

# PARENTS' WORDS OF WISDOM



Written

By

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This is the first masterpiece of our great teacher, the Agga Pandit Buth Savong that has ever been translated into English and distributed to Khmer Buddhist communities inside and outside Cambodia as well as to English readership in general.

We also hope that all readers of this booklet would kindly understand our efforts and our limitations in the compilation of this jewel of the Cambodian wisdom. This material is useful for parents, young and adult Cambodians living abroad to have access to their heritage, traditions and didactic materials through the medium of the English language. It can be used as a moral-conduct or a

savoir-vivre manual flavoured with Buddhist teaching for Khmers who are living far away from their homeland.

Once again, please accept our thanks and gratitude for your involvement in the achievement of this publication.

*May all be well and happy!*

Dhamma4khmers.org

California, the full-moon day of Asadha BE 2549

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005

## **Buddhist Teachings and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy**

Buddhist teachings have much in common with cognitive-behavioral therapy. The Lord Buddha teaches us that “people have happiness and misery in their mind according to their ways of thinking” (see chapter 61) and that if “they cannot control their own thoughts these thoughts are harmful to themselves”. Such wisdom was generated over two thousand five hundred years ago only to be reflected in the works of cognitive-behavioral therapists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Lord Buddha also gave suggestions for how to conduct one’s day. He notes that “when you wake up in the morning, you must promise yourselves that you will do good deeds, speak nicely, and think more properly than the previous days”. This is much like a positive affirmation, used in cognitive-behavioral therapy, often used in the mornings and meant to set a positive tone for one’s day.

Gamze Gurbuz, Ph.D.  
Psychologist

## **A Well Thought Out Inheritance**

How often parents wonder what to leave their children as they complete their time in this life. People often work hard to amass estates and possessions to leave behind this life as a token of love and esteem for their dear ones. However, the author has allowed us to view the process of assembling a legacy in writings that in thoughtfulness and heartfelt wisdom will not diminish, a voice that can be meditated on by all generations to come. To review the words of generations past, to bring alive the values and treasures of one's culture and how its influence assists one in the challenges of daily living...the value of such a gift is beyond silver and gold. The pages you will read herein accomplish this task in a simple yet elegant fashion. This book is a well thought out inheritance, one which I am sure will be long treasured by the children who receive it, as well as those of us who have had the privilege to witness the creativity and development of this project.

**Lisa Rimland, MT-BC**

## Parents' Words of Wisdom

*My Beloved Children:*

*Your goodness and your success are the hallmarks of our happiness. We, your parents, never have evil or vengeful wishes towards you. We only have good wishes, tender care and love for you in our hearts. We have no room for harmful thoughts or evil acts to tarnish our good intention for you.*

*Our love for you is infinite and pure. We are not sad or embarrassed if you lack material luxuries, but we are truly sad and embarrassed if you are wicked or cruel.*

*We are glad and contented to see you succeed in life. You are good and capable, have an honest job, and warm family relationship. We are especially proud to see you have become a good person.*

*We are not gods but we are more than gods.*

*We are not Brahma but we are more than Brahma.*

*We give you life that nobody else can give you,  
not even gods or Brahma,  
And we give you infinite love.*

*We wish you a valuable and successful  
life full of enlightenment and contentment. This  
is the sole reason why we always take this  
precious time to say these words of wisdom to  
you. Please take time to read this “Parents’  
Words Of Wisdom” with care and diligence.  
Try to digest its meaning and apply to life’s  
circumstances so that progress, success and  
goodness will be yours.*

*With best wishes from your parents,*

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## Buddhist Proverbs

Sabbadanam ☒ dhammadanam ☒ jinati

Gift in Dhamma is the best of all other kinds of  
gifts

Sabbarasam ☒ dhammaraso jinati

The taste of the Dhamma is the best of all other  
tastes

Sabbaratang dhammarti jinati

Contentment in the Dhamma is the best of all  
other contenments

Tanhakkhayo sabba dukkham ☒ jinati

Cleansing of all desires one can conquer all  
forms of suffering

## **Chapter 1**

### **Real Feelings**

My Beloved children,

Now you have grown up, we hope you have some understanding about life. Moreover, we hope you have come to realise how much we, as your parents, love you. You are our pupils or our most important internal living organs.

You also know that we, parents, do not work hard just for our own sakes, but mainly for your wellbeing. We say this, not because we want your gratitude, but because we wish you to become good people.

In fact, we really need your help, but we cannot spell it out. Please understand that although we have everything we really need, we still wish to receive gifts from you, even though those gifts may not be as expensive or good as they should be. Still, we are extremely joyful once we know that the gift we receive is from our beloved son or daughter.

In fact, no matter how fully we have been fed, we are always genuinely pleased to taste any food you offer us. Also, no matter how plain the clothes you offer are, we always want to wear them to please you. Even when nothing has been received as gift from you, we are always joyful in your presence and your joined-hands kneeling salute.

The main blessing that all parents want from their beloved sons and daughters is to see each one develop good hearts and reasoning, good deeds, and righteous speech. Their children must know how to distinguish between merit and misdeed according to the truth. We cannot tell you to kneel and greet us or buy us good fruits, and for this reason, some parents, even up to their last breath have never received a salute from their children.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Keep your parents' words, the words of their heart,  
which are precious.*

*They are collection of wise words from the past based on  
Buddhist teachings.*

*Bright like morning sun's golden rays, parents' words  
should be remembered.*

*And they are comparable to sunlight and as valuable as  
gold.*

*The world is bright due to the sun, and parents are the  
living Buddha that can  
be compared to the morning rising sun. Parents are in  
the East and they are  
worthy of salute from their children.*

*East means ancestors who gave birth to many children  
on earth, and their  
words are as bright as the sunlight illuminating the  
world.*

## Chapter 2

### A Warm Family

The word “family” means love or warmth. It is to be shared by persons who also share a common family name. In the West, wives adopt their husband’s family names and the couples addressed each other as “my home’s man” or “my family’s woman” respectively.

When you were young, we lived happily together. We played together, ate together and did everything together in a very lively atmosphere. After a day of hard work, no matter how tired we were, we felt completely relieved to see you coming to help us carrying things and ask us about our work. We were happy to see you sleep and eat well. This satisfaction is what people use to call a warm family.

Now that you have grown up and as brothers and sisters you must love each other. As you are biologically related you cannot disregard each other. As old saying states: “You can never cut water into pieces, and in the same way, you can never really estrange brothers and sisters”. You

should not despise each other. Don't be stingy, or get angry and vengeful. You must be helpful to each other and look after each other.

It is shameful for you as brothers and sisters to have any quarrels. Good siblings do not quarrel and should think of your parents' feelings and concerns. Remember that when you were young, after you fought each other, you reconciled and you started to play together. You forgot your quarrel and forgave each other. You loved each other, and you cooperated again as it was. It is good to recall past memories and study them. If you think that you are grown up, forgive the bad incidents of the past. Beloved children, you can look for a new partner and even have a new child, but you cannot replace your brothers and sisters because their number is fixed. To disown your brothers and sisters, means you cut the flesh of your parents.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*A warm family environment requires that parents and children must live according to the dhamma. Don't be influenced by your sense-desires but stick to blessings that yield beautiful life and endowed with virtuous mind.*

## Chapter 3

### Hurtful Feelings

Sometimes, we, parents, do or say things that upset you but you have to understand that in whichever the conditions, we always love and think about you so much. You remain the pupils of our eyes and hearts.

We are hurt so much when you stare at us with anger and consider us as strangers. Other people look down on us or misunderstand us, yet this is not as hurtful for us as being misunderstood or being looked down upon by our own beloved children that we love so much. We can bear your anger, your unhappiness or your indignation as a consequence of our wrongdoing to you. However we will feel enormously hurtful if you are angry with us as the result of your misunderstanding of the real feelings of your parents.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*The heart of Arahantas is so pure towards all people in general, and the hearts of parents are also the same for their children.*

*You should not consider your parents' heart as equal in value to your monthly salary because your parents are the living Arahantas.*

*No people in this world have good heart with loving-kindness, which can surpass those of the Arahantas, who are your own parents.*

*If you want to pay homage to the Arahantas, you have to think of your parents, who are the living Arahantas in your household.*

*Parents' heart is genuine and truly sincere for they sacrifice their heart and physical effort, their life, and their money and their gold for their children. Their heart is comparable to that of Prince Vesantara<sup>1</sup>.*

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<sup>1</sup> Vesantara was a Bodhisatva who was so generous that he gave his two children and his wife to beggars in his pursuit of completing his highest merit in generosity.

## Chapter 4

### Supreme Wishes of Parents

You do not yet know of the supreme wishes of your parents. Whenever they are sick, they want to see the faces of their children. Their children's care, respect and attendance at their parents' bedside are the most effective medicine. When parents become old and not able to do what they could do before, they need their children's support more than ever. Your parents understand that you are busy with your daily work that you cannot afford your time to see them but they still insist upon seeing you and receiving your services.

Apart from the above-mentioned wishes, parents have other supreme wishes to see their children prosper, have achieved their aims in life, and have a bright livelihood and happiness. Parents are not jealous of your achievements. Indeed, we are very pleased to see you fulfil your aims in life. We strive so hard in bringing you up and supporting you in achieving your aims. All parents will forget their hardship if they see their children become good,

able and clever people, who have a steady jobs and achieve their aims in life.

Beloved children, bear in mind neither to hurt your parents' feelings nor to make them disappointed.

## **Chapter 5**

### **You Should Be Honest**

Honesty can be compared to water that nourishes plants to keep them alive. Similarly, your life will prosper as a result of your own honesty.

When we stay or work with someone, it is better to be loyal to him, be honest in your work and also be frank and sincere in your speech.

Honesty is the confidence of your mind. It means you speak truthfully and people are fond in listening to you. You should be honest in your words and mind, as well as in your profession.

Beloved children, you should keep firmly to your honesty and make it a foundation for your actions. Never abandon this noble principle no matter how tiny the return you will get. For those people who think that being crooked or trying to gain the upper hand by dirty means is a clever way, let them behave as they wish. They may say you are stupid and ignorant but you remain our clever children who can always help yourselves out of

unwholesome actions. If you are not honest to yourself and you do wrong things and get caught; those people who said that you were stupid because you were honest, and those who urged you to commit wrong doings; they never come to rescue you. You are solely responsible for your own actions. If you persevere on taking honesty as your best policy, at first, you may experience some hardship but you will be happy, and in the long run you will have continuing happiness.

## Chapter 6

### **Hardship Has Its Value.**

Parents are not different from other people; they do neither want to have hard times for themselves, nor for their children. No parents wish to see their own children facing hardship but in certain conditions their children cannot escape it because it is impossible for parents to prevent it from happening.

In this situation, you have to bear in mind that hardship is not too bad for people to endure it. If we consider it in the field of education or in other matters, the good side of it or the benefit of having hardship is that it turns us into tougher and most enduring people. It makes us powerful thinkers and even become leaders in the same way as forging iron and turning it into a much harder one.

It is hard to teach people to be strong in helping oneself because it requires from them to be tough in overcoming the hardship first. There are many people who become good as a result of being tough in facing hardship. They are the one who abide to the Cambodian saying: “hardship is followed by

good time”. It means having patience and perseverance, which are between hardship and the bright time.

In contrast, there are a lot of people who know only how to enjoy their life; and do have never encountered hard times and difficulties. Whenever, they have to face hardship, they hardly can help themselves, cannot do anything, cannot stick to one thing and they even cannot cope with any kind of work. They can hardly survive. Some of them cannot face the hardship and they finally die, therefore don’t be afraid of hardship. You have to remember that ‘hardship’ is your trainer.

Dear children, you have to face hardship with patience, you must benefit from hardship, gain virtues from it and take hardship as a lesson that you have to study and think that you will not return to face the hardship again.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*An inferno can burn all trees in a forest, but it can make the steel harder.*

*In the same way suffering burns people and deprive them of refuge, but it makes determined people to realise the truth. Nothing is better than virtue, and patience is required in struggling. The content of water in a small container can only soak something small, but with perseverance it can make a large container full.*

***Viro** means courageous people, who dare facing the suffering with patience, perseverance, and trained mind. They help to overcome tremendous suffering as well as bring in virtues. Benefit from work is the human value, and working hard can help avoiding mishaps. It helps overcoming obstacles and it bring in virtues, which are the treasure for life. Persons who are tough like steel are not stubborn. They try hard to eliminate conceit. They become gentle and kind, but strong in character and hard as iron in observing their honesty.*

## **Chapter 7**

### **Good Heart Is Worth More Than Money**

As government employees or in private firm you have to be fully committed to your work and make yourselves well worth the money you receive. If you work harder than you really ought to, that will be even better. Do not work just for the sake of earning salary or just to have it finished, but you must work to achieve good results.

Working harder than it is required means that working with good intention. Even though it seems they lose some of their valuable time, but they have performed their duty very well. These people are happy and have satisfaction in their job. This happiness is the essence of life, and it cannot be bought by money, but it can only be the result of your good heart.

People with good heart are those that are generous and their mind is free from jealousy. People without good heart do not have satisfaction in their job, and their mind is dry like a rice-field without water.

Train yourselves to be people with good heart, and do not feel that you are not on equal footing or not good at all. Remember that a good will always produces a true and long-lasting working cooperation, and in the long run good heart is worth much more than any amount of money.

## Chapter 8

### Keep Your Word

What you said is very important to your life. You should pay attention to:

1. Before you speak, and
2. After you have spoken.

Before speaking you have to think carefully, and after you have spoken you should keep your word. Your words are your own master. They order you to execute them as you have received them from others. You have to do what ever you have promised even though it is very costly in terms of your money, your physical energy and even your life.

Beloved children! Remember that your words are very important. If your words have no credibility, everything else is useless and meaningless. Your reputation is ruined because you have not kept your promise. An old Khmer saying stated that: “people are worth of their words like elephants their tusks”.

We remind you again. If you think that you will face with lots of problems in keeping your promises and you don't want to be in such situations, you should be careful before promising anything

with anybody. You have to make sure that whether you can keep your promises or not.

What can people have as their own worthiness if they are not able to keep their words? People have speech as their inner wealth, and still they cannot keep their word. How can they keep any wealth, which does not belong to them? We remind you, once again, not to promise anything with anybody without careful considerations. You should be people who do not easily break your promise.

People who break promises for the sake of getting out of an awkward situation will not be possible to repeat it again because people have no trust in them.

Beloved children, firstly you should not speak frivolously or even telling lies as jokes, and secondly remember that your speech is of greater value for yourself. You have to keep these words in mind:

1. Pandits keep their word because speech is considered as an important business.
2. Speak less is far better than speak more empty words.

3. You cannot become a pandit for the sake of speaking more than it is required.
4. Virtues are not in words alone, but they are in your consciousness.

## Chapter 9

### Intimacy

The Dhammas that keep people bonding together are many, sincerity, faithfulness, and keeping promise from the start.

Truth is sincerity. It is considered as a golden key, which locks the heart of husbands and wives. Truth can create intimacy. Truth brings lots of other values such as understanding each other's, forgiveness, patience, sacrifice, taming one's own mind, and gratitude.

Being faithful between husband and wife is a prerequisite for a happy family life without any conflict, divorce, suspicion and jealousy, therefore husband and wife should be faithful to each other at all cost. When you decide to get married you should be faithful to your wife in order to be happy and having a bright conjugal life. If one party is not faithful there will not be any happiness within the family. You will realise yourself how terrible your life is when you have to live and communicate with an unfaithful

person, therefore as husband and wife you should be faithful to each other at all time.

People who cannot keep the truth for their partners in life, what else can they keep for their lovers. How can they have other virtues in life? To have confidence in honour and happiness in any person is started by this truth. In order to become a reliable and trustworthy person he should be the one who observes truth and sincerity. How can we believe in people who are not even faithful to their own partners in life?

Khmer tradition stresses the importance of being faithful to each other in a married life. It is a great shame, especially for Cambodian married women, who are not faithful to their husbands.

Beloved sons and daughters, if you decide to stay together as husband and wife throughout till reaching Nibbana, you should be a couple who has the same quality of faith in Buddhism, precepts, generosity, and intelligence as well as understanding each other based on the principles of causes and effects. You should not be stubborn and out of rationale.

## Chapter 10

### Being Stupid Is Not Too Bad

Others consider being good-hearted, sincere and justice loving as stupid. People may view a good-hearted individual as unable to earn a living, unmotivated to better his finances or increase his wealth. You have to accept that criticism. Accepting being stupid is better than people who have no heart, sincerity and justice.

Even though you are not rich as others, you are still happy, because you work with honesty; and you have good-heart, gentleness and straightforwardness towards others. Our family may be in short of cash at some extent, but we are confident and live happily without any trouble in mind.

There is a choice between being materially rich, but lack of warmth and harmony in life, and being only self-sustainable but with warmth. Which one of these will you choose?

There are some eminent people in the community, who prefer to use their time to build up communication and acceptance outside their own

homes. They wander here and there, without rest, just to serve others at the expense of their own family. They entertain the heart of others for their acceptance more than caring for their own family. What they do is to prove that they are clever, but they forget that their own cleverness cost them a lot in terms of time such as not having time for meals or eating them outside the appropriate time. They cannot afford their time even to sleep and rest. There is no available time for their own family; and it creates a family ambience devoid of warmth and comfort.

Beloved children, of course we need money in order to sustain our lives. However, money cannot bring warmth and happiness and everything else to the families all the time. Many housewives are rich, and have best and most expensive things, but they are not happy at all because they cannot share love and comfort with their husbands.

People think they are clever, but they do not have time to sleep at home, and often leave their families behind. They are greedy and not faithful. They have no tolerance and no sense of justice; and earn their living by illegal means. Beloved children, in this context, it is good for you if they say that you

are stupid because you are different from them. You work within your own profession with good-heart and loyalty; and the family have comfort, warmth and happiness. You sleep well and have no worries.

## Chapter 11

### Forgiveness

In this world, nobody is right or perfect in every thing they do because they still have lust, which makes their heart impure. In addition, no one will be able to do things that can meet every aspect of our expectation. We are the same in that sense, although we do good deeds in every way, there will be always someone who disapproves our work.

Someone does something wrong, and has shortcomings in his work or performs something unsuitable to your heart and expectation. You should be able to forgive him, do not take offence easily and do not be in conflict with him. It is better for you to keep quiet; and if you want to have something done you should consider the appropriate time and the concern of other people too. It is important to control your temper and your speech; and if you have to act your speech must be in good balance and be based on appropriate causes and effects.

You have to remember these words:

Bamboo trees depend on their thorns to protect themselves. Wise men depend on laws to protect themselves against any wrong doings. Malicious people depend on nothing but the quarrel and their physical might.

Once you forgive someone, the one who is happy will be you. Keeping the anger is like keeping the fire in your mind. Vengefulness by various means has nothing worth of it.

Another way to forgive is not to cause any trouble to other people. It means that you are not harmful to them. You do not cause fear or troubles to other people.

You have to let people know that you're a genuine friend not a foe. Let them know that you're not tricky and they can depend on you. This is what we call forgiveness.

You have to understand that forgiveness means providing goodness to yourself; and people will entrust you with important jobs. This is the difference between you and those who are harmful to others. These types of people cannot be trusted, and wherever they are nobody wants to get closer or be in association

with them. People are afraid of them, and nobody trusts them in their work and they are very bad in every aspect of their manner. You should not behave like these people who are harmful to others.

If you can forgive people, you'll be happy. If you can become a harmless person you can stay wherever you wish; and nobody will cause any troubles to you, therefore it is advisable for you to train yourself in forgiveness. You should not think that practising forgiveness is a sign of weakness. It does not ruin any honour or any position of authority at all. Due to love of honor and prestigious positions, people abuse their authority to an extreme; and they will create all sorts of bad Kammās and misfortunes among themselves endlessly.

## Chapter 12

### Friends for Life

Have you ever thought that books are our best friends? Books are our friends in all occasions whether we are happy, sad, regretful or bored. They can be with us in many places in the forest, mountains, in the middle of the ocean and even in our bedroom. Regardless of who you are, wherever you are, don't discard books. Discarding books mean that you give up your best friends. You must read many books and be diligent in your reading. You should know how to choose books to read in order to save your time.

The Buddha's teachings that you've read or heard are the road map for your life. One good book is equal one best friend. Every book that you've read, you have to think thoroughly about it and decide whether you can believe the author or not because there're so many kinds of writers with different knowledge and intention. You have to remember that the book is the writer's thought. If you have read a good book,

it means that you have implanted the author's good thoughts in your mind.

Even in broad daylight, it will be dark in the house if you close all doors and windows. In a similar situation, if you close your eyes and ears it means you do not read or listen to proverbs of intellectuals, your mind will be dark just like the house with all doors and windows closed.

In order to become a good person, you must:

1. Look for knowledge and don't waste your time, and
2. Act according to your knowledge, and let it be your guide in life instead of being led by your desires.

Beloved children, you have to be friends with wise men via readings their works. We can assure you that progress and prosperity will occur in the future.

**Saddaha**✂**no**      **arahatam**☒  
**dhammam**☒ **nibba**✂**napattiya**✂

*First is to believe in the Dhamma –teaching of Arahantas because good Dhammas help you reaching Nibbana.*

**Sussosam**☒ **labhate**                      **paññam**☒

*Second be mindful and eager in listening to the Dhamma preaching of the Buddha. Pay attention to the preaching you will be wise.*

**Appamatto**    **vicakhaṇo**

*These two are keys to open the door of ignorance, which reveals illusion and carelessness. These will brighten your mind.*

## **Chapter 13**

### **Good Personal Traits**

While you live in a society and you need to communicate with other people you must be on your best behavior and speak nicely. In addition, you need to dress appropriately because it's a necessity to show that you're a good person.

Being trained for mature temperament will enhance in a demonstration of having good intrinsic conduct, which is a part of an attribute of a person with good personal traits. People with good traits are superior in many aspects to other people who are devoid of them. Those aspects are friendship, intimacy and trust. These qualities will bring good fortune to people with good traits for they will be assigned with important and most prestigious job.

Good personal trait is an acting-out of appropriate and gentle physical behavior worth of admiration and respect. You should train in good personal trait and to keep it as your personal attribute, which is composed of dressing appropriately and suitable to your age. Don't take

off your clothes in front of the public. You should wear appropriate clothes while receiving and entertaining your guests. Having gentle characters, knowing how to kneel and greet, paying respect to important people, using a well-balanced speech, do not speak loudly in the public place or in a public meeting. Do not interrupt while other people are speaking, and be aware of other people's concern and intention. While having a meal you should not behave like a glutton, and don't talk with your mouth full. When getting up or sitting you should control your movement and be careful in every way.

A person with good personal traits is the reason for people to admire him and for people in higher authority to like and have compassion for him. They incline to support you in a variety of ways. Good personal trait is the jewellery that people find joyful and irresistible everywhere.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Empty clusters of rice flowers stand up, and some people are like that. They are similar to human beings having no assets and live badly without any values.*

*People produce their own life and manage it in everyday. With intelligence that people can have marvellous life, while ignorant people are considered as imitated gold and silver.*

*With intelligence life is like stars, which move in their right place throughout benefit and honour without any worries. These are the aims and good objectives of life.*

*Malicious people who are fond of their body will withdraw to secluded area and eat poisonous drug, and having a terrible life. Fallen leaves have trouble with wind, which blow them aimlessly and it is likewise for malicious people.*

## Chapter 14

### Sensitivity

When you do things either inside the house or anywhere, you must be careful and sensitive to others for what you're doing may cause uneasiness, irritation or discomfort to them. Don't do whatever your impulse dictates you or believe that you can do whatever you please. You have to consider other people's concern too, for example, your neighbours or your roommates. Being sensitive is very good because it helps to avoid quarrelling and displeasing other people. It's better for you to have friends than foes. You should not think that it doesn't matter much about people who hate you. It is their rights to do so. From your part, you should not hate any people.

If it is necessary to do any thing it is better to inform or even ask them permission beforehand. Being sensitive towards others does not cost you anything, but instead, such a move will make other people being sensitive towards you too. They will be happy to allow you do your work as requested. They can bear whatever you do; and they do not

mind at all. They do not think that you have ever disturbed them at all.

You should put yourself in their shoes and take yourself as example. Don't think that you can do everything as you please. You have to remember that sensitivity is a good personal trait. It's a charm, a social behaviour and a savoir-vivre, which helps to avoid frustrating others.

For example, let say you're in a meeting room or in a temple during a Dhamma preaching and other people are paying attention, but you start chatting, which is a nuisance to them. If your work involves with lots of noise that can disturb or irritate your neighbours you should be sensitive and consider other people's concern too. If it's going to take long before completion, you should really take that into serious consideration. Such a consideration will help you to avoid any trouble ahead.

Don't behave like gangsters, who do not care for other's feeling, but only for their own benefit. You should not think this way because it's very shameful for you.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Ignoble people are soaked with defilements, therefore you have to restrain from anger.*

*Make good friend with pandits, and don't be boasting and laid to rest lazily.*

*You should acknowledge that even a huge mountain could be destroyed as a lake run dry by the heat of the sun. We are tiny and weak, so it is good to endeavour. We should not boast for ourselves and disregard other's concerns.*

*While ornamented with best costumes and being honored they are no more than empty rolling barrels. For the sake of the public happiness, it is better to have your mind embellished with Dhamma and your head crowned with Sila.*

## Chapter 15

### Watch Out for Sweet Words

You have to be careful with people, especially with those who are using sweet words. Sugar cane or palm juice has sweet taste but if you leave it sit for a prolonged period with yeast, it will become an intoxicated drink. The same can be said for people with sweet words that can intoxicate you. Once intoxicated, you become light-headed, dazed and you're not yourself in what you do. In some instances, this can lead to financial lost because you believe someone else sweet words.

You should think carefully when some one speaks sweetly and praises you that you are good at this and excellent at that. You have to be very careful and don't be flattered by those who pull you into their trap. Don't lose yourself with all their sweet words. If you are not deceived by those sweet words, you won't be disappointed at a later time.

Fishes die because of the lure of the bait and its shelter. They do not die if they are not attracted to the bait. For this reason that you must

be careful in every way, not just the sweet words alone. You have to be careful with other worldly enticements in your life and don't let yourself be deceived like those fishes.

Beloved children, vigilance is your spirit. Be vigilant in everything is very good. You have to remember the following words of your parents.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*You can forget most of the things, but don't forget yourself. Forgetting yourself is considered as sliding into a ravine. If so, be quick to get out of it while it is not too late.*

*You can lose your material belongings, but don't lose your fame because it is impossible to be recovered. You have to be careful and don't be addicted to sense-desires, which ruin your life.*

*Ruining oneself and ruining your fame are dangerous and render one's life worthless. Even though you are in this condition you should not let them happen again. You should try your best to redress your situation.*

*You can throw things away, but don't throw yourself because nobody can rescue you on your behalf.*

*Keep yourself till you reach the other bank with vigilance. Vigilance is your own Buddha hood.*

*It is your mother who helps to produce all firm virtues.  
Patience is your father who manages you. All virtues are  
comparable to a waxing moon.  
Forbearance is considered as medicine, which is hard to  
swallow, but its bitterness bears a very good result.*

## Chapter 16

### **Praise and Criticism Are Empty Words**

When people praise or criticize you, you have to be calm and don't let their remarks affect you at all. You have to think about them whether they are true or not. If they are true you should not get angry. If they are not true you have to think that the speakers don't know your whole story at all. This attitude will prevent thing from being blown out of proportion. On the other hand, if you're good as they say; you just acknowledge that they know the true story about you. If you're not good as they say you shouldn't be happy to accept which is not true at all. If you can apply what you are told there won't be any rise or fall of egos based on people's praise or criticism.

Criticism or praise is just the 'words of mouth'. They come and go, and they cannot do any good or bad at all. People who are driven by criticism or praise will have mental problems or even become psychologically insane.

When people are in the open under the sun, they said it's very hot, but under the same condition

if they're trying to dry wood or clothes, they say it is a very good day. Nothing can satisfy everybody in every way. You should remember your mother's words.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*The moon and the sun don't know anything although they are praised and blamed. Clouds are like flying birds. Rain and wind cannot escape the blame either. Buddhist monks are not free from blame. Thieves and plunderers will be caught red-handed. Even the Buddha, there is no full acceptance from people; and his beautiful teaching is not immune from being despised.*

*Praise and criticism exist from the past and cannot fully be accepted. If you follow the wise men you will be lucky.*

## Chapter 17

### **Distinguishing Between Good and Bad People**

When you praise or accept someone as a good person, you have to look at all sides and be sure that it's for certain. You have to observe that person for months and years not just relying on its face value. They can be nice to you, help you, and speak nicely to you. You don't have enough time to think over so you think that he is a good person. In fact, a good person for you is not certain that he is really a good one because he may expect something from you. You may be able to do something for them or at least you haven't stand up against him, therefore they're nice to you. Other reason is that you're a husband and wife or related to him. The really good person is the one who is good to you as well as to others.

At the same token, when people are nice to others than to you, you should not consider them as bad people. Bad people are the one that is not nice to you as well as to others.

The reason we, as parents, mention this to you because we want you to know in the future and don't believe people easily. This sort of knowledge will prevent you from being cheated by others. We don't want you to be bias in judging such and such people as good or bad.

## Chapter 18

### Medicine for the Mind

No one wishes for suffering but everyone will experience it either for less or for more regardless whether we welcome it or not.

There are two kinds of suffering, which are mental and physical suffering. Physical suffering can be alleviated with food, clothes, shelter and medicine. For mental suffering, Dhamma is its medicine.

Dhamma is the medicine for mental illness, and it's a kind of medical booster for the mind. It makes the mind healthy, and serves it as a refuge. Physical suffering requires food and medicine while mental suffering it is a must to be cured by Dhamma. You have to understand this concept clearly.

People who don't see this truth won't have anything to depend on when they are facing with mental illness. They will be sad and they lament about it hopelessly and blame other people for their suffering.

Clever people understand well about mental illness, and they have recourse to Dhamma. They listen to it, study, think over and apply it to cure the mental illness in the same way as they do to the physical one. For this reason, they have Dhamma as their refuge. They use Dhamma as a means to face problems in life, and they can secure peace and happiness, which are cleared of unwholesome roots.

Treatment of physical suffering doesn't depend on age as long as there is a disease to be treated; and the same way of treatment will also apply for mental illness using the Dhamma.

People have greed, hatred and illusion as the disease of their mind. They urge them to commit unwholesome acts. You have to have Dhamma at hand irrespective of your age. You have to apply Dhamma whenever you are facing problems in life until you get rid all of them from your mind. You ought to learn and to understand fully the Dhamma, and you will see how marvellous the Dhamma is. Consider the following poem.

The following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Having fair complexion and lovely, but it cannot match with good heart because physical body will grow old soon, while a good heart is not subjected to be decayed. You, boys and girls, should not disregard the Dhamma, which is worth more than any precious stone because it will help you to get out of this human realm. The body stores all sorts of diseases, but the Dhamma is free of all illnesses.*

*If you practise mindfulness and be of good conduct your mind will be bright. The body is sick and life is coming to an end, but a bright mind will not die.*

## **Chapter 19**

### **Managing People's Mind**

A boss who is kind, fair, caring and friendly, never takes advantage and does not cause any harm to his subordinates. He creates a warm and trustful atmosphere for them. In return, his subordinates will sincerely and truly respect him from the bottom of their heart. They will remember their boss' virtues for the rest of their lives. You may have the opportunity to be the boss or in a position of decision-making. You must not forget our advice if you wish to gain a true love and respect from your subordinates.

It is a good policy to make your subordinates love and respect you from the bottom of their heart. People who are afraid of you will not respect you at all. This is a very bad policy.

Leaders who use only their authority but not their human virtues will create only the subordinates who are fearful. They lack warmth and confidence in their heart and are devoid of true love and respect for their leaders. For those managers who use their virtues more than their

authority their subordinates are confident, obedient and respectful to them. This means that they are good leaders who can manage physically and spiritually their subordinates.

People in positions of responsibility who wish to control other people's heart using their authority to earn their respect are completely wrong. The real power arises from the creation of an ambiance of warmth for the subordinates. The ambiance of warmth endowed with sincerity, love and respect is the result of generosity, caring and the real concern of the managers towards their subordinates. These are expressed in terms of gift in kind and money, moral support, familiarity, provision of good and useful advice, forgiveness, intimacy, honour and promotion etc. . .

If you need to manage people's heart you should know how to provide help and assistance to them with compassion and loving-kindness as often as possible.

## Chapter 20

### **Taking Responsibility**

When you work for yourself or for others, the most important thing to consider is taking full responsibility.

Taking responsibility is the act of commitment and confidence to perform those works systematically and deliver them on time.

People who take responsibility don't need anybody to remind or force them so often. They are self-motivated, conscientious and mindful that the works have to be accomplished. People who are responsible are the ones that other groups or even the country consider them as useful. The responsible people are productive in their work and progressing brilliantly in their life in contrast to those who are devoid of the spirit of responsibility.

People who are careless and irresponsible are not serious in their work. They overlook their duty and are not fully committed to their work. They are fussy in their work. They prefer to opt for easy ways out. They are greedy for money

and want to be in positions of authority to give order to others.

You have understood this concept and you have to train yourself to be a responsible person. Steps to get to that goal are not that difficult because it starts with self-reminding before hand. You need to remind yourself that it is your duty, your work, and your business, and to manage them by yourself. Once you started the work, perform it with perseverance and your best possible ability. You have to demonstrate that you are a knowledgeable and able person. The result of your endeavour is that you will be rewarded accordingly.

Reminding oneself constantly to be responsible will make your responsibility increase and in the long run you will become a person with good responsibility.

Dear children, it's not necessary for your parents to leave you wealth. Knowledge, good deeds and responsibility are the only good things that parents should leave for you.

## Chapter 21

### Golden Opportunity

There are people who, in positions of power and authority, can have a golden opportunity to deliver good services to the nation, but they fail to do so. They did not realise the importance of this opportunity and gave priorities only to securing their own power, prestige and honor, and personal benefit. In reality, if they use these opportunities in a timely fashion to produce useful assets or good works for the community, and remember their achievements, then these masterpieces will generate an eternal fame or prestige for them. They would give them the most essential benefit to their lives. For even, after they quit their positions, people in the community would keep talking about them, and acknowledged their deeds with praise.

Now let us turn to your own case my children. If you ever reach a high position within the community, be not insensitive about what you should do. Please use all those golden opportunities provided to you by that position to produce useful assets and good works, which you can keep as good

memories for your life and for the general benefit of people in the community. These assets and good works will be used at a later date with affection and appreciation.

Again, be always mindful, my children, if you are fortunate enough to be in a position as a high-ranking leader, you should be determined to achieve what I have told you. If you fail to fulfil my words while you are in such a high position of authority, then your golden opportunity becomes useless. Unconsciously, you have ruined your fame and honour in life for ever after.

## Chapter 22

### Don't Be Too Naive

During a dialogue with friends, it is often hard to avoid talking about people, criticising or analysing their behaviours or personal qualities. In these circumstances, you should learn to be patient about the agenda and be cautious about the criticisms. In other words, be not easily misled. More directly and importantly, if you are in a high position, e.g. a director or a responsible of any institution, or a head of a family and so on, you should pay more attention to this problem of gossip. There are people who always want to talk without thinking of any harm caused to the feeling or the reputation of others. Some want to talk because of their pleasure and satisfaction in talking. They want to attract listeners as well as get them excited and involved in their rhetoric. Some people talk with their full intention to divide people and to let others down. The content of their speech is varied and multifaceted and full of hidden motives.

You should listen to their talk with mindfulness and don't be too naïve. It is better not to react to those words instantaneously, but you have to take time to consider them seriously. Your careful and serious consideration will help you avoiding any deception and unhappiness in the future.

There are lots of naïve people whose fame, reputation and good nature have been ruined by this kind of irresponsible gossip. There are lots of naïve people around who have created discord and mistrust within their family circle. It leads to divorce, family breakdown or an atmosphere of uneasiness between members of the same family. Our advice to you is to be on guard on any gossip. It will serve as a precaution in your life.

## Chapter 23

### Employing People

Delegating a duty to a person means employing someone with a specific task. It involves considering the person's ability and his work, and to match his work record with the skill required for the work in question. Last of all is his knowledge and responsibility. Engaging the right person to a task will enhance the smooth progress of the work itself.

If you do not appropriately match a right person to a right job or employ a person who is your friend or engage a person without any serious condition; you will not only experience a work without progress but also face a complete failure and destruction of the work itself.

So far, there have been many cases in which the persons in higher positions had hired unfit people to carry out the tasks. The result was disastrous. Works of national interest have been assigned to people of the same political affiliation or associates who do not possess any good qualities. The result was a complete failure.

Therefore, if you have to engage someone to undertake a task you have to be careful in such appointment. The appointment to the job should not be based on political affiliation but on competence and the spirit of responsibility. Whoever has the quality and experiences required for the job should have the job.

You should be mindful of your work, if you don't you will face failure and your downfall is inevitable. Failure in any assigned task can happen to anybody irrespective of whether the person in question is very skilful or not, once he is careless and acted like stupid people.

In all, in relation to work you should be mindful, don't leave it to chance and don't think that it doesn't matter much, but you should be serious and attentive in every aspect of it.

Following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*People are worth more than money*

*Honesty is worth more than a diamond. Don't be stupid and give away yourself.*

*Do not trade yourself for any amount of money.  
Giving away your body means selling out yourself. This  
is your father's word because any person is always  
worth more than money.*

## Chapter 24

### Order and Disciplines

Flower arrangement in a vase is admired and praised by people. The admiration is due to a skilful decorative artwork of a person. Some flowers are not so beautiful, but they turn to be nice because they are well arranged in the pot. Other flowers are naturally beautiful, but they do not have a good chance to look beautiful as expected once an unskilled person arranges in a pot. The same thing is applicable to items used in a household. They can make the house looked ugly or worthy of praise according to the ways those items are arranged by the householder. The analogy can be extended to include people too. Some people can be worth of admiration and respect because they are nice in appearance and their behavior is attractive. Flowers and household items are worth of praise due to the care of their owners, and human beings need a better self-management to get the same praise and attraction from other people. Orderly manner in things is considered as an art. Order and self-

discipline are considered as important attributes for human beings to be good.

Beloved children, an uncarved piece of wood is not different from another piece of firewood to be used in our kitchens. However, this similar piece of wood whenever it is well carved it will become a valuable art item. Moreover, it will be extremely dear, if it is carved into a statute of the Buddha, because Buddhist followers will pay respect to it.

Dear children, you can lack most of things in life, but not your own orderly manners and self-discipline. You should discipline yourself in using your time at work as well as in your social interaction.

In this world, if you do not observe any discipline, or self-regulated principles, how can you be accepted and admired by other people. Therefore, you should learn and practise whatever is good, such as establishing in your self some sound discipline, rules or principles that constitute a true education of yourself.

Following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Performing good deeds you will be rewarded in good deeds, this is a nice proverb.*

*Possessing virtues in your heart, your life will be superb. Virtues can be developed through practice; and perseverance can enhance self-development.*

*A stone or a log can be carelessly trodden over, but if polished or carved into a statute of the Buddha, then Buddhists throughout the world will pay respect to it.*

Virtuous persons embellish themselves with Dhamma and *Vinaya* – rules of disciplines.

They abide to them and put them into daily practice.

They purify their physical, verbal and mental actions all the times. They observe the teaching and pay homage to the triple gems to improve their life.

## Chapter 25

### Stubbornness

When living together or sharing life, in the case of married couples there is always one strange thing occurred between the two people. That strange thing is the misunderstanding or differences of opinion between the two. In a married life, sooner or later the husband and wife will have misunderstandings between them on petty or important matters. Misunderstandings do occur more often than anything else. Please remember that misunderstandings do not consist of only misunderstandings amongst people, but they also involve many other kinds of deviations from the truth as well.

Misunderstanding and stubbornness added together create more problems because either party stands firm on his own conviction. They believe that their perceptions and conceptions are always correct or true, and moreover, tend to blame others for failing to make sense of what they perceived or conceived. After some while of arguments, their differences become greater;

and ultimately end up with separation from each other without any hope of possible reconciliation.

Dear children, you have to keep in mind that misunderstanding never brings benefit to anybody, only discord and unhappiness among friends and acquaintance. Being husband and wife, why should you engage in argument based on misunderstanding. Wouldn't it be better if you turn to each other, talk nicely to each other about each individual wish? Use your rational objectively to clarify your different views together, and finish up with satisfaction of having worked out what is true together.

Although having two different physical bodies, husband and wife should share one heart in common in order to have a peaceful family life. Husband and wife should have used their reasoning based on cause and effect. Either party should not act according to one's own whims, and decide the matter without regards to the partner. Although the marriage break down does not occur yet, but husband and wife turn their back to each other while sleeping due to the fact that they are not happy being together.

Husband and wife should control their individual desires, and do not let the desires control them. They should do the same thing to their anger. Before acting and speaking they should be mindful and be in control of the situation. Be concerned of other feelings and avoid causing uneasiness to others. Don't act and don't talk if you feel that it is not necessary. Cleanse your mind of your wrong and evil views, stubbornness, misconceived thoughts and attachment. Hold on to cause and effect, and the good Buddhist practices as one's ways of life. Husband and wife should have compassion for each other and be frank and sincere all the times.

## Chapter 26

### **Narrow-Minded and Open-Minded**

There are people who lack material wealth but have many friends and neighbors, upon whom they can rely for help. This renders their difficult tasks to become reasonably easy to carry out. In contrast, there are people who are rich in material wealth and higher positions of authority in the community, but lack companions, friends and peers. In some occasions, they are surrounded by lots of people, who cannot be trusted because the majority of them come over only to seek favours. It is not so hard to find these two categories of people in our community nowadays.

In fact, those good friends and companions are very important, because in the community there must be some kind of tasks, which need to be carried out together. People can be brought together through good and constant communication among members of the group. What makes a person have a large group of peers, that sincerely love each other, wish to

help and look after each other, commit to help solving each other's problems without being asked to do, and are willing to share with others any goods they individually own? The answer is that these kinds of people are generous and open-minded.

A generous and open-minded person can attract large group of friends. This is in contrast to a stingy and narrow-minded person with no concern about others. The latter usually lacks supportive peers or friends, and when they need help, it is hard to get any help at all.

My wish to you is that you should be kind and open-minded persons. Whichever you have, you should share with others. This move will bring you good merit. When people have problems and worries, you should make yourself available and ready to help as far as you can. At least, you should offer moral support in order that they can start to cope with their problems.

Showing concern and moral support, in time of crisis, are most needed to help people to face isolation and despair. Dear children, you should remember that human beings couldn't enjoy happiness forever. They have to face

misery as well. Whenever you experience misery, you will clearly understand how important are materials or emotional supports from good friends or neighbors. They are considered as special medicines for your mind, which produce warmth, comfort, and hope. These will enhance your effort and perseverance to overcome obstacles.

## Chapter 27

### Do Not Imitate Others

You must have noticed that some people like to gather in order to talk behind others' back. Once these people have seated themselves together, they almost never loose time in bringing others' businesses into the agenda of their discussion. Most of the contents of their talks are aiming to ruin the reputation of others. They are fond of considering themselves as experts on information about other people's problems or shortcomings. They pretend to know it accurately; and their fluent rhetoric makes them feel so comfortable to talk effortlessly and aimlessly without end.

Oh my children! Remember that the longer the speech, the less valuable it will become as it is reflected in this saying: "The more you talk the more you have made mistakes". This is a message for those who never learn about the harms of an excessive talk. You should not imitate this category of people. Put it this way, if other people criticise

you or talk behind your parents back, it is sure that you will not feel comfortable at all.

In talking about other people, you should be overly cautious even though you have restricted yourself to talk only about a certain truth or about their good sides. When you talk about a person's goodness, you should also consider the feelings of others who may not be happy to hear it. If you spread false or fabricated news about others you are sinful because you tell a lie.

My children, you had better turn to your own businesses. If you do not have any issues to be put into your own agenda, it would be better for you to take a rest, read a book, or listen to the radio, for this will create in you a sin through your words.

For those others' ill statements, even they are aiming at you, you should not pay any attention or create any uncomfortable feeling at all. If they gather and talk bad about a third party, blame someone or criticise others, these are others' business. You should think about your own issues, in terms of what should be done first and what should follow. Even better,

you should leave the company of those talkative people.

In short, you should remember the following statements:

1. Dangers come to your life through your mouth, whereas crises also go out to others from your mouth too,
2. Whoever likes to talk bad about people is a useless man, and
3. A person with no virtue never gets rid of self-praise and disdaining other people. He is fond of extravagant talks. He is compared to an empty rolling barrel.

## Chapter 28

### Endurance

There are people who seriously and honestly work harder to improve the quality of their lives and those of their families, until they have achieved their decent goals. They should deserve great praise.

There are in this world not many people who, without doing any work, have inherited enormous wealth from their parents. In general, people earn their wealth from hard work, especially through their various knowledge and skills without any inheritance.

Obviously, there are two types of heritage, the property heritage in terms of material wealth left over by parents, and the intellectual heritage, which was the formal and informal education provided by parents. You should reinforce your spiritual strength to match it with your physical and educational power so that you can improve your quality of life.

Having a better position in life, earning an easy life, and having material wealth can be achieved

only through physical hard work, perseverance and endurance in one's professional skills. You have come across with people, who have no perseverance and endurance, but always wish to have an easy and happy life without putting any effort at all at to work. They are useless and hopeless, because they do not have any opportunity to develop themselves in order to move up the social scale. They face hardship in life even though they may have huge mass of wealth at their disposal.

Beloved children, “Life is struggle”. This is an old saying. You should consider problems in life as strengthening pills. You will be sure of encountering obstacles if you are determined to struggle in life. If you are successful in overcoming one obstacle, you will be confident and in a good shape to overcome more obstacles ahead. You should endeavour to reach your ultimate goal in life.

Parents have no material wealth left for you, but what we have given you is your life, your physical and moral strength, and enough and essential education. You must start to use all these resources in order to successfully pursue your goals in life.

## Chapter 29

### Genuine Struggle

In carrying out any kind of task, the worker must struggle and face various kinds of difficulties. Those who are successful in achieving their tasks are those who have overcome minor or major difficulties. Difficulties can be overcome successfully through determination to face them. It does not mean avoiding or skipping it as though one can easily jump over a fence. People have to struggle by proceeding fearlessly through to the core of the problems. Consider for examples, how a rowing team can take their racing boat through a rough sea, or how people can walk through a very hot sunny day. People have to go through those dreadful waves and storms, and horrible heat of the burning sun in order to fulfil their aim in life.

In fact, facing an obstacle is not that exceptionally hard, if you have struggled with your own mind successfully in advance. A real and valuable fight is the fight against one's own mind. It is much harder compared to other forms

of struggling outside one self, for example, facing the cold, the heat, the rain and even a famine.

In order to win over your own mind, you must wake up your mind and strengthen it. Don't allow it to be complacent and regressive, but train it to be strong and ready for action. Once you have won over your mind and gain a strong will power, you are then able to fight against any difficulty outside your mind, with a strong hope that you will go through that difficulty with success and safety.

If you cannot win over your own mind through fighting with its main hurdles, which are laziness, lack of courage and lack of a strong will power; what are other difficulties can you expect to be able to overcome. Again, if you succeed in winning over your own mind in advance, then you can fight with an upper hand with anything in this world. This is because there is no battle that is harder to win than this battle with your own mind.

Following is the translation of the Buddhist proverb into English:

**Atta~~o~~ hi attano na~~o~~tho kahi na~~o~~tho  
paro siya~~o~~**

*Help yourself. Other people cannot help you.*

**Attana~~o~~ hi sudantena**

*Training your own mind is a courageous act. Fighting  
your own desire successfully*

*makes you a virtuous person, according to the Buddha.*

**Na~~o~~tham~~o~~ labhati dullabham~~o~~**

*Seeking refuge in the Dhamma is not an easy task for the  
people in this world of Samsara.*

## Chapter 30

### Vomiting Brings In Relief

There must be some days that you, as a human being, have to bear sufferings or face problems that create many troubles or worries to your mind. It can be a problem that you cannot tell others or that you think no one else is able to help you at all. This kind of problem may cause you to be tired of life, left alone, and to have frequent sighs. You think too much till you have a headache, and no appetite for food or sleep. All these can eventually lead to a mental breakdown.

When you fall victim to the above-mentioned types of suffering, do not keep them to yourself, but instead throw them out to ease your mind. This can be compared with the situation of having an upset stomach accompanied by constipation, where you will feel better after having defecated. Likewise, all depression, worries and mental stress must be thrown out of your mind in much the same way.

There are some problems, that create a pressure inside, that manifest themselves in the form of violence and revenge to hurt others. It is highly

recommended for you, my dear children, not to let out in this way.

The best method to let go your sufferings or worries is to tell other people about them, and the first trial is to tell your own parents. Let your parents know about what has happened in your mind, which has caused you so much suffering. Let them listen to your problems. They are neither a poison nor a demon that create problems for you. Parents are always ready to share your feelings, worries or concerns although they are not in a position to help you. Parents can be considered as a container that you can discharge all your worries and problems in life into. You can cry, weep and lament your painful feeling as long as you like in front of them. They are always pleased to hear, share and accept your problems all the times. You should not think that your parents are strangers. We, as parents, are pleased to be the container in which you can discharge all your problems. You should feel free to use us at any time. Do not keep your worries and problems inside yourself because they make your life miserable. Please remember that your parents have been your own container or toilet from the very beginning of your life since you were in the womb.

## Chapter 31

### Jealousy

There is something that can happen naturally to anyone. It makes one angry and painful. This something is called jealousy or rage. Jealousy arises when you see someone who is far better than you are. You feel that he is your enemy or your contender. This sort of feeling intensifies your jealousy enormously. Someone who has jealousy will unknowingly destroy his inner peace. He finds fault in everything; and it is a change of heart from compassion and loving-kindness into a mind devoid of virtues. He is a narrow-minded person.

The fire of jealousy is very powerful; and it can make people murder each other. The fire of jealousy can ignite the heart with its constant burning of anger. This burning fire although it can be easily lit, it depends also on someone who sees his enemy or contender in a better circumstances than himself. If this same condition happens to his friends, this jealousy will not occur.

After you have understood it, you should be very careful about these unwholesome feelings.

In order to prevent it from happening to you, you should turn yourself into an open-minded man. Other persons whether they are your friends or enemy; they have their rights to decide their own affairs as any other people do. If you cannot be happy with them; it is better for you to be indifferent or pretend not seeing or hearing or just seeing for the sake of seeing only, and just hearing for the sake of hearing or just knowing for the sake of knowing. This will help you to be free from being burnt by the fire of jealousy. Everything that occurs has its own appropriate causes. How can we be envious of someone else's advantages?

My dear children, please keep this in mind: "do not wish to own anything that does not exist, and do not be attached to anything that you have. All things happen in accord to their causes, and all things are subjected to changes. When you are lacking virtues, you cannot appreciate the good deeds of others. Therefore, the one who harbors miseries is no one other than you are. It is stupid for you to keep the fire of jealousy burning in every occasion of your life. Don't be a fool, don't be jealous of others, and don't burn yourself with the fire of jealousy.

## Chapter 32

### Think Far Ahead

The old adage said: "think far ahead". It means to look into the future far ahead. This saying has a very important meaning because the one who thinks far ahead will succeed in his work at the long run. The Khmer word 'kom baeng khley' means do not think just in the present time. Short-minded people are those who see only things in the present moment. The people having the hand-to-mouth idea of livelihood will receive only short results. There is nothing important; and as a result despair will arise. On the other hand, short-minded people will do things carelessly, swiftly without appropriate thinking. They act on their impulse; and they will suffer later for their whole life. They may become murderers while others will commit suicide.

Whenever you engage in your work, you should think far ahead as it is stated in a Khmer proverb: close firmly your eyes, but you should think far ahead". If your work in which you are involved is of great importance in life, you should

think seriously and very far ahead. You should be mindful all the time. Have you ever thought that some works are of utmost importance compared to your life?

When dealing with works, you have to remember that:

- No people can be free from difficulties if they lack perseverance and dare not face hardship.
- Without patience, there won't be any good work.
- Without struggle, no work can be achieved.
- Preoccupation with love affair is not compatible with importance responsibilities.
- Skillful in jobs, but being careless in their works, they fail miserably as ignorant people do.
- Live to work, but not just work for the sake of living only.
- Nobody will be able to make you important except yourself, who observe your own profession.

- Don't turn yourself into a lame man, while you are still very fit.
- Bad work leads you to darkness, while good work brings you the bright aspects of life.
- Jobs, which are free of ill wills, will bring in good progress.
- Jobs are honor and life themselves etc...Jobs are worth more than anything else, because they will help us to rid of misery. All these are lessons in life for you to consider and think far ahead.

The following is a translation from an excerpt of a Cambodian poem:

*See far, don't see near.  
 If you flirt with a woman, observe her behavior.  
 Please the king with what he wants.  
 Please the common men with what they wish.  
 Know your guest by noting their behavior.  
 The true words will be detected.  
 Lies may imply the hidden truth.  
 Assuring words may disguise the dishonest heart.  
 Putting on a monk's robe doesn't make him a monk.*

*Leave the wise for the fool as a mean to avoid misdeeds.*

*How possible for someone who is holding a ladle in hand, can claim he knows the taste of the soup. It is not possible to produce oil from pressing the sand.*

*It is impossible to make a bamboo case using unknotted bamboo; and in the same way how can one sound a gong or a drum without using a stick.*

*How can one rely on a firefly for light instead of the sun?*

## Chapter 33

### Be Ready

In your daily life, you will always encounter problems, which obliges you to solve them. Sometimes this problem arises and then other problems arise too. At others times, you have difficulties and frustrations because you cannot solve those problems. You have faced similar problems in the past therefore you have to be prepared. This precaution reflects well in the saying, which states: “care is better than cure”.

It's like planning a trip. You have to prepare before you leave. You make a plan for your trip. You pack up your food, your clothing. You prepare your transportation and your money. At the time of departure, you will have all of what you need. You will be on the road on time and you will not leave your needs behind.

Likewise complete preparation is the best prevention and a good solution to the coming problems. They can be solved in a timely manner. In other words, it is like having a stock of reserved water for any fire, a medicine for an illness.

In daily life, you have to prepare yourself physically, mentally ahead of time. Then you will know what to do when problems will arise.

As related to this manner, the Buddha said: "Do not underestimate". A mindful person will not underestimate things in life. He is usually prepared for the worst even in old age, sickness and death. As with the law of impermanence and the law of karma to which all of us are subjected a mindful person will face them calmly without any panic.

Be mindful in life, my children. Don't let the good opportunities pass by with time. You will be a good person if you can exploit all good opportunities for your own benefit. Please remind yourself, that "no one can make your life happier than your own goodness has done for you", therefore, in your life, you should be good. For this reason, you have to be ready for every aspect of your good deeds in life.

## Chapter 34

### **Kindness Is Essential**

We, your parents, told you in the past that people should be kind to others when they stay with other people. Beloved children, you can lack everything, but as good people you should be endowed with kindness and generosity. You should not be selfish, but be altruistic.

People who are devoid of good heart will not have good friends. Those who still stick with them will one day leave them. In the same way, animals will flock to a place where there is enough food and water. People with good heart will attract lots of friends. These friends prefer to stay together although the place is even too crowded. It reflects well the saying: “be mentally comfortable is far better than living in a crowded place”.

You are aware of what we have told so far. It is better to be a man of good heart, especially, the people that you work with or your subordinates. Whenever you can assist them do so, and you have to remember, “a valuable person is

someone who is the most required by others". People always require a valuable thing, and such a thing is always scarce.

Good heart people are not many in this world, and they are in need by other people. Good heart people are required by families, people in villages and district, and even in communities, therefore you should be a person with good heart. You should be grateful to people who are good to you. You should repay their gratitude wholeheartedly. You should reward them. You should show your good will towards others who are kind to you. At least, you should praise them and to make them happy. Caring for others is a good policy that can attract people to you as well as make them kind and gentle towards you.

Good heart is a special virtue comparable to special precious stone that can improve the quality of people who has it. People with good heart will also gain other virtues. Beloved children, remember that good heart is the happiness in life.

## Chapter 35

### Management of Suffering

When you are physically strong and healthy, your body can easily overcome several illnesses without difficulty. You will suffer less and enjoy more with your physical health maintained. Likewise if you don't want to have any mental suffering, you must build a strong mind in order to counter any mental state of suffering.

In reality, this psychological pain comes directly from your thoughts. Those thoughts originated either from internal or external responses to stimulus such as sights, sound, or touch. Your mind takes those thoughts and manipulates them into its own whim. If your mind holds on to good thoughts, you enjoy good feelings. If your mind holds on to bad thoughts, you will suffer from unpleasant feelings.

For example, if two persons are facing the same difficult situation, one may enjoy the challenge; the other may go through a great deal of pain. The latter one may also experience a loss of

sleep and appetite. It depends on how they set their mind either with positive or negative emotions.

For that reason, you must not let negative thoughts consume you. Learn to build a strong, positive attitude toward life for the sake of your healthy mind. Learn to get rid of bad thoughts and to nurture good thoughts. Feed your body and mind wisely to keep your physical and emotional health in balance. A mindful state with wise consideration will serve as a good breeding ground for healthy mind to fight against suffering.

It is hard to build a good breeding ground for healthy mind. You have to have a consistent practice for a long period of time before you can have a good result.

You have to remember that the most important job for your life is to train your mind and to keep it healthy. Be mindful all the times, and you must live with your heart endowed with Dhamma.

## Chapter 36

### Recognize the Face but Not the Mind

A Cambodian old adage said: "people can recognize each other's face but not their mind." It is valid through out the time, and it can serve as a reminder to be careful when dealing with others. You can easily be fooled by their appearance. They may seem very trustworthy, but their hidden thoughts may be dishonest. A man's drawing picture seems far better than the man himself due to the skill of a good artist.

A person can create a good and attractive appearance through his facial and verbal expressions as well as his behavior. That's how the proverb: "people can recognize each other's face but not their mind." started.

If you want to make friends or become a business partner with someone, you must consider carefully his heart. Look at their intentions, and how they live their lives.

The Buddha taught us too through his teaching. One can discover whether a friend has practiced *Sila*, precepts, while staying with

him; knowing his good heart through his speech; knowing his strength when physical power is required; and knowing his wisdom through verbal communication.

You have to understand people's heart by the following means:

- Knowing whether someone has practiced *Sila* – precepts, through sharing a residence, observing with diligence, and applying one's own wisdom,
- Knowing whether someone has a healthy speech by comparing his different speeches as well as his open and hidden speeches, talking behind one's back,
- Knowing the weakness and strength of someone's courage and virtues by ways of his handling a serious crisis. Is he calm and determined or shaky and fearful?
- Knowing whether someone is witty through his questions and answers.

Without careful observation, you may be victimized by putting your total trust, your total love in the

wrong person. You will suffer from regret and deception due to your false expectation.

As for yourself, you should be kind and honest to others, especially those who love and trusts you. Do not deceive anybody by your unethical behavior. People must be faithful and honest to each other. In life, you shall abide to your good conduct and honesty. Let other people know your kindness. Let them feel your friendliness and your trustworthiness.

## Chapter 37

### Our Feelings and Other Feelings

It doesn't matter who you live with; it is important for you to consider their feelings. That is how you can make a happy or unhappy home and relationship. You have to understand how people feel in order to understand their wishes, their aspirations; and it can be highly important. Whatever you do, you can't always think about yourself only, you have to avoid hurting others through your actions. Sometimes you think that your action will benefit others, but they think in the opposite. You have to be careful to avoid all the mishaps that can make people unhappy. They do not welcome any unhappiness that is resulted from your action. Greedy people are self-centred people. Self-centred people are always in conflict with others.

Dear children, as human beings we should think of others who are hungry while we have plenty of food. We should think of others who are suffering while we have a happy life; and we should think of others who are poor while we have

a prosperous life. If you behave this way, you are the one who is generous, thoughtful of others, caring for others, helping the needy ones. As a result, the people will like you in general.

If you are a selfish person, you will be isolated because no people will approach you. When you are in trouble and you are in real need for help, no one will come to help you at all.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Their heart, your heart; be concerned, and be considerate. It is good to consider the teaching of the Buddha.*

*Their heart, your heart; be restrained from your caprices. You should train to live in a modest life devoid of all mishaps.*

*Consider yourself, practice mindfulness on compassion; and at the same time you have to rid of all hatred. Work out for happiness with your self as well as for others. Happiness is not far away, but within you.*

## Chapter 38

### Think Before You Speak

Speech can cause trouble as well as happiness. Cambodian tradition has a pool of sayings reminding people about appropriate speech. They are:

1. A broken strap of bamboo can be easily replaced, but not a careless speech,
2. Human mouth has lips, likewise a bottle has its cork,
3. Walking requires three conditions, while speaking needs four,
4. People are worth of their speech, while an elephant its tusk,
5. Turn your tongue ten times before articulating your speech,
6. Tongue can be either the source of happiness and unhappiness,
7. Speech is number one, while numeracy is number two,

8. A nocturnal bird is killed by its dropping, while a small flat fish is caught by its mouth bubbles etc...

In your work place as well as in any ordinary relation, you must be very careful in your speech as it is stated in this proverb: “a stupid guy speaks aimlessly, while a pundit speaks from the bottom of his heart”. If you have to speak, your speech must be originated from your good heart. Think before you speak, and don’t speak just in response to your careless impulse. The more you speak, the more mistakes you will make. If it is necessary to speak, you should speak mindfully. You must be sober in your speech. You should be fully aware when and what to speak out. Speak according to the Dhamma and according to appropriate ethics. Any speech must be useful and beneficial to the intended audience.

Nowadays, people can be good speakers, but be aware of the content of their speech. Among them there are not many who really speak from the bottom of their heart. It is hard to come across a well-balanced speech, a speech, which can generate reconciliation and happiness. Everyone

can say what he or she wants to say. They can talk about good things, bad things, irritating things, convincing things, bragging things, stupid things, and so on. It is their right. They are responsible for what they say. One important thing for you, my dear, is not to speak as they do. You must really think before you speak. Be cautious with your words while communicating with outsiders.

In regards to outsiders, we don't know their whole story. We cannot speculate on what we don't know. Even if you do know it, you should speak with compassion. Don't just talk about your own good things and paint a bad picture of others. Bring up some virtues that other people have and have the courage also to let people hear about some of your bad deeds. For the sake of fairness to all, wisely stand in the middle way, the Buddhist way.

## Chapter 39

### Non-Witted Mind

You may have heard this sentence before: “look closely for the merits in others”. This sentence tells us to exercise our minds to inquire the good side of persons we know, the individuals we associate with, or the people we are living with.

Human beings are full of unwholesome deeds therefore there are many shortcomings in their characters. Nobody is free from blame. Before you take somebody as a friend or an associate, look closely for the good qualities of that person. If you find some flaws, go ahead and do not take note of them. It is better to focus on the many good aspects in him. This is a good strategy to overlook minor mistakes, which help us to overcome hatred and vengeful ideas towards the persons that we are associated with.

In reality, with a compassionate mind we can discover good aspects in people we know. People with good heart can discover easily the good characters in other people. In the contrary, unkind people will find hard to discover any good characters

even the person in question has quite obvious enormous qualities. Such a person is said to have a 'blind-mind'.

A 'blind-minded' man cannot see the good side in any people. He is overwhelmed by the four wrong motifs, which are 1- impartial due to love, 2- impartial due to hatred, 3- impartial due to ignorance, and 4- impartial due to fear. Nobody can find justice within the heart of a 'blind-minded man. This type of person cannot even know that he is really a 'blind-minded' man. It is better to have company with a blind man rather than with a 'blind-minded' man. Be aware that doing good things for a 'blind-minded' man will not benefit anything from him.

What we told you so far is to remind you that, on most occasions, you could recognize only a person's face but not his/her hidden heart. You have to learn to gain experiences in the human psyche. It allows you to avoid mistakes, prepare your mind for any appropriate decisions to come. The old saying goes: "serve the king for what he wants, serve the citizen for what they wish"; and at the same time, be mindful and do not let yourself to become a 'blind-minded' man.

## **Chapter 40**

### **The Path of Life Is Not Smooth**

The path of life is not always even or smooth. There are ups and downs, joys and sorrows, successes and failures. The more responsible the job is, the more problems there will be. After a careful consideration, you have engaged in a job you think that it is worthwhile and beneficial in the long run, but unfortunately it turns to be very bad because it does not go as it was planned. At this point what should you do? Don't give up. You should continue your challenge with tact and skillfulness, and patience. Don't be panic, but be sure to commit yourself in finding solutions to the problems with a high-spirited determination.

The useful key element in your life in time of crisis is the power of your mind. Don't let the power of your mind run down in whichever condition it is. You may experience the salary cut, but don't let the power of your mind goes down.

Keep your spirit high, care for your mind, and be careful not to let your mind be defeated in

whichever condition you are in. A Khmer saying stated that: “after a fall you have to get up”. It means that a person who makes faux pas on a slippery path will, for sure, fall down. He must get up and continue his trip otherwise he will not reach his destination. In the same manner, if you are disappointed while encountering obstacles, you should have a strong determination. This determination will help you to get of this impasse; and then you have to persevere in your task until you can receive a reasonable result out of it.

My dear children, you should have known that deception arises from having no hope; therefore in your daily life you have to learn to maintain your positive attitude and hope in life. Don't let deceptive thoughts pull you down. It is true that hope can enhance the power of the mind, but in certain circumstances it can create also some deception resulted from unforeseen failures. To face this situation, you are advised to cultivate wholesome wills. These wholesome wills help keeping you happy and satisfied in your present job. Satisfaction and happiness in job encourages you to work for others without

requiring anything more than it has been agreed upon. The products of your work are blameless. If you fail in your work, you do not have any deception; and you are pleased to pursuit working in a job, which is free from any harm.

It is hoped that you will not let your spirit down while pursuing your work. You have the full strength for your job as well as having a peaceful mind while you are in your job.

## Chapter 41

### **Loving the Bright Side of Your Life by Cutting Off the Eight Vices**

You should remember the following Khmer saying: “Sralanh vaeng oy kat sralanh khley oy tau” This saying has a profound meaning in life. It has the following meaning:

*If people are really liked the bright side of their life they have to stay away from the eight vices:* In general, people want to have a bright future, a happy life, and a long-lasting reasonable social status. To maintain this quality of life, people have to get rid of negative attitudes, which can ruin their harmonious life. Those negative attitudes are the eight vices. They are 1- committing illegal sex, 2- addiction to alcohol and drugs, 3- lavish spending, 4- addiction to gambling, 5- frequenting non-recommended places by night, 6- attending night-clubs, 7- being lazy, and 8- keeping company with bad friends. The benefit resulting from dropping these vices are so many. People will have a bright future.

They are wealthy and endowed with honor and virtues.

*Admiring the healthy side of your life by ways of cutting off the eight vices* These vices do not only destroy the people's wealth, but they also degrade the quality of their life as well as their family. They destroy the people's spirit, which forms the vital part of their life. These eight vices are comparable to the main entrance to hell. They are viruses, bad friends; and they lead people to commit sinful acts. They are the sources of all destructions. People may not believe in the abandonment of these eight vices; and they keep enjoying their daily life without thinking of the mishaps in the future to come. These people will realise one day the bad effects of their thinking.

You have encountered some of these bad aspects of life in the past. Some people have a very hard life from the beginning, but due to their hard work, wise spending, good conduct and abstaining from those vices, they become rich and have an easy and bright life. Some people have very happy life because they have inherited lots of wealth from their parents. Their vision in life is very short. They spend their inherited wealth

carelessly. They see no value at all in their wealth because they earn them without any effort. It is not too long before their wealth disappeared; and they become miserable forever after. It is pity to see such a huge wealth, which is the product of their parents' hard-work being destroyed in a very short time.

Dear Children, these eight vices are too bad, they are the evil, and they can destroy people who live them. You have to remember your parents' words, which are: "admiring the bright and healthy side of your life by ways of cutting off the eight vices".

Following is the rendering of the Khmer poem into English:

*Admiring the bright side of you life requires you to drop all the eight vices.*

*Admiring the healthy side of your life requires you to stay away from them too.*

## Chapter 42

### **Cultivating Generosity Is Better Than Begging**

“Giving makes you popular, while begging creates a sense of uneasiness”. This saying is true. You can check it yourself. The first few instances of begging are acceptable, but in the long run it will create an atmosphere of uneasiness from the part of the providers. In the contrary, you feel very happy if you have received even many petty gifts from others.

In this context, it is better for you to be a generous person than a beggar. You will be popular and people feel at ease with you. They may in certain circumstances choose you as their leader.

While living together in a community, you must think of “what can I offer to others” instead of “what should I get from them”. By cultivating and engaging your mind in this way, you will get used to it. People who give more and receive less will be endowed with all the best qualities as mentioned above.

In fact, what you have done to others it means also for your own benefit. Transforming yourself to be a good person and making your life worthwhile means that you have provided good services to others as well as to yourself.

In the opposite, if you behave as a beggar you are happy to receive more than you have to give away. You will become a narrow-minded and selfish person. You are addicted to begging, and nobody wishes to be your friend. You may attract some people, but they are not your genuine friends. They are the ones who exploit you.

You have to possess the following four Dhammas to deal effectively with people in general. They are:

- 1- If you think that it is worth the gift, let give it,
- 2- If you think that sweet words are required, let talk sweet words,
- 3- If you think that it is appropriate to help them, let help them, and
- 4- If you think that such people are worth to be honoured, let honour them accordingly, but you should not be haughty.

## Chapter 43

### **Use the Money and Not to Be Used by It.**

Nowadays, people think that money is everything. They consider money as their own God because money can buy everything even the people's heart. People are addicted to money and they are rushing for it. People commit crimes and use all sorts of illegal means for the sake of collecting money.

That is the reasons why people have very hot mind, and the weather is likewise. Money is important, but you should not give too much importance to money till you forget what is right and what is wrong. When you give too much value to the money, it would become your boss and it would lead you to do all sorts of bad things. Consider yourself, when you do not have money you restrict your spending to only most basic necessary things, but once you have plenty of money to spend you diversify your spending to everything even beyond what you really need. You don't know that the money controls every aspects of your life.

People with less money have much time to sleep and rest, but when they have more money, they don't have time to sleep or time to sit down and relax while having their meals. They cannot afford their time to spend with family. There is no warmth in family life. These are examples to show that how money can enslave its owner.

Dear children, you can notice how rich people behave. They engage in big projects, and even they dare hiring people to kill other people whom they dislike. They look after malicious people and they practise unwholesome deeds. They are not faithful to their partners in life, and they commit adultery etc....Money dictates them in every of their evil deeds.

Therefore, you must be careful and be smart. You have to study your greed and your stupidity, and don't be enslaved by your own money. You must be the real master of your money. Use it in a proper manner. This is the only way that you will be free from any mishaps in the future.

## Chapter 44

### Revenge

You've watched Chinese movies, especially in martial arts. People are trained to perform and endure emotionally and physically for fatal fights. They have a strong conviction that 'blood is for blood' in the same way as in the western concept of eye for eye, and tooth for tooth'. At the end, most members of both parties are killed in the fight. This is only a scene from a movie, but it can serve as an example in life. It means that revenge is not good at all.

It is true in the real sense of the word, my dear children, that revenge is really bad. If someone hurts you, don't fight back, but try your best to bear it. It is not wise to be engaged in wilful revenge, because it will physically and spiritually ruin you. It is a waste of time, and you cannot have peace in your mind. Revenge is fire in itself. It burns your mind and your thoughts and you cannot get out of this revengeful thought. Revengeful thoughts are evils, which destroy you and your family life.

Lord Buddha taught that: “Victory breeds hatred. The defeated live in pain. Happily the peaceful live, giving up victory and defeat”.

Dear children, if someone makes you angry, you should try to forget and forgive it. In doing so, you will feel happy and your mind is healthy. Nourishing revengeful thoughts for the sake of revenge can bring only a temporary relief, because such thoughts still persist and aggravate throughout your life in whichever conditions you are. These evil thoughts lead you to execute the revengeful act, which makes you end up in jail for years or even for the whole life. It is not only the jail sentence, but you will also have created a vicious cycle of hatred with your enemy.

You can extinguish this fire of hatred through forgiveness as well as in abstaining from revenge. You cannot have peace in mind, unless you have put down the fire of hatred.

## Chapter 45

### **Educate Your Mind for a Peaceful Life**

When we are not happy or having problems in life, the best and first solution is to educate our mind. Sometimes after your mind has been educated, some of the problems have been resolved, therefore it is recommended to have the mind settled first. Educated the mind means that to rid the mind from greed, hatred, illusion or from physical, verbal and mental unwholesome actions. Polluted mind is the main causes of the problems.

The way to educate the mind is to be mindful, get rid off worries and doubtfulness. It requires examining the true nature of things, especially to fully understand how such problems arise, and whether they occur to everybody or to you alone. Recognise yourself that more serious problems do occur to others as well. You should acknowledge that these problems are natural. To see the true nature of things as they unfold means understanding the work of *Sankhara* – the conditioned in Buddhism. They are the world

problems, the problems of human kind, which are also the problems in life. Once you fully understand and have experienced yourself those problems, you are in a good position to have your mind educated. The good result is that hard problems will turn to be easy ones while minor problems will become unnecessary ones. At this stage, the mind is clear and you will experience happiness in life. You are proud of your own solution to the problems.

Dear children, what makes you worry is the state of your mind, which holds and clings to the problems. Suffering has its own place in you mind, because your mind keeps it and entertains it. Once your mind relinquishes the suffering, you will experience peace in your body.

In reality, educate one's mind means develop one's wisdom. A mind, which is devoid of wisdom, would create unnecessary problems to the body. To rid of misery from your mind, you are obliged to develop wisdom within yourself.

## Chapter 46

### **Be a Trustworthy Person**

You should make yourself suit to the old Khmer saying: “make yourself trustworthy when you are around; and make people think of you while you are away”. Wherever you are whether living with someone, or working with your co-workers, the most important thing is to create a warm and friendly environment. Don’t make people frustrated, do not create any disturbance, and do not create problems to people with whom you are staying or working at all. You would live with honour and have lots of friends if you create a warm and trusty environment for others. On the other hand, if you cause troubles to other people and make them frustrated, they would be scared of you, and unhappy about you. As a result, you are dishonored and living in misery.

To be a trusted person, and able to live in a friendly environment, you must not think only of yourself, but instead, you should speak nicely, help people who need help, be part of the whole group, maintain a high standard of moral values,

and don't be haughty. These are the attributes of a civilized person.

Following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Smiling, engaging in conversation, using nice words, helping others, and sharing what you have are the best policy of life.*

*Knowing how to be generous, faithful, thoughtful of others, and attentive to the Buddhist teaching are considered very helpful in life. You have a good heart if you are not haughty.*

*A kind heart is an enchanted heart that can attract people. A person who has a kind heart makes people think of him while he is away.*

*A person who knows how to use himself is the one that bring services to many others. He works relentlessly for others, and he will be remembered when he passes away.*

*Understand oneself, according to Buddhism, means knowing one's duty. Such a person is a popular figure in the society.*

*Knowing how to remind one self is to be coupled with perseverance. These two qualities can make people earn lots of sympathy for not being lazy. These people are always ready to help friends and family members.*

## Chapter 47

### Don't Be Conceited

Someone is considered conceited when he tries to compare himself with other people. There are three different ways:

1. Thinking that one is better than others,
2. Thinking that one is worse than others, and
3. Thinking that one is equal to others.

These three considerations are not good at all.

Thinking that you are better than other people would make you arrogant and disdainful to others; and you act according to your whims with no regards to others. Thinking you are worse than others would create hesitation in your mind. It makes you spiritually weak and effortless. Your life is compared to a boat drifted aimlessly along the current. You will be looked down by others because you are lacking courage and effort.

Thinking that you are the same as other people would make you act arrogantly. You do not have any regards to others because you think that no body is better than you.



What you should do is to follow our custom. There is time when you should listen and be kind to others. There is time when you should be strong and stand up to defend your ideals, but at the same time you should be also flexible to the situations in which you are.

A clever person is someone who can fit himself nicely to the society of his time. Freeing oneself from conceit is considered as having a very high virtue, which can enhance combating stubbornness. It will bring in happiness and progress to life.

Following is the rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*People with good speech and heart will experience good livelihood, because these two qualities are the basic ingredients for life.*

*A reasonable person criticises only the mistakes, but he highly upholds others virtues, which are used as map for travellers.*

**Ga**  **ravo ca niva**  **to ca** *are the two guides who help to avoid mishaps as well as leading people to a higher place.*

The first is **Ga&ravo**; it means respect. The second one is **Niva&to ca**; it means to free oneself from conflict by ways of being modest and gentle. These are the two basic qualities for life.

## Chapter 48

### People with Genuine Heart

Outside appearance and speech cannot assure that a person is worth to be friend and trustworthy. Behaviour is man-made as well as any speech; therefore they are not reliable criteria. A person may say that he likes us, knows our heart, and pays lots of respects for us, but in fact he is not our genuine friend. He may have a hidden agenda.

There are other people who do not spell out their heart to us, but they can be our genuine friends. No one can take for granted that these two groups of people are all bad or all good. It depends on our consideration of their actual works for long period of time.

People who are good to us stay faithful in whichever conditions they are. They help and protect us in whichever conditions we are facing. These are the conditions and criteria that we should look for in the heart of those people we think they are good and genuine friends.

Other people are nice in our presence, but talk behind our back while we are away. They neither help nor pay attention to us. They are superficially nice to us with the intention of using us and exploiting us for their own benefit. They are not good friend at all.

In making friendship, you have to consider it seriously. Do not be convinced easily by those sweet and empty words. If you fall in this trap, you will loose your credibility, as well as your wealth. And on top of all, you will be completely disappointed.

## Chapter 49

### A Healthy Body

We all want to have long life and be healthy. Longevity and being healthy do not happen naturally as we have thought. People who are caring for their health are healthy, and can live much longer compared to those who are not taken care of their health.

You should keep yourself healthy. Do not overwork, and take some breaks. Don't let your body become weak from overwork, because that would make your body vulnerable to diseases. When you are sick, it is hard to be cured and regain the same healthy condition as it was.

The best option to care for one's health is to follow your doctor's advices. They are: first, to consume appropriate food, undertake regular exercises, and to live in a good environment. Second, keep your mind healthy by ways of avoiding problems causing irritation and deception, do not overwork, and do not consume alcohol and drugs. Third, it is necessary to observe regular time for meals as well as sleep

habits. These three conditions will strengthen you body. Once your body is in good shape, it will help to maintain your good health. This will provide longevity

Keeping yourself healthy is listening to your doctor's advice, such as eating healthy food, exercising enough, and staying in a place with fresh air. Keep your mind clear. Do not get mad or upset about anything. Do not overwork. Do not drink alcohol and do not do drugs. Eat your meal at the right time and get enough sleep every night. When you are strong and healthy, you rarely get sick. Then you will have a healthy long life.

Being in good health is considered as one of the best assets in life. It provides energy and strength to earn your living. You are in control of your own life. In the opposite, if your health is not good you will face enormous obstacles in your life, because you cannot work to earn your living. Sometimes, your mind becomes weak and you are completely desperate. Life is meaningless and people do not want to live any longer.

Everything else depends on health condition; therefore it is of prime importance to sustain one's health in good shape.

**Arogyaparama** ❧ ❧ **la** ❧ **bha** ❧  
**santut** ❧ **st** ❧ **hiparamam** ❧ **dhanam** ❧  
**vissa** ❧ **saparama** ❧ **ña** ❧ **ti** ❧ **nibbanam** ❧  
**paramam** ❧ **sukham** ❧

*Being in good health is the best gift you could ever have.  
Full satisfaction with tolerance is your best wealth.  
Sincerity is considered as best relatives, while Nibbana  
is the utmost happiness.*

## Chapter 50

### Mental Health

When talking about health, we think about health of our body, especially strength and a body, which is free from diseases. In fact, mental health is more important than the health of the body. A healthy mind would be clear, bright, free of any anger and non-polluted. Therefore, keeping your mind healthy is the most important.

Care is also required to keep a mind healthy. Such a care is involved in making sure that there shouldn't be any accumulation of unhealthy thoughts in the mind. *Ayonisomanasikara* means wrong considerations, which open the mind to all sorts of unhealthy thoughts. These thoughts putrefy like rotten food; and make the mind sick.

There is nothing wrong in the thought itself it is you who think that there is something wrong in it. The same story line is bad for someone, but it is not for another, because he thinks differently from the first person. This is to show that there is nothing bad in the story itself, but it depends on the feeling of each individual. In this case, you

should not allow your thought to create unnecessary bad feeling for you.

In this world, there is nothing better than being a good person. Instead of wishing others to do good to you; it is wise for you to perform good deeds to yourself, because in this world nobody can perform good deeds for you and on your behalf. Only your own good deeds that have real effect on your mind, that is to say, it will bring peace and a tranquillity of your mind. Once your mind is in good shape everything else will be self-regulated.

A healthy mind is considered as an essential asset for a person. A person is very valuable for himself, therefore one have to live with oneself who is a good person. A good person would endeavour to keep his mind healthy.

**Pavivekarasam**☒ **pitva**✎ **rasam**☒  
**upasamassa ca nindaro hoti nippa**✎**po**  
**dhammapi**✎**tirasam**☒ **pivam**☒

*People enjoying happiness resulted from a tranquillity of the mind and the taste of Nibbana – a state of bliss, at the same time, enjoy also rapture resulted from the Dhamma. They are the people who have neither sin nor problems in life.*

## Chapter 51

### Environment

Besides caring for better physical and mental health, it is very important for people to care for the environment too. You have to understand and care for them as well. Good environment will also enhance a better physical and mental health.

There are natural environment such as trees, mountains, rivers, weather, etc... as well as other environments, which are man-made such as homes, places around homes, vegetation and roads. All these environments can provide benefits as well as harms to people dependent on how do we care for them.

It is important for you to care for it for your own benefit as well as for others. You have to start from your house, bedrooms, kitchen and bathroom. It is your duty to keep it clean, bright and not filthy. You should not turn it into a pigsty, which is prone to diseases. The area around your house should be kept clean. You grow flowers, trees for shadow. You should avoid making puddles that mosquitoes

can breed. Make your place clean to keep away flies. Do not throw rubbish from the kitchen and other dirty rubbishes in unsuitable places. Do not cause dirt to fly and do not emit any bad and filthy smoke, or loud noise that disturbs your neighbours.

Caring for a good environment, it means not destroying it. It will provide benefit to every body. A good management of the environment will create a good living place, and a house with good environment. The roads are good and the water streams are also good etc.... Villages and districts are bright. In the contrary, if we do not manage the environment in the proper way, it means we destroy it. If we do so, the environment will punish us by ways of creating destruction to our society and causing harms to us.

**Udakam☒ hi nayantti nettika✂**  
**Usuka✂ra✂ namayanti tejanam☒**  
**Da✂ram☒ namayanti tacchaka✂**  
**Atta✂nam☒ damayanti subbata✂**

*In general, farmers will irrigate their rice-fields; archers will make arrows straight; carpenters will chisel the wood and put it straight, and those with good practices will educate themselves.*

## Chapter 52

### Train Oneself Successfully

You should engage to build yourself according to the following three dhammas:

1. Teach oneself,
2. Train oneself, and
3. Use one's utmost effort.

The first dharma 'teach oneself' means that people in general neglect to teach oneself but prefer to teach others; and they do it with success. Train others to perform this and advise them to do that successfully, but they fail miserably in life because that cannot teach themselves. In fact, it is very hard to advise, teach and train oneself and the hardest of all is to alter one's bad temperament.

In general people commit mistakes or are effective in their work, but when they have encountered them they must teach and advise themselves not to repeat the same mistakes. Constantly reminding oneself is a mode of self-improving thought, which enhances oneself to face with confidence and success any work in the future.

Without the good advices of others, we may not succeed in advising ourselves because we think that we are smart. This, for sure, will lead us in the wrong direction and it will end up with a terrible disaster.

You should train to advise yourself regularly. It is not wise to rely on others to advise you. Other people cannot be with you all the time and they do not know every aspect of your life and your ways of thinking. Your thought and your mind are very abstract; and it is only you who know them thoroughly, therefore you are in a better position to advise yourself than any outsiders.

**Attana𑀓 codayatta𑀓nam𑀘  
pat𑀓imam𑀘setamattana𑀓  
So attagutto satima𑀓 sukham𑀘 bhikhu  
viha𑀓hisi**

*Oh monks! People who investigate themselves and reflect by themselves thoroughly are being fully mindful, and they will live happily.*

## Chapter 53

### Teach Yourself

The second dhamma is to ‘train oneself’. It means teach oneself and manage oneself to understand the true meaning of life. It also means knowing oneself thoroughly. You should know that you have your own knowledge and capacity. You should realise how clever and how strong you are, and the most important of all is to know what is the most useful thing in your life. You should study yourself thoroughly as you study a book or a bible. You should understand every aspect about yourself as someone who studies carefully a road map in preparation for a long journey or even as a house builder who studies carefully the architectural drawing prior to the construction itself.

The process of life, any working processes and planning a journey or building a house are not different. They all require an appropriate study. The longer the study, the better it will be. Knowing oneself better is the necessary requirement for a good work performance in life as well as for any other worthwhile decision-makings.

If you do not even understand and know yourself, how can you succeed in your work? In the same way, a traveller who can embark on a journey without a road map will be lost for sure. The time and effort that he has spent are useless because he does not know the way therefore before you decide to do any work you have to know yourself thoroughly. Read your own mind like you read a book prior to any commencement of work. If you abide to this rule you will be certain of not having any problems from the very start.

Besides knowing your own knowledge, capacity, intelligence, strength, and your aims in life you have to know your original duty, status, gender, expertise, virtues, and ways to behave according to your responsibility and to fulfil the aim beneficially and legally in order to avoid any disaster.

**atta𑀓 hi attano na𑀓tho atta𑀓 hi attano  
gati  
tasma𑀓 saññama atta𑀓nam𑀓 assam𑀓  
bhadram𑀓va va𑀓n𑀓iṅṅo**

*You are your own refuge and you are your own ideal, therefore you have to look after yourself as merchants who seriously look after their good horses too.*

## Chapter 54

### Utmost Effort

The third dhamma is to ‘use one’s utmost effort’. It means people in general like to be praised. People that are worthy to be praised should have demonstrated their ability to use their own utmost effort in their work. People without this virtue are not popular. The way to create this virtue is to strive hard by himself or herself or knowing how to use themselves properly. Applying one’s effort or using oneself is to advise oneself to work, work by oneself, thinking to provide services to others, and make oneself useful. Others should not tell you to work, but whatever job is suitable take it. Some works do require consultation with others just to make sure that it will meet the requirement intended.

Those who can use themselves effectively are those who are not fussy about what job they take. They are the people who have *attasampada* – potential people or people endowed with progress. They have a strong mind. These kinds of people are always active and ready to assist others in their work.

If you wish to gain this virtue and belong to this category of people, you have to know how to conform yourself to the above mentioned advice. Be active in work, be helpful to others, help with good heart, and don't be a heartless person. Don't be a man who amasses only material wealth because such a person is heartless and selfish. He is not straightforward, has no virtue, and is not worth to keep company. Others do not like him.

Beloved children! Building your own virtue is better than to be cunning. Creating virtue is not too hard; it only requires a persistent mindfulness, and don't be a person with empty words and heartless.

**Digha𑀧 ja𑀧garato ratti digham𑀧**

**santassa yojanam𑀧**

**Digho ba𑀧la𑀧nam𑀧 sam𑀧saro**

**saddhamam𑀧 avija𑀧natam𑀧**

*Long is the night for him who is sleepless; long is a league for him who is weary; long is the cycle of existences for the ignorant ones who do not know the good doctrine.*

## Chapter 55

### Attachment

Human life cannot avoid facing troubles, worries, and mental unrest of all kinds. Among these troubles, there are worries arising from attachment to one's physical body. The objects of attachment are many and varied such as people, objects, works, position, knowledge, and personal thoughts. Attachment creates an intensive and obsessive sense of belonging. This attachment brings in all sorts of troubles, worries and misery. Each object of attachment has its intrinsic misery. No attachment to any thing means no misery, and troubles.

If you want a genuine peace you have to decrease your attachment to those things. You have to keep in mind the following words: "do not crave for things that do not exist, do not cling to your belongings. Everything has its own cause. Everything that exists does not last for long. You should not carry big pieces of stone on your head, and do not accept work which is beyond your ability. Each load has its own weight. It can be light or heavy, but once you unload it you feel at ease.

The load carried by your mind is not only heavy, but it is very hard and even impossible to unload it. This creates a heavy burden for your mind as well as all sorts of worries and troubles forever. Not the burden or the load is the matter of concern, but whether one can unload it at a suitable time so that one can enjoy his life accordingly. It is better than to carry it forever.

Attachment is a matter of the mind and comparable to a heavy load. For such a heavy burden if one can release it, one can find some good times. If one can unload it forever, one can obtain a real peace of mind.

## **Chapter 56**

### **Win-Lose Based on Causes and Effects**

A desire to win through argument, even though it is based on causes and effects, cannot improve any situation at all, but it is a waste of time and can cause division and serious conflict in society. Speeches based on causes and effects are not always appropriate, especially, within families and groups. Understanding each others' softening one's stand and being quiet are also effective means of conflict resolutions. It seems from the outside that such means are not reasonable, but in fact, they can create agreement and intimacy, and avoid discord. This is the peaceful way out of potential-conflict situations.

Husbands and wives who stick to their own ways of arguments based on causes and effects in order to gain an upper hand in their conflict have ended up in separation or divorce. Stubbornness and win-lose concepts of conflict resolution are the main causes, which ruin the family life of many married couples. Reasoning based on causes and effects are not always effective. They must be used

wittingly and according to appropriate time and situations.

Living together and working together require forgiveness, a better understanding, patience, and forgetting insignificant matters. It looks unreasonable to hold in such a stand, but it can lead us to reach a peaceful agreement, and help preventing discord. It is far better than arguing for the sake of winning the case, and ending up in dispute and revenge. A concrete example is the traffic situation in which people are reliable mainly on the green light. People may be in rush, and disregard the traffic law. They go through the red light, which is again the law. A collision may occur, and the victims are those who abide with the green light traffic law. Similarly, in our daily life activities one should think of these above-mentioned examples, instead of relying solely on rules and regulation in place. Be on our own guard is better than anything else.

In some circumstances, loving each other and in family life situations, it is not recommended to use argument based on causes and effects because the problems in questions are beyond the reasons based on these relative and incompatible causes and

effects. In these cases, it is only plausible to have concession, a better perception of the reality and frank acceptance. If some things go wrong don't blame or quarrel with others, but use your own virtues and wisdom to overcome the problems.

## Chapter 57

### **Mindfulness Leads and Wisdom Follows**

If you wish to avoid shortcomings, which produce problems in life, at works or in communication, you have to think thoroughly before you start working or speaking. Mindfulness helps you to be aware before working and speaking so that you can avoid making mistakes. Having right thought before working and speaking is an effective means to avoid making mistakes. This process is one of the characteristics of mindfulness, which is a necessary virtue in life. People without mindfulness act and speak ineffectively or forget most of important things. This lack of mindfulness can bring disaster, which requires lots of time to resolve or it can even involve the loss of important things in life. Problems are adding up all the times, and there is no plausible solution at hand. Being mindful is the only way out of one's shortcomings and disaster.

Mindfulness leads wisdom as plough to ploughshare. It is possible to increased wisdom by training in mindfulness. People have intelligence from

birth, and they become clever and very knowledgeable because they have studied hard. If they lack mindfulness and are careless they will face danger in the same way as any ignorant people do. Whenever mistakes and frustration arise these people think that “if I knew it would happen I should not have done it”. It is not wise to act out and speak by relying solely on one’s wit or wide knowledge before considering the matter seriously. Don’t consider your cleverness before any mindfulness; otherwise problems will arise ever after. Mindfulness and wisdom are essential ingredients for all kinds of works; and they should be considered in pairs.

Lord Buddha said that: “if people realize that they are the centre of their own love they must care themselves with their utmost”. Everybody loves himself or herself but he or she never really knows what the object of his or her love is, therefore there is no such a care is taking place. If people lack determination in caring for themselves this means that they are careless, therefore their livelihood is not good at all.

In facts, everybody is living with his own self from the time of birth till death, and after

death he is still living with his own self until he has reached his last life in the Samsara. If we do not improve our self we will live forever with the self who is not good at all.

Children, you must be careful all the time. You must train yourself to keep your mindfulness alive because it helps you to refrain from committing mistakes. It is like having a guard to catch the culprit. You should consider this poem.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

**Hi** ~~✂~~ **nam** ~~☒~~ **dhamam** ~~☒~~ **na seveyya** *violent conflict and abuse, being ungrateful to parents and being unfaithful to Buddha are considered as the violation of the teaching.*

**Hi** ~~✂~~ **nam** ~~☒~~ *means very mean, and it refers to ungrateful people who consider Buddhism as their enemy.*

**Na seveyya** *are these bad people whom you should not associate with. These mean behaviors are increasing and can be found everywhere in the society. Young and old alike have embraced these mean behaviours under the influence of money, and they end up in jail.*

**Pama** ~~✂~~ **dena na sam** ~~☒~~ **vase** *you should avoid at all cost the cruel life, and turn to the practice of wholesome deeds as a way to escape from this evil. My dear children*

*don't be careless, and you should not be deceived by your own desires because they will cause misery. You should contemplate on the true aspects of the dhammas. If you do not stand up you are in trouble because life is full of drama. You are alone and full of ignorance, and you are lost in this world of darkness. Beloved children, pay your attention to my words. Don't be enslaved by music, but listen to the dharma teachings. Do not get involve in the three vices, which are committing illegal sex, consuming alcohol, and gambling. They are dangerous to your life.*

## Chapter 58

### Life Is Invaluable

Do you know that “life is invaluable”? Our life and the life of others are also invaluable for us as well as for others. That is the reason why the first element of the five precepts has stressed the importance of abstaining from taking life. People are the most important for themselves. Animals and other persons are also important for themselves therefore we should not kill at all.

Once you realize the importance of your own life you should try your best to look after yourself. You should act for the benefit of your own as well as for others as much as you can. Bad actions, which produce unwholesome Kamma should be avoided at all cost.

Lord Buddha said that: “living just for one day with strict observance of Sila – *Buddhist precepts* is worth more than one hundred years of livelihood, which is devoid of Sila”.

Maccuraja, *the King of Death*, takes away our life span day by day. To be reasonable and in response to what we have paid daily to the Maccuraja, we must work harder for the same period of time to gain the life-value, which is worth more than the value of a twenty-four hour living. Do you know that performing good merit to get rid of suffering is worth more than life itself, therefore you must be careful not to lose the credit of your daily life.

## Chapter 59

### **Human Beings Are Useful for Themselves**

What is the best thing for people in this world? To be born as human is the best of all. We are bad, sinful and crooked; we disregard the rules and cause trouble to others. Although we may have acquired lots of diamonds, a hill of gold and a plentiful of wealth we still cannot become good people at all because we have been very bad.

People are fond of themselves. They support and move up the social scale for their own sake. In a similar circumstance, you should be careful if it happens to think that: “if we have good salary we will be better off”. You should not be corrupted by this mean idea because it will push you to earn your living by illegal means.

You should guard against your many and varied intentions such as wishing to enjoy something or loving some things or somebody because you are the most valuable for yourself than any other things. You should consider the following poem.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*You are told to do good deeds. Wearing white is a sign of having good heart.*

*You are advised with selected best practices in the same way as someone filters the dirty water for a good one.*

*You are reminded days and nights to be industrious and diligent. Work is your best friends.*

*Being straightforward is worth more than diamonds, and don't forget yourself because you are very worthwhile.*

*Don't exchange yourself for money.*

*Disregard yourself means selling your own; this is the truth of the matter. You, as human being, are worth more than any money; therefore you should care for your own in the best way that you can afford.*

## Chapter 60

### We Are the Centres of Self-Love

Lord Buddha said: “If people know that they are the centre of self-love they shall care themselves to their best. ‘Self’ here is used in the sense of the ‘processes of our life’, which is the stream of the mind. ‘Looking after the self’ means looking after one’s own mind. ‘Looking after the self’ means managing well the mind in the processes of life such as educating the mind in Brahmachariyadhamma – *pure life or holy life* as well as having peace and happiness.

We have told you that you should guard against your wishes to enjoy something because if you are not careful you will be attracted to evil deeds. You should guard against your wishes to love your daily belongings, irrespective of whatever they are, because love brings in protection. Protection here is compared to a slippery opening of a crevasse. This situation is likely to get you involved in conflict. In a conflict situation, people will use nasty words.

They tell lies, use insulting words and all sorts of violent means.

If you know for sure that you are the centre of your own love you should guard against your own defilements. You should consider this Buddhist proverb:

**Cittam** ☒ **guttam** ☒ **sukha** & **vaham** ☒ - *try hard to chase away the enemy out of your mind and manage your heart with sympathy; and you will be happy forever after.*

## Chapter 61

### **Happiness or Suffering Arises from Our Own Mind**

People who are careful in their work do not let things or even their thought go astray. They are mindful in managing their thinking, for example, they do not walk into a slippery path at all.

In normal daily life, people have happiness and misery in their mind according to their ways of thinking, and that's the reasons why Lord Buddha teaches us to find our own true happiness through looking at our own minds and to be very careful in what we are thinking. If they cannot control their own thoughts these thoughts are harmful to themselves. They will bring suffering to their mind and they also encourage them to commit violent deeds.

Thoughts are considered as firewood. It will bring benefit if it is well managed, otherwise it will burn houses, and villages and districts therefore mindful people are cautious in their ways of thinking. Peace and happiness are the result of such carefulness.

Beloved children, you have to try hard to generate happiness through your own thoughts. You have to realize that whatever problems have arisen during the course of your life, they do not directly bring happiness or suffering to your mind. It really depends upon how stupid or clever you are in the ways you perceive them. It is your mind that creates those conditions of happiness or suffering.

When you wake up in the morning, you must promise yourselves that you will do good deeds, speak nicely, and think properly more than the previous days.

## Chapter 62

### Ducks and Chicken

There are two people who see ducks as well as chickens. One person wishes the chicken to become the duck and the duck to become the chicken. This cannot happen in the life of these animals. If people wish for such a thought to happen all the time then surely they will be unhappy people.

Another person who sees ducks as ducks and chicken as chicken and does not want any one of the species to change into another type of species, will have no problem whatsoever because he can accept the law of Anicca – *impermanence*, which means that things will change constantly. If we wish that things stayed the same all the time then, we will not be unhappy. Moreover, if we see the truth of Sankhara – *the conditioned* of all things that they are impermanent, we will have peace, we will not have any problems or frustrations at all.

Human beings always disagree with the truth, which does not suit their temperament. They wish to walk away from the true nature of things. On

the other hand, the wish to acquire things or to have things changed to fit one's expectation is the source of dissatisfaction.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Duck will always be duck and cannot be otherwise.  
Desiring to be happy, but it turns to be sad. This is true  
without sway.  
Any wishes should be reasonable. This is the truth of life.  
Don't distort the truth, but train your mind to gain  
happiness.*

## Chapter 63

### Water Flows Down the Stream Forever

Water flows from the mountain via the waterfall and the stream of the waterfall flows into rivers, and then into the sea and will not return.

If there is a man who stands beside the river bank and stares at the current that flows down the stream with the intention of wanting the current to flow upward, that man will endure a great deal of suffering because the phenomena will not occur the way he wants it to be.

That man does not have peace in mind, be he standing, walking, sitting or sleeping, and why. That is because the man has wrong views, and in the same way, the nature has its own way and behaves according to the law of Anicca - *impermanence*, Dukha - *suffering* and Anatta - *not-self*. Whoever thinks against these natural laws or not accepting the ways things are, that person will have regret, sorrow, grief and sob.

On the contrary, those who have mindfulness and wisdom to understand the law of the three characteristics will have contentment and inner happiness. They are the result of a harmonious life.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Clouds go away and disappear far and far like Sankhara that disappears along the day.*

*Water flows off the mountains without regret like valuable life that will leave us anyway.*

*Water flows off without return even though it sticks on rocks or mountains like people with great honor and with lots of relatives, they will die for sure.*

*Thick forest has animals, water has fishes and birds skilfully fly in the sky.*

*Eight Loka-dhammas are not permanent and Sankharas are subjected to the three laws of characteristics, anicca, dukkha and anatta.*

## Chapter 64

### Dogs with Scabies

Dogs with scabies, which have lost their hair in winter, will experience a great deal of suffering regardless of wherever they stay, simply not because of the place where they sleep or eat, but due to the disease that causes them the trouble.

Human beings are like that too, they are not happy, and they feel restless because their minds are experiencing so much trouble. People who have false views are the ones whose mind has experienced so much turbulences and troublesome. They stick to them, and don't let them go away. They keep on blaming other people and other external things for their own sufferings. They ignore the real causes of their troubles. Wherever they go, they cannot get along with other people, and wherever they go they can't find their own peace and happiness. That's because their mind has scabies in the same way as dogs do. People and things do not cause them any harm. You must understand that "wherever there are causes there are effects for sure". Frustration is caused by the disease of the mind.

You must train your minds to get rid of the right causes of sufferings and not to bark at a wrong tree.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Dogs with scabies have no hairs. They feel itchy, and become skinny in winter.*

*Having terrible pain, they run around and tremble with horror.*

*Problems are everywhere and in any postures either in villages or in the forest.*

*They are to face death for sure due to their own mishaps.*

*Just like people who have diseases in their mind are full of frustration and suffer badly like someone being hit with poisonous arrows. It is caused by too much attachment to oneself.*

*Wherever there are causes there will be consequences, therefore it is wise to eliminate all bad causes in order to gain happiness while people are in community or in the forest.*

## Chapter 65

### Snake's Head and Snake's Tail

Every one of us does not want to be unhappy. We want only happiness, but we are so attached to this happiness that we cannot be freed from misery. Happiness and misery are like a snake. The snake's head has poison and if we go close to it we get bitten. It's rather easy to catch by its tail, but if we don't let it go quickly then the snake will turn its head around and bite us. That's because the head and the tail belong to the same snake.

Suffering is like the snake's head, whereas happiness and peace are like the snake's tail. Happiness is Sukha and dissatisfaction is Dukkha; and both of them arise from the same source, which are Avijja - *ignorance* and Tanha – *craving*. That's the reason why sometimes even though we have happiness, our mind is still agitated, not satisfied or at peace although we got what we want like money or reputation. People are happy after gaining what they want, but this happiness is temporary because their mind is still unappeased due to the fear of losing them in the near future. Fear is one of the

reasons that make our mind preoccupied. Sometimes those worries have been substantiated because mishaps do occur; and the misery does intensify. This is a proof of an ordinary happiness, which is always not a genuine peace. It is called Samisasukha in Buddhism. It is similar to catching the snake's tail or like a fish, which is lured to bite bait attached to a hook.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*A snake's head can bite us to death yet the tail looks rather easy to catch, but if one holds to it and does not let it go quickly, he will be killed.*

*This act of catching causes sufferings.*

*Contentment comes first and suffering follows as Sukha is followed by worries.*

*They are symptoms of craving. Love is followed by quarrel due to sense-desires.*

*The way out of the misery is the extinction of Tanha – craving.*

## Chapter 66

### **Death, Chicken Owner and His Chicken**

Chicken lives its life without knowing what's happening next. At dusk, chicken looks for a place to sleep and at dawn, he starts scratching the ground for food. The chicken owner gives out paddy to the chicken to eat everyday and yet it does not know why it is being fed for. Chicken owner and the chicken think differently.

The chicken owner keeps thinking that the chicken is growing up, and time will come soon to have it weighed and sold, whereas the chicken is satisfied with the food given and thinks that its owner loves it.

Human beings have similar problems. They don't know where they come from. How many more days can they live on? Where will they be going? Who will lead them? They simply do not know.

Maccuraja is the Pali word for death (King of Death); and in this case it is the chicken owner. Whenever death will come after us, we simply don't know because we are attracted by its lethal

baits, which are the five sense-organs: form, sound, smell, taste and touch. These five sense-organs are comparable to a big flood, which sweeps away every people who sleep near the water of the river.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Chicken thinks its way, and at dawn it starts looking for food nearby, whereas its owner thinks of kilos and dollars. Both chicken and its owner are ignorant. They enjoy eating the lethal baits, and their death is caused by being attracted to dollars and the bait of the King of Death.*

## Chapter 67

### Thorns

Phenomena do happen by themselves and do not cause any troubles to anyone. Consider thorns, which are sharp. Do they cause us any problem? No, they don't. Thorns by themselves do not hurt anyone if they are not stepped on. If we happened to step on them then surely they will make us feel painful suddenly.

Why is there suffering? Suffering happens because we step on them. Similarly, Sankhara dukha or upadana khandha dukha – *the true aspect of suffering* is the first element of the Four Noble Truth of Suffering. It is comparable to a thorn. It will not hurt you if you do not step on it. Thorn here is taken to mean Upadana – *attachment*. If there is no attachment, there won't be any suffering.

Dhamma is compared to a pair of thongs, which can secure us from psychological misery. Walking in the forest, we need thongs; and similarly we need dharma while we are going through the Samsara – *the endless cycle of birth and death*.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Nothing is wrong with thorns although they are sharp,  
but being careless is the thing that makes us hurt.  
Sight, sound, smell, taste and touch are the thorny trap  
of the mundane world.*

*You must not be in conflict with thorns, but use thongs  
to protect you while walking in the forest. The path of  
life is really scary and only Samvara – morality  
consisting of restraint of the sense-organs is your  
protection.*

## Chapter 68

### Cat

Kilesa - *defilement* is like a cat if we keep on feeding it, it will keep on following us. If one day we don't feed it or do not feeding it on time, it will disturb us by clawing and scratching things. However, if we don't feed it for one or two days, it will disappear, and this is the same with Kilesa. Whenever Kilesa does not disturb us we will surely be at peace.

The following is a rendering of a Khmer poem into English:

*Kilesas are hot, dirty and disturbing things. They are the knots of Mara – the Evil One. They keep on demanding more because we feed them all the time.*

*Let deprive them of food, and don't become stuck by sympathy. It is not good to let Kilesas grow, but it is good for you to have Sila.*

*Restrain the speech and cleanse the mind, and restrain your appetite to chase away the laziness. Restrain the sense-organs to curb laziness, and restrain the mind through Sila to have a right livelihood.*

## Chapter 69

### **Different Types of Goodness**

Wealth that belongs to others is not as good as your own. Inheritance from our loved ones is not as good as the wealth that comes from your own hard work. Wealth obtained by illegal means is not as good as the wealth that comes from honest works. External material wealth is called Rupa-dhamma and it is not as good as the Rupa-dhamma from the inside of the body. The internal Rupa-dhamma is not as good as the Nama- dhamma that exists within oneself i.e. the goodness within.

Beloved sons and daughters, try to find the knowledge and education. You must build your ability and love goodness. All of these are the good happiness and noble wealth to have within.

## Chapter 70

### Doing Good to Please Others

Having a face with make-up is definitely better than having no face, and no head. Human beings have shame. They know their own body, their head, and their face. They know how to dress up as civilized people. They perform non-genuine wholesome acts just to build their reputation and face-saving, but they are better than those who haven't done anything. The best of all is to have genuine, physical and verbal intentions aiming at generating wholesome merits within themselves.

Doing good things for the sake of face-saving is better than doing terrible actions - but such action is for one's reputation alone. Doing bad deeds will ruin one's reputation, physical body, mind, as well as other values.



9. Generosity is a provision for a long journey towards nirvana.

10. While practising generosity, one should abstain from taking life.

## Chapter 72

### **Sila** - *precepts*

You must study the following nine points about Sila:

- 1- Morality will not perish by itself, but people can be separated from morality.
- 2- Mistakes can be thought of as teachers, but please do not repeat the same mistakes
- 3- Good deeds worth more than any College's degree.
- 4- Virtues cannot be found in speech, but in one's heart.
- 5- Do not get slack at generating virtues because nobody else can do it for you.
- 6- Virtues have carefulness as mother and patience as father.
- 7- Good people do not seek their own happiness at the expense of other's suffering.

- 8- Revenge is the wound of the mind as well as the mishaps in life.
- 9- Anger is the fire that burns our hearts, whereas loving-kindness is considered as cool water.

## Chapter 73

### **Bhavana**✂ - *Contemplation*

You must study the following eight points about contemplation:

A feeling from which a sin arises, that sin will chase the mind away from it.

Enjoy being fully aware by watching out your mind.

No light can outshine the light of wisdom.

Wisdom makes us aware of the virtues of carefulness.

Hardwood-tree cannot grow within one year.

Perseverance and patience are greater teachers in this world.

Life is a long journey and our body is just a temporary resting place.

Time consumes all kinds of sentient beings, as well as its own.

## Chapter 74

### Obedience

You must study the following seven points about obedience:

- 1- Human beings should have gentle and polite manners in the same way as flowers upon the trees imparted their marvellous odour.
- 2- Gentle manners are inseparable friends of virtues.
- 3- Good people always build up virtues; and they are willingly accepted others to become better than themselves.
- 4- Those who truly know about themselves never glorify themselves.
- 5- Learn to respect oneself first before expecting any respect from others.
- 6- Gratitude shines brightly from good heart and good spirits.
- 7- The son and daughter's gratitude is the happiness of their parents.

## **Chapter 75**

### **Provision of Assistance at Work**

You must study the following six points about provision of assistance at work:

- 1- Laziness is a graveyard in which people are buried alive.
- 2- Beds are prisons for lazy people.
- 3- Laziness and poverty are good friends to each other.
- 4- People who are freed from hell are not supposed to indulge in laziness.
- 5- The King of Death reduces our life day by day.
- 6- You should work to generate benefit that is worthwhile more than life.

## Chapter 76

### Sharing of Merits

You must study the following five points about sharing merits:

- 1- Sharing and dedicating of merits are the most important generosity.
- 2- Sharing of merits is achieved through loving-kindness and understanding.
- 3- We should have strong wishes that all creatures are endowed with a genuine happiness.
- 4- We should wish that all creatures were relieved from all kinds of misery.
- 5- Do not glorify for ourselves, but we should wish others to accept wholeheartedly the merit.

## Chapter 77

### Receiving Merits

You must study the following four points about receiving merits:

- 1- The appreciation with good heart in wholesome deeds is the merit itself.
- 2- The received merits may help to cleanse sins out of the mind.
- 3- Having received merits is better than having a Devata – *deity* residing in our body.
- 4- The ability of receiving merits is possible under the condition that people are devoid of stubbornness and hatred.

## Chapter 78

### **Dhamma-dana** – *offering Dhamma as generosity*

You must study the following three points about Dhamma-dana:

- 1- The 15<sup>th</sup> day of the waxed moon of the month of Asadha (July), which is two months after the enlightenment of the Buddha is the birthday of Dhamma Preaching by Lord Buddha.
- 2- Dhamma preaching is the most important duty of every of the Buddhas.
- 3- Dhamma-Dana excels all other kinds of generosity.

## Chapter 79

### Listening to the Dhamma

You must study the following two points about listening to the dharma:

- 1- If you have read the Buddha's teaching in the Tripitaka – *Buddhist canon* it can also mean that you, personally, have paid respect to Lord Buddha.
- 2- Let us make up time for receiving the Buddha's teaching daily without fail.

## **Chapter 80**

### **Right Understanding**

You must realize that all things are happening according to their own causes, therefore causes and effects are the main points for a right understanding.

**END**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Lok Kru Buth Savong was born in 1960 at Anlong Vil commune, district of Sangker, province of Battambang, Cambodia. He attended Anlong Vil primary school and Svay Por secondary school in the provincial capital city of Battambang. His mother, Oeurng Lonh, deceased in 1976 and his father, Tuot Buth, deceased in 1991.

Like all other Cambodian people throughout the country, he was expelled from his home village, under the Khmer Rouge regime in 1975 and was forced to join the mass labor camp working in the countryside as farmers.

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, Buth Savong was ordained as a Buddhist monk at a pagoda in his native commune of Anlong Vil. Four years later, he left his monkhood, and continued to study Buddhism as a lay person.

He started teaching Dhamma classes at Battambang in 1980 and Abhidhamma classes in Phnom Penh in 1997. He has made many trips abroad to preach Buddhism to Khmers

Buddhist communities living in Australia, Canada, Europe and USA. He led many Cambodian pilgrims to pay visit to the Buddhist holy land in India as well as other important historical Buddhist sites in Sri Lanka.

Dhamma books in Khmer language for free distribution that Lok Kru Buth Savong has authored are:

1. Bat picarana  
Ratiocination
2. Jumnuoy sati  
Manual on Mindfulness vol. 1-10
3. Manus jea muoy ka ngea  
People and Works
4. Sikkhabat manus l?aw  
Ethics of Good People
5. Por buon prawka  
The Four Wishes
6. Preah Buddhabheasit 43 gatha  
Forty-Three Buddhist Proverbs
7. Khlinsa kuor yoal deung  
Buddhist Essentials Worth Knowing

8. Preah Buddhasasana  
Buddhism
9. Kon meas euv puk  
My Beloved Children
10. Mae!!!  
Mother!!!
11. Vidhi rum ngap sackdei krodh  
Ways to Appease Anger
12. Sokcit ning gunabheap nei jivit  
Accept the Quality of Life
13. Me rien jivit  
Lessons in Life
14. Peak pich mae euv  
Parents' Words of Wisdom
15. Ponloeu Thor Preah Buddh  
The light of the dhamma

Thousand copies of each of these fifteen titles have been published in Cambodia for free distribution; and they are readily available for Cambodian Buddhist living abroad.

Lok Kru Buth Savong has produced a total of 5,100 copies of dhamma-talk audiocassette tapes. These tapes can be classified into three categories, Buddhism in general, life and stories of famous elder disciples (Eta dagga puggala - contemporary of Lord Buddha) and Abhidhamma.

Throughout Cambodia, there are three towns and eight provincial capital cities that have regularly broadcasted his Dhamma talk on radio. They are the capital city of Phnom Penh, the city of Pailin and Sihanoukville. Those provinces are Battambang, Siem Reap, Pursat, Kampot, Kompong Cham, Preah Vihear, Banteay Meanchey and Svay Rieng. Khmer Buddhists living in Kampuchea Krom (South Vietnam) have also listened to his dhamma talk through AM radio broadcasting from Phnom Penh.

For Khmers living abroad, the website: **[dhamma4khmers.org](http://dhamma4khmers.org)** has posted many hundreds of audiocassette tapes of his dhamma talk since its establishment.

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