things that slow us down and restrict freedom

1. Self-delusion

2. Doubt
3. Clinging to Ritual
4. Sensuous Lust
5. Ill Will
6. Greed for Fine Material Existence
7. Greed for Immaterial Existence
8. Conceit
9. Restlessness
10. Ignorance

Friends on the way to freedom

The boundless states or *brahmaviharas* are considered friends on the way to Nirvana. They help in dissolving the idea of a separate self. [Text Wrapping Break]

1. Loving kindness
2. Compassion
3. Sympathetic Joy
4. Equanimity

Near enemy is a quality that can masquerade as the original but is not the original. Far enemy is the clearly opposite quality. The boundless state serves as an antidote for the quality mentioned as the far enemy.

<i>The Brahma Viharas</i>				
Pali	English	Description	Near Enemy	Far Enemy

<i>metta</i>	loving kindness	good-will, friendship, unconditional love for all beings	selfish love	hatred
<i>karuna</i>	compassion	empathy, to feel with someone instead of for someone	pity	cruelty
<i>mudita</i>	sympathetic joy	spontaneous joy in response to others success	hypocrisy	envy
<i>upekkha</i>	equanimity	even-mindedness based on insight into the nature of things	indifference	anxiety

Qualities that need to be perfected

1. The ten perfections (*paramis*) are
2. Morality (*sila*)
 1. Renunciation (*nekkhamma*)
 2. Wisdom (*panna*)
 3. Energy (*viriya*)
 4. Patience (*khanti*)
 5. Truthfulness (*sacca*)
 6. Resolution (*adhitthana*)
 7. Loving-Kindness (*metta*)
 8. Equanimity (*upekkha*)



THE JHANAS



Jhana (Pali) or *dhyana* (Sanskrit) is a term in Buddhism that refers to states of deep concentration and meditative absorption. Jhana is a core aspect of Buddhist meditation practice in the [Theravada](#) and early Buddhist traditions.

Jhanas are a sequence of progressively deeper states of concentration, each characterized by specific qualities and experiences. These states are achieved through sustained and focused [meditation](#) on a chosen object, such as the breath, a mantra, or a visualized image. The practitioner gradually moves through these stages, refining their concentration and insight.

The specific number and characteristics of jhanas can vary across different [Buddhist traditions](#), but a common description often includes four main jhanas, plus four formless jhanas, resulting in a total of eight.

The First Jhana

This stage is marked by initial detachment from sensory distractions and the arising of a joyful, blissful state. The mind becomes unified and one-pointed on the chosen object of meditation.

The Second Jhana

In this stage, the initial [joy](#) transforms into a more refined, serene contentment. The meditator experiences a deep sense of tranquility and inner peace.

The Third Jhana

The experience of happiness further refines into [equanimity](#). The practitioner becomes less attached to both pleasure and pain, entering a state of balanced mindfulness.

The Fourth Jhana

Equanimity becomes even more profound, resulting in a state of pure equanimity and [mindfulness](#). The practitioner experiences a deep sense of mental clarity, balance, and focused awareness.

Beyond the fourth jhana, some traditions describe four additional formless jhanas that involve meditative absorption into progressively subtler levels of reality.

While jhana practice is a significant part of some Buddhist traditions, [Zen](#) and [Vajrayana](#) emphasize different methods and aspects of meditation practice.