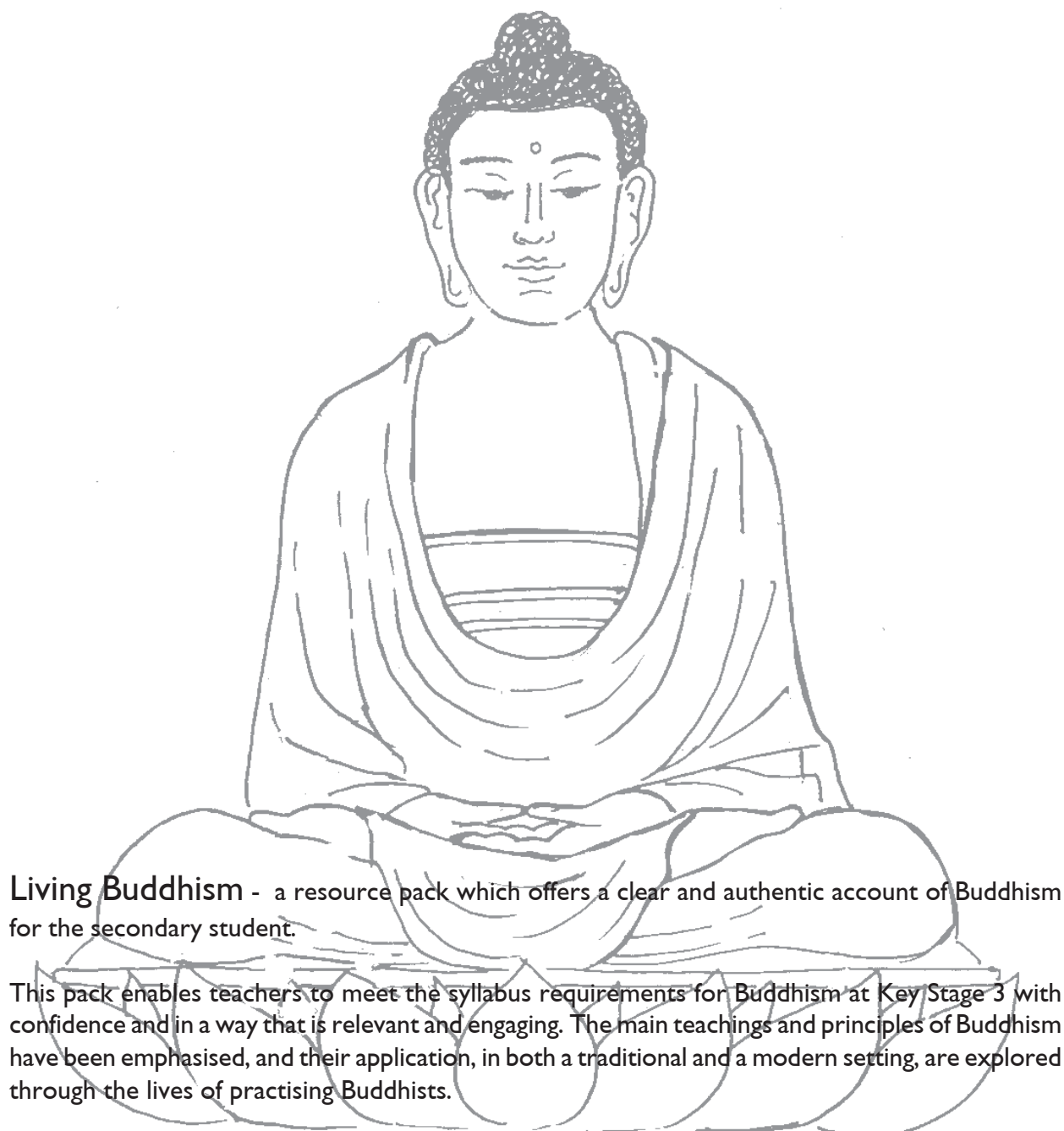


# Living Buddhism

## INTRODUCTION



**Living Buddhism** - a resource pack which offers a clear and authentic account of Buddhism for the secondary student.

This pack enables teachers to meet the syllabus requirements for Buddhism at Key Stage 3 with confidence and in a way that is relevant and engaging. The main teachings and principles of Buddhism have been emphasised, and their application, in both a traditional and a modern setting, are explored through the lives of practising Buddhists.

The teacher's notes provide background information. The photocopiable sheets for students, activities and suggestions for classroom discussion provide an opportunity for students to reflect on areas of human experience that all religions seek to address.

This resource has been produced by The Clear Vision Trust, a charity which is part of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order (FWBO).

The information sheets are for classroom use, and may be photocopied for use by the purchasing establishment.

## CONTENTS

### **PROGRAMME 1 THE BUDDHA**

---

Teacher's Notes:	The Story of Prince Siddhartha	4
	The Enlightenment	5
	The Buddha Image	6
Information Sheets:	The Story of Prince Siddhartha	7
	The Enlightenment	9
	The Buddha Image	11

### **PROGRAMME 2 THE DHARMA I**

---

Teacher's Notes:	The Four Noble Truths	14
	The Noble Eightfold Path	15
	The Story of Ashoka	16
Information Sheets:	The Four Noble Truths	17
	The Noble Eightfold Path	19
	The Story of Ashoka	23

### **PROGRAMME 3 THE DHARMA II**

---

Teacher's Notes:	The Five Precepts	26
	Karma	27
	Bodhisattvas	28
Information Sheets:	The Five Precepts	29
	Karma	31
	The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara	33

### **PROGRAMME 4 THE SANGHA**

---

Teacher's Notes:	The Spread of Buddhism	36
	Worship	37
	Meditation	38
	Stilling Exercise	39
Information Sheets:	The Spread of Buddhism	41
	Worship	43
	Meditation	45

## Programme I

# The Buddha

Contents	Page
<b>Teacher's Notes:</b>	
The Story of Prince Siddhartha	4
The Enlightenment	5
The Buddha Image	6
<b>Information Sheets:</b>	
The Story of Prince Siddhartha	7
The Enlightenment	9
The Buddha Image	11



# The story of Prince Siddhartha

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Buddhism arose from the Buddha's experience of Enlightenment. The title 'Buddha' means One Who is Awake. At his Enlightenment, the Buddha became awake to the truth of How Things Really Are. The Buddha was not a God, a prophet or a messiah, but a human being developed to an extraordinary degree.

The Buddha's teachings were preserved through a strong oral tradition for five hundred years before being written down in Sanskrit and Pali. The **Pali Canon** is the only surviving complete record of this oral tradition.

It doesn't contain a complete, sequential account of the life of the Buddha, but a Sanskrit work by the Indian poet Ashvaghosha (the Buddha Carita, or Acts of the Buddha) composed about a hundred years later, also provides a basis for accounts of his life.

The Buddha was born as Siddhartha Gautama, a member of a wealthy aristocratic family of the Shakyan clan, in what is now Nepal, around the year 560 BCE (Before Common Era). For twenty-nine years, Siddhartha lived a well-to-do existence, but increasingly found a life devoted to material pleasures empty and unfulfilling. He experienced a deep sense of dissatisfaction and also a desire to find meaning in life. The legend of the **Four Sights** represents, in dramatic form, a spiritual crisis or turning point. His response to this spiritual experience was to Go Forth, to leave behind security and comfort in order to be free to seek an answer to these questions for himself. The **Going Forth** and the **Enlightenment** are key incidents in the life of the Buddha.

In the Indian subcontinent there was, and still is, a tradition of wandering holy men and teachers. It was then commonly believed that the way to find spiritual truth was through self-mortification and extreme asceticism. After six years, Siddhartha realised that extreme self-denial was not a useful spiritual practice. Instead, he followed a middle way between the two extremes of denial and self-indulgence.

For Buddhists, the life of the Buddha is an inspiration. They worship the Buddha as the one who discovered the way to Enlightenment, as a teacher and an exemplar.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Suffering

Siddhartha's father tried to shield him from all the unpleasant things in life.

- Do you think that it is possible to avoid all suffering and unhappiness in your life?
- Can you say why?
- What things cause us to suffer or be unhappy?

### Turning points

Siddhartha saw the Four Sights and felt that he could not ignore the questions they raised. Sometimes we see, or experience, events that make us stop and think: illness, bereavement and loss, for example.

- Can you remember such an event?
- What was it that made you stop and think?
- What did you do as a result of the experience?

### Moving on

The Buddha did not find it easy to leave the comfort and familiarity of his home and family. But it was something he needed to do in order to be free to seek an answer to his questions.

The process of growing up is, to some extent, one of leaving things behind. In order to move on, we sometimes have to leave things behind. Changing classes at the end of a year or moving from junior to secondary school are examples of this.

- Why did you make the change?
- What did you have to leave behind?
- What feelings did you have? (sadness, relief, regret, etc.)
- What did you look forward to in the new situation?
- What feelings did you have about the new experience? (excitement, nervousness etc.)

### Making up your own mind

When Siddhartha gave up the ascetic life and began to take food again, his five ascetic friends left him. But he was not afraid to admit that he had made a mistake and that he must carry on alone.

- Are there any occasions when you have had to admit that you had made a mistake?
- Can you relate an experience when you have had to make up your own mind?
- In what situations do you experience group pressure?
- How do you deal with it?

# The Enlightenment

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Enlightenment is beyond words. Nevertheless, people do need to know something about it in order to move towards it! Traditionally, Enlightenment is described in four ways; negatively, positively, paradoxically and symbolically:

### **Negatively**, as Cessation.

An Enlightened being is free of the unhealthy mental states of greed, hatred and ignorance.

These are sometimes known as the three poisons or the three fires. Nirvana is known as the extinguishing of these fires.  
(Nirvana = blowing out)

### **Positively**, in terms of the characteristics of an Enlightened being, which are:

- supreme bliss
- profound wisdom (seeing into the nature of reality)
- infinite compassion (springing from a love for all life)
- a radiant, unlimited consciousness
- boundless energy

### **Paradoxically**

The Mahayana texts employ paradox to describe Enlightenment in order to emphasise that it is beyond words and concepts.  
e.g. - a Buddha abides in a state of non-abiding.  
- Nirvana is attained by means of non-attainment

### **Symbolically**

Enlightenment is also represented through metaphor, poetic description, or symbol.  
e.g. the Cool Cave, the Island in the Flood, the Further Shore, the Holy City  
- elaborate Mahayana accounts of the happy land or the Pure Land.  
- the stupa, and symbolic images of the Buddha and other Enlightened beings.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Impermanence

When the Buddha became Enlightened, he understood that all things are impermanent and fully realised the implication of this.

- What signs of impermanence and change can you see in your life, or in the world around you?
- Can you think of anything that is permanent, lasting and will not change?
- What effect does thinking about impermanence have on you?
- How might recognising impermanence affect the way you live your life?

### Wisdom and kindness

- Do you know anyone that you consider to be wise?
- How can you tell that they are wise?
- What is it they know?
- How did they become wise?
- Is it possible to be wise but not kind, or kind but not wise?
- What might be the dangers of being kind without enough thought behind it?

### Human potential

Buddhists believe that all human beings have the potential to grow and change and eventually become Enlightened.

- What things do you think can, and can't, be changed about yourself?
- Do you believe that everyone can change for the better? Can you give examples from your own experience?
- Are there some people who cannot change? Say why.
- What do you think causes people to change?
- Do you think there is an 'upper limit' to the positive changes a person can make in themselves? If so, can you say what that upper limit is? What prevents people going beyond it?

# The Buddha Image

## TEACHER'S NOTES

During the Buddha's lifetime, his followers would venerate him by making offerings and coming to sit silently in his presence. After his death, or Parinirvana, the Buddha's remains were divided and housed in funerary mounds called stupas. The early Buddhists would visit the stupas to worship. Making offerings, and chanting verses of praise, they would renew their undertaking to strive for Enlightenment. The holy sites connected with the Buddha's life were also places of worship.

It is not known when the first Buddha images were made. By about the first century of the Common Era, monasteries, or viharas, incorporated a shrine room housing a Buddha image.

The image, while being a reminder of the historical Gautama Buddha, was primarily a symbolic representation of Enlightenment. Early Buddhist artists will have drawn on the traditional iconographical style to show the 'marks of a superior being' - the long ear lobes and the ushnisha, or extra crown at the top of the head, for example. As time passed, other symbolic features developed, such as mudras, and the particular posture and colour, based on the visionary experience of Buddhist meditators.

Some images of Enlightenment, from the Mahayana and Vajrayana schools of Buddhism may bear little resemblance to the historical Buddha. They can be in male or female form, look peaceful or wrathful and wear the clothes and ornaments of royalty. But all convey particular qualities of the Enlightened mind and have symbolic and ritual significance to the devotees of that school of practice.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Reminders

The Buddha image reminds Buddhists of all that the Buddha represents for them. When we love and admire someone a great deal we sometimes keep pictures or mementos to remind us of them.

- Do you have any pictures, posters or reminders of people you like or admire?
- Who are they of?
- What are they?
- What do you like or admire about that person?
- How does the picture or memento help keep them in mind?

### Body language

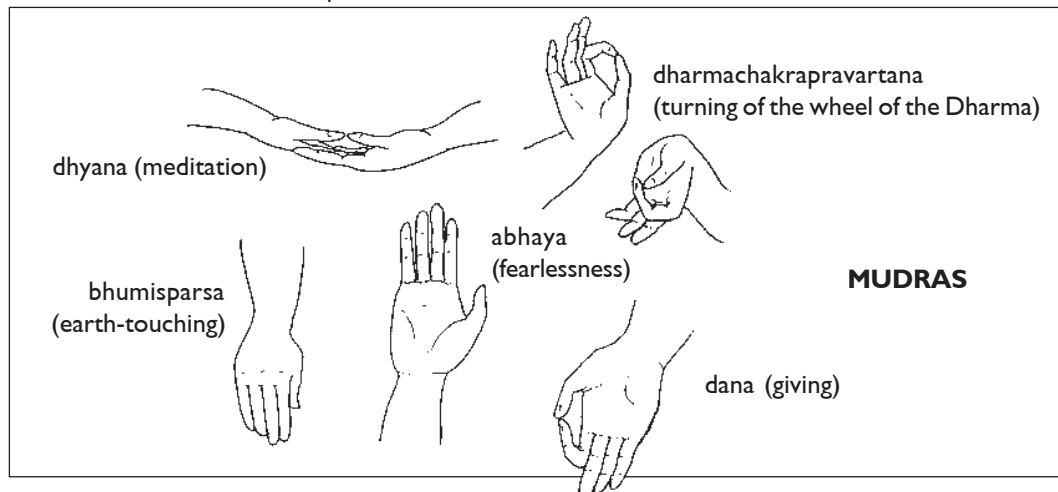
The Buddha image communicates particular qualities to Buddhists. We communicate ourselves to others through the way we dress, sit and move.

- In what ways do you dress in order to express your personality?
- How does what you wear affect how you feel?
- How does what you wear affect how other people respond to you?
- Can you tell what a person is like from looking at them?
- We communicate through 'body language' all the time. Does how we move and hold our body affect how we feel about ourselves? Does it affect how others respond to us?

### Perfection

Buddhists believe that the Buddha perfected himself.

- Is Perfection possible?
- Who do you know who has qualities you admire?
- What personal qualities would you most like to develop?
- What qualities do you think a perfect person would have?
- Do you believe that it is possible to be perfect?
- If not, what stops us?
- If you think it is possible, say how you think it can be achieved.



# The story of Prince Siddhartha

## INFORMATION SHEET

**S**iddhartha Gautama was born into a royal family two and a half thousand years ago in Northern India (now Nepal).

Asita, a holy man, foretold that the baby would either be a great King or a great holy man. Siddhartha's father wanted his son to follow in his footsteps and become king. He took great care to shield his son from anything that might upset him. He wanted to prevent him from leaving home to live a religious life.

Siddhartha grew up in the palace surrounded by luxuries. When he was still a young man, he was married to the beautiful Princess Yashodara and they had a baby son.



One day, despite his father's orders, he decided to leave the palace grounds and go into the nearby city with Chanda, his chariot driver.

They hadn't gone far when they came across a frail old man. Siddhartha was so shocked at his first real experience of **old age** that he asked Chanda to take him back to the palace at once.

But the Prince returned to the city the

next day, where he saw someone lying in agony at the roadside. This second sight, too, disturbed the prince. He had never before seen **sickness**. He returned to the palace straight away.

On his next visit to the city, Siddhartha saw a dead man being carried through the streets in a funeral procession. This third sight struck him even more deeply; this was the first time that he had seen **death**. He returned to the palace stunned.

However, he still visited the city again the next day. This time the sight he saw was quite different. There, walking calmly through the crowd, was a man dressed in rags and carrying a begging bowl. The peaceful

expression of the wandering **holy man** impressed Siddhartha. He felt inspired to become a wandering truth-seeker, to find an answer to the problem of suffering in the world.

Finding an answer to this question became the most important thing in Siddhartha's life. He wanted to be able to give it all his attention. He knew that if he stayed in the palace he would easily be distracted. He decided to '**go forth**'.

That very night he got up as quietly as he could and kissed goodbye to his sleeping wife and baby son. He woke Chanda, his chariot driver, and together they crept past the sleeping guards. Silently they rode away from the palace. When they reached the river, which marked the border of the kingdom, the pair dismounted. Taking his sword Siddhartha cut off his hair, and swapped his rich clothes for the mud-stained rags of a wanderer. He gave his rings and ornaments to Chanda to take back to King Suddhodana.



Chanda watched sadly as Siddhartha crossed the river and disappeared into the darkness of the jungle.

For seven years Siddhartha lived the life of a wandering holy man. He spent time with different teachers learning all they had to

teach him. He was a good student and learned well, but in spite of this he realised that their teachings did not get to the root of the problem of suffering and sadness.

He tried living an ascetic life, subjecting his body to great hardship, hoping that this was the way to find out about the truth of things. He would sit out under the midday sun, surrounded by blazing fires. He reduced his food to one grain of rice a day, growing so thin that if he put his hand on his stomach he could feel his backbone! Even though he had become famous for these ascetic practices, and had five followers, he found that he was still no nearer to the truth. Not afraid to admit that he had made a mistake, he decided to start taking food again.

He now remembered how, as a young boy, whilst seated in the shade of a rose-apple tree, he had become absorbed in meditation. He resolved this time to pursue the truth by practising meditation. He chose a tree in a peaceful spot by a river at Bodhgaya, and sat down to meditate, vowing that he would not rise again until he had found the truth.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- Make a list of the key events in the life of Siddhartha Gautama. Re-tell the story of his life in the form of a comic strip, with words and pictures. Make sure you include the key events.
- Siddhartha went out into the city and saw the Four Sights. Imagine yourself as Siddhartha. Describe the Four Sights as you might see them in a modern town or city. Say how you would feel as you saw each of the sights.
- Imagine you are a close friend of Siddhartha's. You see that he is sad because of the suffering he has seen and cannot enjoy his life of luxury. Write down what you would say to him and what you would advise him to do.



# The Enlightenment

## INFORMATION SHEET

**A**fter seeing the Four Sights, Prince Siddhartha left his comfortable palace life to become a wandering holy man. He wanted to find an answer to why there was suffering in the world. For seven years he wandered in the jungle. He studied with various religious teachers, and tried living an ascetic life, but eventually realised that he had not found the answer. He was no nearer the truth.

He remembered an incident from his childhood when his mind had become very calm and clear. He chose a tree, sat down under it to meditate and resolved to achieve his quest.

It is not known how long Siddhartha sat there in deeper and deeper meditation. One morning, just as the sun rose, a great change came over him and he knew that he had achieved his goal.

Through his own efforts he had seen into the truth of How Things Really Are. He was now no longer an ordinary human being. He felt totally free, peaceful, happy and kind. He had become Enlightened; he had become a Buddha.

The word 'Buddha' means 'One who is awake (to the truth)'.

The words **Nirvana**, Nibbana, or Buddhahood all mean the same as Enlightenment. It is very difficult to understand what Enlightenment or Buddhahood really is. It is only by becoming Enlightened that anyone can really know.

To give a clue, poetic images have often been used to describe the Enlightenment experience: for example the Cool Cave, the Island in the Flood, the Further Shore, or the Holy City.



Another way in which we can gain some idea about Enlightenment is to look at the qualities of an Enlightened person. In his **wisdom** the Buddha understood that everything constantly changes, nothing stays the same or lasts for ever. Just as a plant needs the soil, air, water and sunshine to exist, he saw that all things are interdependent. Everything depends on something else for its existence and changes when those conditions change or are no longer there. The Buddha said that this was true of people and of the world. It is even true of the stars. Nothing in the Universe is unchanging or lasts forever. The Buddha also understood that people don't want things to be like this. They want things to be permanent and it is this craving for permanence that is the cause of unhappiness and suffering.

Out of **compassion** he wanted to help others to understand this. He wanted them to be able to free themselves from suffering, just as he had. But was it possible; could others understand?



As he sat under the Bodhi tree, he looked out over the world. In his mind's eye he could see a pool; it was full of lotuses. Some of the lotuses were still stuck in the mud at

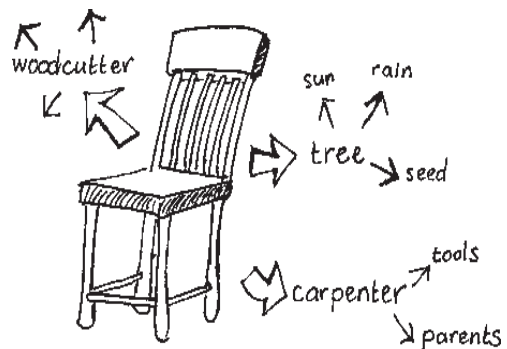
the bottom of the pool; others had buds and were beginning to grow upwards through the water. A few stood clear of the water, opening in the sunlight. 'People in the world are like lotuses in different stages of development', thought the Buddha. 'Everyone has the potential to achieve Enlightenment, and those people who are like the lotuses ready to open in the sunlight will be able to hear my teaching'. So the Buddha decided to set out and teach the world about the truth he had discovered.

## ACTIVITIES

● Imagine you are Chanda, the chariot driver. You have returned to the palace with Siddhartha's jewels and ornaments as instructed. Write the story of Siddhartha's leaving home as you would tell it to the King the next morning. Explain what Siddhartha has done and why.

● The Buddha understood that all things are dependent on something else for their existence, and that all things are interconnected.

(a) Look at this interdependence web. How far can you extend it?



Plot an interdependence web for the following: a woollen jumper, a plate of chips, a car, yourself.

(b) Choose one of your interdependence webs. Will all the links always stay the same? Say what might happen if one of the links changed.

● Individually, or working with a partner, brainstorm as many things as you can that change. Can you think of anything that is permanent? Write a Haiku, or short poem, to express the truth that all things change and how you feel about it.

# The Buddha Image

## INFORMATION SHEET

The Buddha image is a symbol, not an actual likeness of a person. No one now really knows what the Buddha looked like.

The first images were probably made a few hundred years after the life of the Buddha. As Buddhism spread out of India into South-East Asia, China, Japan and Tibet, artists in each of these countries began to make Buddha images. These images can look very different but they are all trying to show an Enlightened being. Most Buddha images have certain features in common.

Size, as well as style, varies. There are giant sized images such as the one at Bodhgaya, and small images for use on personal shrines at home. Each Buddhist vihara or temple will have a Buddha image as the central feature of its shrine room.

When Buddhists look at an image, they remember the Buddha, who lived 2,500 years ago in India. They are also reminded of the qualities that they too are seeking to develop in their own quest for Enlightenment.

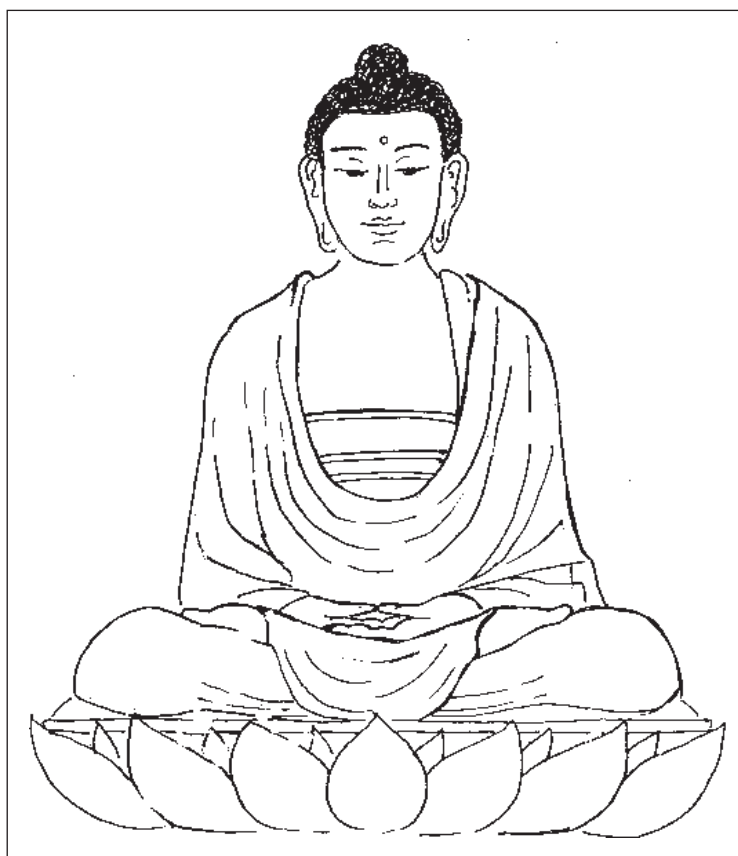
### POSTURE

The meditation posture is the most common. The figure is seated in the full lotus position, legs crossed with the feet resting on the opposite thigh.

Other positions include standing and lying on one side.

### HANDS

The symbolic hand movements are called mudras. Each mudra communicates a meaning. The hands resting together in the lap symbolise meditation. The hands held as if turning a wheel symbolise the Buddha as teacher. The right hand held in front of the chest is a symbol of fearlessness.



### FACE

Closed, or half-closed, eyes symbolise stillness and concentration. A gentle smile shows friendliness.

Sometimes a 'third eye' can be seen on the forehead. This shows that the Buddha 'sees' with his mind; he understands everything.

### BODY

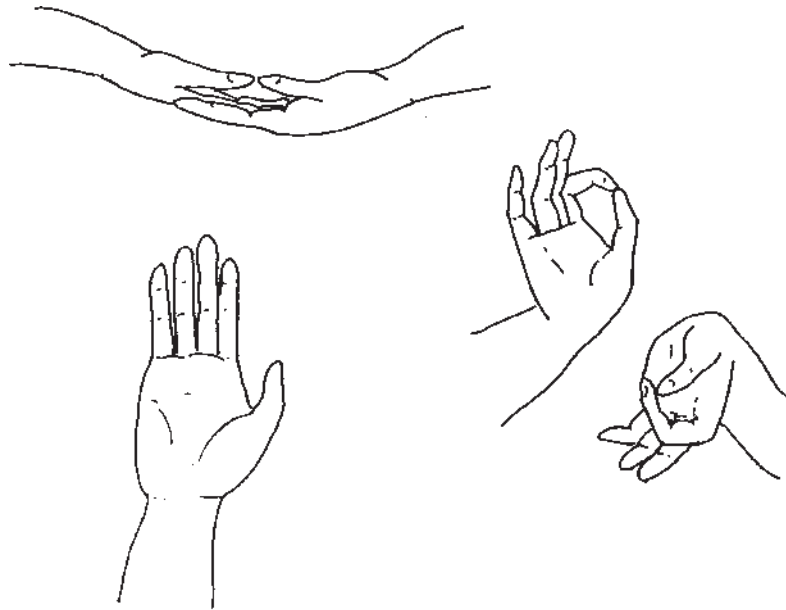
Buddha images are often gold-leafed. The Buddha is precious to Buddhists. Shining gold reminds them of the Buddha's beauty and radiance. The outer beauty symbolises the inner beauty of an Enlightened Being.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- Look at a Buddha image and draw it from observation.
- Draw and label the mudras.

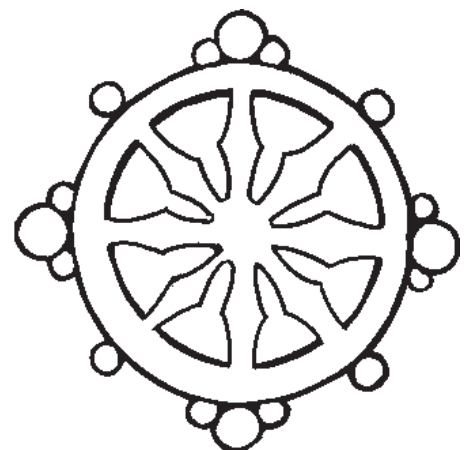


- We often use our hands to express ourselves. Draw some symbolic hand movements that you, or other people use. Write next to them what each means.
- Invent mudras for the following words: peacefulness, strength, caring, determination, sympathy, friendliness. Make up some more of your own.
- Think of someone you admire and aspire to be like. Draw a picture of them. Make up symbols to show their special qualities. Say what the symbols are, why you have chosen them, and what they mean.

## Programme 2

# The Dharma I

Contents	Page
<b>Teacher's Notes:</b>	
The Four Noble Truths	14
The Noble Eightfold Path	15
The Story of Ashoka	16
<b>Information Sheets:</b>	
The Four Noble Truths	17
The Noble Eightfold Path	19
The Story of Ashoka	23



# The Four Noble Truths

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Part of the Enlightenment experience of the Buddha was the direct 'Knowledge and Vision of Things as they Really Are'; he realised the Truth, or the Dharma.

He decided that it was possible to help others to realise the Truth for themselves and gain Enlightenment and began to formulate the Dharma, the teaching that leads to Enlightenment. So he put his realisation, which is essentially beyond words, into the conceptual form of the **Law of Conditionality**.



*This being, that becomes;  
from the arising of this, that arises;  
This not becoming, that does not become;  
from the ceasing of this, that ceases.*  
(Majjhima Nikaya I I, 32)

As part of his Enlightenment experience the Buddha could see that existence has three characteristic qualities or 'marks': impermanence (Anicca), insubstantiality (Anatta) and suffering (Dukkha).

The Four Noble Truths are an application of the Law of Conditionality to the problem of human suffering. This teaching follows an ancient Indian medical formula:- illness, cause, cure, remedy.

The Noble Eightfold Path is the fourth Noble Truth - the remedy for human suffering.

### The Four Noble Truths

Buddhism begins by addressing suffering because no-one can deny the existence of pain. Simply put, the Four Noble Truths are:

1. **Dukkha** - PAIN - physical suffering, psychological pain and existential dissatisfaction.
2. **Samudaya** - The ORIGIN of Pain, which is craving.
3. **Nirodha** - The CESSATION of Pain, which is achieved by overcoming craving. The Third Noble Truth asserts that man can achieve Enlightenment through his own efforts.
4. **Magga** - The Way to the Cessation of Pain, which is the following of the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Four Noble Truths are a fundamental Buddhist teaching. Despite their concise and simple format, they are a profound teaching that can be understood on deeper and deeper levels.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Points of View

After his Enlightenment the Buddha walked to Sarnath to find his five friends. He wanted to explain to them exactly what he had understood.

- How do you put across your point of view?
- How do you respond when people disagree with you?
- How would you decide whether what someone said was true?
- Can it be a good thing to change your mind? Say why.

### Suffering

The first Noble Truth states that there is suffering in life.

- How do we feel when we see or hear about suffering in the world?  
Using a specific example discuss:
- What might have caused the suffering? (for example famine could be caused by crop failure or war.)
- How can we help?
- How could we stop it happening in the future?

### Wanting

The second Noble Truth states that the cause of unhappiness is craving. At some time or other we all want things, whether it is an experience or a new possession. Think of something you wanted a lot.

- How does it feel when you want something a lot?
- How does it feel when you get it?
- What makes you want things? (e.g. T.V. adverts)
- In what ways can things go wrong or let you down?
- How does it feel when things let you down?

### Happiness

The third Noble Truth states that it is possible to be happy.

- What makes you happy?
- Do you think that it is possible to be happy all the time? Say why.
- What do you think people need in order to be happy?
- How could your school, community or the world be a happier place?

# The Noble Eightfold Path

## TEACHER'S NOTES

The Noble Eightfold Path is perhaps the best-known of the Buddha's teachings. It corresponds to the fourth Noble Truth: the way to the cessation of suffering.

The symbol for the path is a wheel with eight spokes. It is called the Dharmachakra, or wheel of the Dharma, and stands as a symbol for Buddhism.

The first step of the path, Perfect Vision (sometimes also translated as Right Vision or Right Understanding), is concerned with a vision of the Ideal, the goal towards which all the other steps lead. The subsequent seven steps constitute the path by which Buddhists can transform every aspect of their lives in the direction of that goal. The path is essentially about practice.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Goals and ideals

Buddhists follow the steps of the Noble Eightfold Path to help them achieve their goal of Enlightenment.

- Do you think it is important to have goals in life? Why?
- What might those goals be?
- Do you have an ideal of what you would like to achieve in life?
- What would you like to have achieved:
  - one year from now?
  - five years from now?
  - by the end of your life?

### Taking steps

The steps of the Noble Eightfold Path cover every aspect of life.

- How would you set about achieving your goals in life?
- What might stand in your way?
- What changes would you have to make in your life?
- What would help you to make these changes?
- How many steps do you think it would take you to achieve your goal?

### Motivation

The second step of the Noble Eightfold Path, Right Emotion, is about developing motivation.

- How important do you think motivation is in achieving your goal?
- How do you motivate yourself?
- What do you do when your inspiration runs out?
- Do you have any strategies for overcoming difficulties?
- In what ways can other people help?

# The Story of Ashoka

## TEACHER'S NOTES

During the first hundred years or so after the Buddha's death, Buddhism established itself mainly in the Kingdom of Magadha in North-East India.

It was during the reign of the Emperor Ashoka (289-232 BCE) that it spread across the Indian subcontinent and beyond, eventually becoming an international religion.

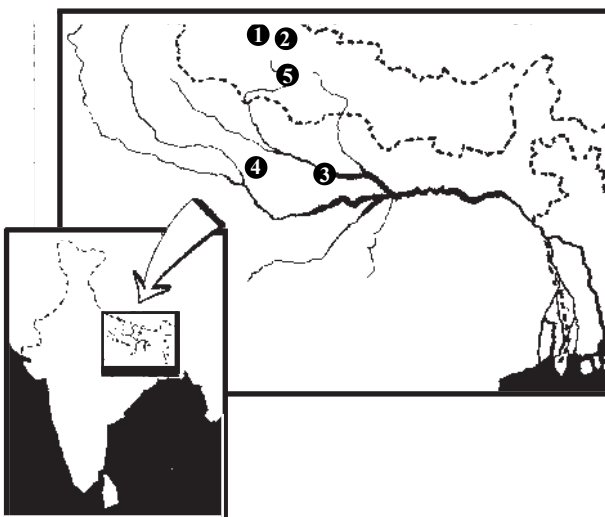
At first, Ashoka's policy was one of aggressive expansion. After his conquest of Kalinga, he converted to Buddhism and renounced the use of force. Instead, he put into practice the beneficial teaching of Buddhism and, as a result, the Dharma spread across the Indian subcontinent.

Ashoka devoted his life to the welfare of all, animals and people alike. Adopting a policy of religious tolerance, he recorded his edicts on rocks and stone pillars throughout the empire. He built stupas at the major places of pilgrimage and called the Third Buddhist Council, circa 250 BCE, to help restore the Sangha.

Ashoka's Buddhist missionaries travelled South towards Sri Lanka, North towards the Himalayas, South-East to Burma and West towards the kingdoms of the Greek Empire. As he lay on his death bed he decided to donate much of his wealth to the Sangha. His ministers succeeded in keeping hold of the treasury however. Undeterred, Ashoka gave what was in his hand, a piece of fruit.

### Pilgrimage

One of Ashoka's contributions to Buddhism was the restoration and development of facilities for pilgrims at the holy sites associated with the life of the Buddha. Pilgrimage is not a religious observance for Buddhists as it is for Muslims, for example, but, nevertheless, Buddhists naturally feel reverence for, and a desire to visit, sites of special significance.



### Significant Holy Sites for Buddhists

1. Lumbini - Birthplace of Prince Siddhartha.
2. Kapilavastu - Where the young Prince grew up.
3. Bodhgaya - Where the Buddha gained Enlightenment.
4. Sarnath - Where the Buddha gave his first teaching.
5. Kushinara - Where the Buddha died.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Radical Change

Because of what he realised on the battlefield, Ashoka completely changed his life.

- Is it really possible to change your life completely? Say why.
- Do you know of anyone who has changed their life dramatically?
- What caused the change?
- What personal qualities are needed to undertake dramatic change?
- Is there anything about your life that you have changed?
- Can you say why?

### War and Peace

After his change of heart, Ashoka stopped going to war.

- Do you think war is ever justified?
- Explain your views.
- Do you think the use of force is ever justified in society?
- By what means can peace be maintained:-  
in the world?  
in the community?  
in the family?

### Exemplars

The way Ashoka lived his life was an inspiration to his people.

- What people inspire you?
- In what ways does personal example have an effect?
- Do you think leaders, and heads of state should set a personal example?



# The Four Noble Truths

## INFORMATION SHEET

When the Buddha became Enlightened, he found the answer to the question of why there is unhappiness and suffering in the world. He became free from suffering himself and saw that others could do the same. He walked a hundred miles to Sarnath to find his five friends. He wanted to tell them what he had discovered.

The Buddha used a well known Indian medical formula to help explain the Four Noble Truths to his friends. Buddhists believe that the Buddha's teaching is a cure for the world's illnesses.

1. What is the illness?
2. What has caused the illness?
3. Does a cure exist?
4. The remedy - what does the patient need to do in order to be cured?



### 1. THE FIRST NOBLE TRUTH - the illness.

The illness is the suffering and unhappiness that everyone feels at some time in their lives.

### 2. THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH - the cause of the illness.

The cause of unhappiness is craving. We tend to want more and more of everything. We become unhappy with what we have. There is always something else that is going to make us feel right.

### 3. THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH - a cure is possible.

It is possible to be happy and free from craving. This state of perfect freedom and happiness is the same as Enlightenment.

### 4. THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH - the remedy.

The way to overcome the craving which causes our unhappiness is to follow the Noble Eightfold Path. This path is sometimes called The Middle Way; it is a middle way between extremes. The Buddha had once lived a life of luxury as a prince. He had also tried a life of extreme hardship - the ascetic life. He taught that following the Noble Eightfold Path, a middle way, leads to happiness and freedom from suffering.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

Collect photographs, and examples from the press, of suffering in the world.

With a partner arrange your examples under two headings:

- (a) suffering that can be changed.
- (b) suffering that cannot be changed.

Explain your choice.

Imagine you are trying to explain the Four Noble Truths to someone who has never heard them before. Use pictures to help you. Draw one for each of the Four Noble Truths and write what each one is.

Make a list of four things that you know to be true about life. Say how and why you know them to be true.

Sometimes we want something very much, thinking it will make us completely happy. Often, though, we end up disappointed. Make up a story about someone learning this lesson.

# The Noble Eightfold Path

## INFORMATION SHEET 1

All Buddhists should strive to follow the Noble Eightfold Path, whether they live in a remote monastery in Tibet or in a flat in the middle of Manchester. How do Buddhists follow the Eightfold Path?

Here are some quotes from Western Buddhists who are trying to follow this ancient Buddhist teaching in a modern setting.

### RIGHT VISION

“Before I can practise Buddhism at all, I have to have some idea that there’s something to work towards. When I look at the Buddha image I remember that I, too, can be like that. I can become happier, wiser and more compassionate. I too want to gain Enlightenment. That’s my goal, my vision.”



### RIGHT EMOTION

“It’s no good wanting Enlightenment in my head, if, in my heart, I can’t be bothered. One way I can motivate myself is by meditating. I can also inspire myself by reading some Dharma books”

### RIGHT SPEECH

“We have a strong effect on others through our speech and communication. I need to speak kindly and truthfully. If I tell the truth, especially when it isn’t easy, I can develop honesty and fearlessness. By being truthful I do myself honour....What a challenge it is to be really honest and always kind.”



## RIGHT ACTION

"We're engaged in actions all day. Buddhism says that the key to Right Action is intention. Behind every action is a state of mind. If I catch myself in a negative state of mind, I can choose to act differently and so practise Right Action."

## RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

"We try to avoid any kind of work that might increase suffering in the world. We don't want to harm the environment, animals or humans. So we avoid work involving weapons, tobacco or alcohol. Instead, I want to find work that can help the world. I like to work with other Buddhists because it keeps me on my toes. It's not easy to forget the Noble Eightfold path when your mates are practising it too."

## RIGHT EFFORT

"I can find myself in different states of mind from one moment to the next. What can I do about this? My states of mind can affect what I do. So I need to ask myself through the day: 'What state am I in?' Then I can change that by making more effort - I can change how I think and feel. With Right Effort I can develop a more positive and brighter outlook."

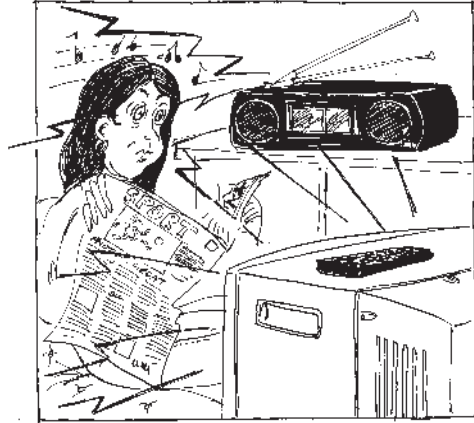


# The Noble Eightfold Path

## INFORMATION SHEET 2

### RIGHT MINDFULNESS

“Often we are not aware of how we are feeling or what we are doing. If we can become more aware we can live in the present moment and transform our lives. Staying aware is a practice that can lead to happier states of mind. Instead of rushing through a job, I can slow down and even enjoy what I am doing. Right mindfulness makes the most of the present moment.”



### RIGHT MEDITATION

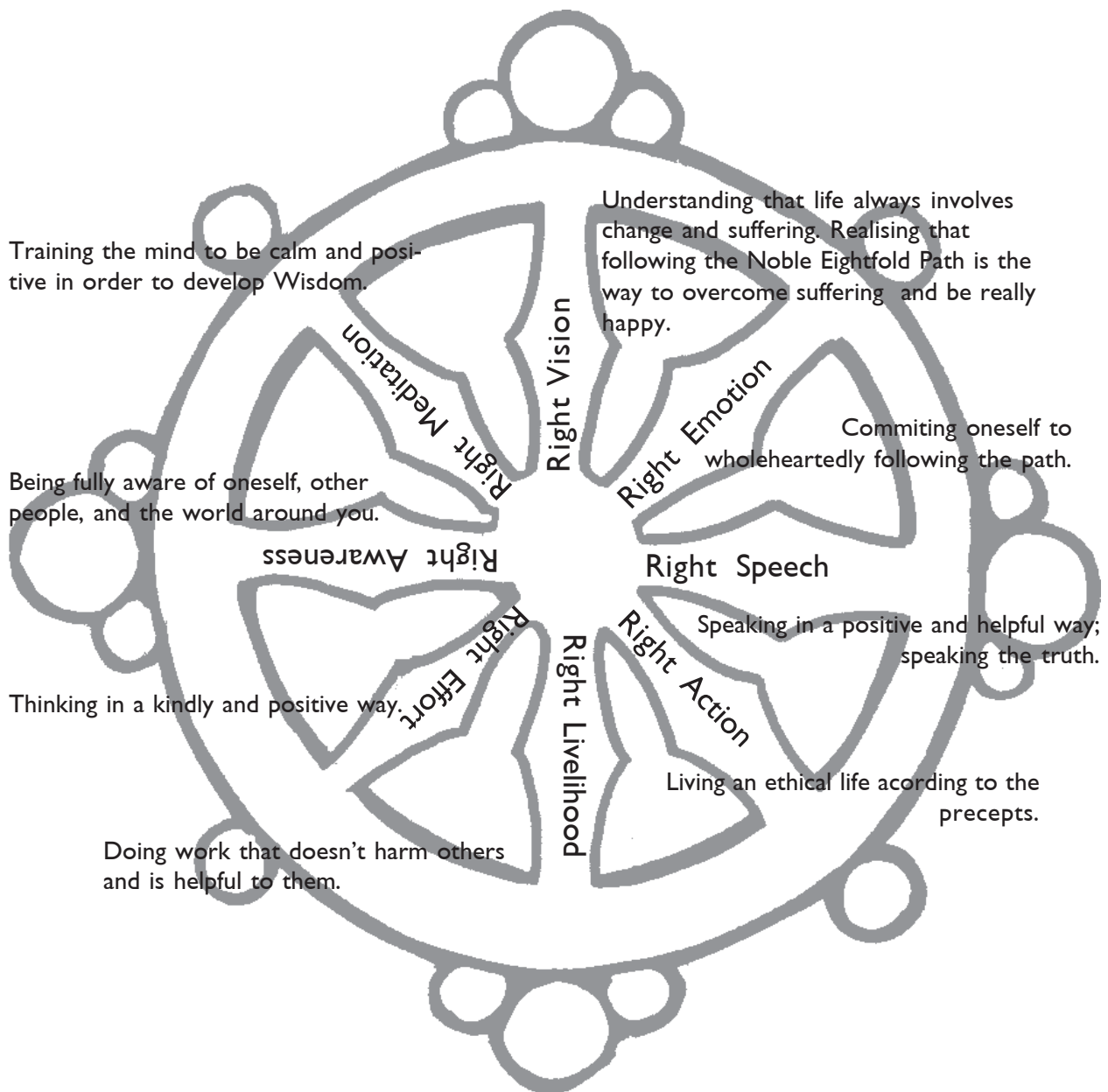
“I begin my day with meditation. Why do I meditate? I can only transform myself in all the other steps of the path, if I know myself well. Meditation helps me to develop calm and peaceful states of mind. Then I can begin to see myself more clearly. With the help of meditation, I can gradually progress through ever higher states of mind along the path. I can get nearer and nearer to Enlightenment, even if it takes much effort and many lifetimes.”

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- The symbol for the Dharma is a wheel with eight spokes. Using this symbol, draw a diagram showing each stage of the Noble Eightfold Path.
- Draw a picture to illustrate each step of the path as it might be lived today. Explain in your own words what each stage means.
- Think of a goal that you want to achieve. Say what this goal is. Write down eight steps you would need to take to achieve it.



The Dharmachakra is a Buddhist symbol for the Dharma. It usually has eight spokes to represent the teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Although the 'Path' has eight separate steps, they are not intended to be followed one after another. The Buddhist way of life involves all of them and enables Buddhists to train themselves in every aspect of their lives.

# The story of Ashoka

## INFORMATION SHEET

**A**shoka was an Emperor of India about 200 years after the Buddha. He was a cruel and ambitious ruler. Even though his empire covered most of what is now the sub-continent of India, he wanted to conquer even more kingdoms.

In a long and hard battle against the neighbouring kingdom of Kalinga, Ashoka's army killed thousands of men, and took many Kalingan prisoners.

After this battle King Ashoka realised the terrible extent of the suffering he had caused. He saw that his greed for land and wealth had caused thousands of people to die and he decided to change his ways.

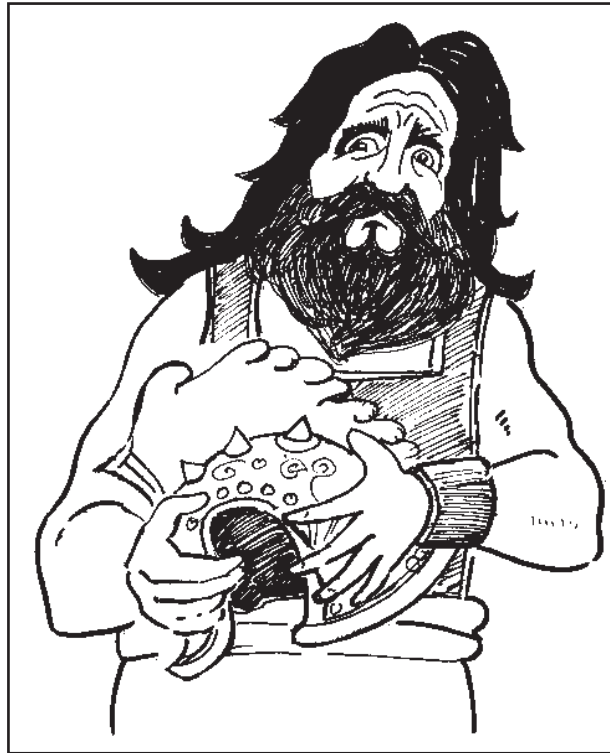
Ashoka gave up violence and war and became a follower of the Buddha. He turned his mind to the welfare of his people and built hospitals and rest-houses. He had trees planted along the highways of his kingdom in order to provide shade for weary travellers.

The king became a vegetarian and passed laws forbidding the killing or wounding of animals. He even built hospitals for animals.

He gave up his lavish imperial silks and jewels and began to wear simple robes. His people were inspired by his example.

Ashoka's new instructions for living an ethical life, following the Buddha's teaching, were carved on rocks and pillars all over the kingdom. For example, "Excellent it is to abstain from killing living beings. Excellent is generosity to friends. The king wishes men of all faiths to live everywhere in his kingdom."

King Ashoka sent teachers to travel to other kingdoms in order to let people know about the Buddha's Dharma. His own son took Buddhism to Sri Lanka.



Ashoka himself travelled on pilgrimage to the important places in the life of the Buddha. He visited Lumbini, the Buddha's birth-place, Bodhgaya, where the Buddha gained Enlightenment, and Sarnath, where the Buddha gave his first teaching.

To pay homage to the Buddha, he built great stone pillars at all the places associated with his life. Two thousand years later, a pillar still stands in Vaishali, once a great capital city where the Buddha taught. It stands as a reminder of the courage of a king who changed his life in order to follow the example of the Buddha. He dared to give up his old ways and devoted the rest of his life to helping other living beings.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- You are a member of Ashoka's army. Tell the story of his change of heart from your point of view.
- Imagine you are a subject of Ashoka. Write about the changes you see, and experience for yourself, due to the Emperor's change of heart. What do you feel about them?
- Ashoka passed new laws to improve society. Write down a set of rules you would make to improve society today.
- Write down a list of the qualities you think the ideal ruler, or government, would have.

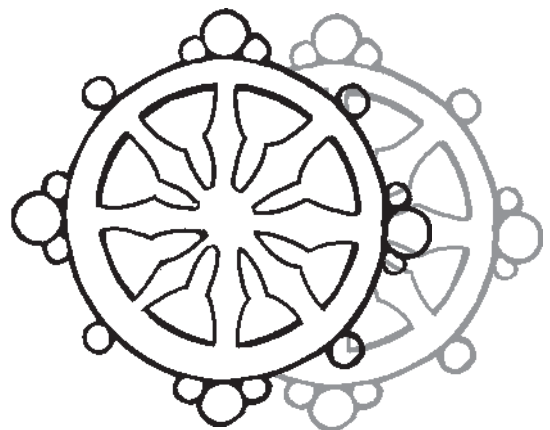




## Programme 3

# The Dharma II

Contents	Page
<b>Teacher's Notes:</b>	
The Five Precepts	26
Karma	27
Bodhisattvas	28
<b>Information Sheets:</b>	
The Five Precepts	29
Karma	31
The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara	33



# The Five Precepts

## TEACHER'S NOTES

The five precepts form the basis of Buddhist ethics. They are so fundamental to the practice of Buddhism that it could be said that someone is Buddhist only to the extent that he or she is living by the precepts. They are not commandments - in Buddhism there is no God to lay down commandments - but a set of training principles taken on voluntarily, the observance of which leads to more positive mental states. In the Digha Nikaya, of the Pali Canon, the Buddha lists the precepts as the spontaneous behaviour of an Enlightened one. Buddhists practise these precepts in order to become more like a Buddha.

In addition, monks and nuns follow a 'vinaya'. These additional rules are a working-out of the precepts as they apply to monks and nuns within the particular setting of a monastic way of life.

All Buddhists try to follow the precepts and chant them regularly. The chanting of the precepts in Pali frequently forms part of Buddhist ceremonies.

The precepts have two aspects which can be practised on deeper and deeper levels:-

### (a) Behaviour to be avoided:

I undertake the training principle to abstain from taking life.

I undertake the training principle to abstain from taking what has not been given.

I undertake the training principle to abstain from sexual misconduct.

I undertake the training principle to abstain from falsehood.

I undertake the training principle to abstain from intoxicants.

### (b) Behaviour to be cultivated:

With deeds of loving kindness I purify my body.

With open handed generosity I purify my body.

With stillness, simplicity and contentment I purify my body.

With truthful communication I purify my speech.

With mindfulness clear and radiant I purify my mind.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Does it matter?

The first and most important principle for Buddhists is that of not harming. They try to put this principle into practice in how they live their lives.

- What principles or beliefs are important to you?
- How do they affect the way you live?
- What difficulties might you meet in living by your principles?
- What helps you stay true to your beliefs?

### Rules OK!

The precepts are guidelines taken on voluntarily by Buddhists.

- Why do you think that Buddhists keep the precepts despite not believing in a God who will punish or judge them?
- Do you have any guidelines by which you try to live your life?
- What are they?
- Who set them?
- What reasons do you have for trying to abide by them?
- What happens if you don't follow them?
- What is the difference between a guideline and a law?

### Advice

The precepts are guidelines, or advice, on how to live a Buddhist life.

- When do you ask for advice?
- Whose advice do you listen to?
- How can you tell if advice is good or bad?
- What is the difference between taking advice and being told what to do?

### Drink and Drugs

Buddhists want to avoid intoxicants in order to have a clear mind.

- Why would a Buddhist want a clear mind?
- What sort of things dull the mind?
- Why might someone deliberately want to 'dull their mind'?
- Do you think drink and drugs are always harmful? Explain your views.

# Karma

## TEACHER'S NOTES

### The Law of Karma

The word 'karma' literally means 'action'. The Law of Karma states quite simply that **ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES**.

This is an important Buddhist teaching and although it can be difficult to grasp fully, some appreciation of this law is essential to an understanding of Buddhism.

The law of Karma springs from the Buddha's law of 'Conditioned Co-production'. The Buddha saw that everything which existed was subject to change, dependent on conditions.

The Law of Karma is the application of the Law of Conditionality to the process of life and death.

However, it **APPLIES ONLY TO DELIBERATE ACTION**.

Not everything that happens to us is the result of Karma. The Law of Karma does not attempt to explain all cause and effect processes to which we are subject.

The Law of Karma is like a scientific law; it merely explains how things happen. It does not indicate the existence of a law-giver. There is no one who rewards or punishes us.

Because of the law of Karma, we have the ability to change ourselves through our own actions.

### Rebirth

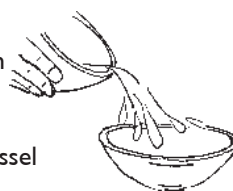
Karma continues throughout the process of death and rebirth.

According to the Law of Conditionality, all things change. However, Buddhism says there is continuity, a connecting link, not only from moment to moment but from life to life.



One traditional illustration of the death-rebirth process is of a new candle being lit just as the flame on the old one flickers and dies. The new flame is different yet it has arisen in dependence on the old one.

The Buddhist doctrine of rebirth is different from the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation. Hindus believe that an unchanging soul or essence (the Atman), passes from one life to the next - like water poured from one vessel into another.



## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Action - ourselves

The Dhammapada says that our life is shaped by our mind: we become what we think.

- Do you think this is true?
- In your experience what has shaped who you are now?
- Does what you do and say affect you?
- How does what you think affect you?
- Who is responsible for how you feel?
- How can you change the way you think and feel?
- What things might affect the sort of person you become in the future?

### Action - the world

The Buddhist Law of Karma states that actions have consequences.

- Do you agree? - explain your view
- Can you think of anything that you do that does not have a consequence?
- In what way do our actions affect the environment?
- Why care for the environment?
- What can you do that will make a difference?
- In what way does the environment we create affect us?

# Bodhisattvas

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Mahayana and Vajrayana schools of Buddhism emphasise that the principle of Enlightenment pervades the whole of existence, that all beings have within them the potential to become Enlightened.

For Mahayana Buddhists the highest goal is to seek Enlightenment for the sake of all beings. This is known as the **Bodhisattva Ideal** - the word Bodhisattva literally means 'Enlightenment Being'. A Bodhisattva vows to free all beings from suffering and to help them gain Enlightenment for themselves.

Through the practice of the **Six Perfections** - generosity, ethics, patience, energy, meditation and wisdom - and over countless lifetimes, the Bodhisattva works to fulfil their vow to save all beings.

The Dalai Lama, Dharpo Rimpoche and Dr. Ambedkar are regarded as Bodhisattvas by many people.

In Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism, there are also archetypal Bodhisattvas - embodiments of aspects of Enlightenment, such as wisdom and energy. These archetypal Bodhisattvas are traditionally shown as eternally young sixteen-year olds. They wear the crown, silks and adornments of royalty. They have long black hair, which falls in curls on their shoulders. Translucent, luminous, each archetype has a particular colour.

The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara (pronounced A -va-lo-ki-TESH-var-ra) is the quintessential Bodhisattva because he embodies supreme compassion for all sentient beings. He appears in many Mahayana sutras or sacred texts. The figure of Avalokiteshvara is extremely popular in Tibet, where he is known as Chenrezi. In China and Japan he is worshipped in a female form (known as Kuan Yin and Kannon respectively). On the video, we tell the story of the thousand-armed form of Avalokiteshvara.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Helping

A Bodhisattva works to help all beings.

- How important do you think it is to help others?
- Do you know of anyone who devotes time to helping other people?
- In what ways could you help other people?
- How do you decide who to help?
- What are the best ways to help people?
- How do we know what people really need?

### Commitment

Avalokiteshvara vowed to work to help all living beings become free from suffering.

- What is a vow?
- Have you, or anyone you know, ever taken a vow?
- Have you ever made a strong commitment to do something?
  - what was it?
  - why did you commit yourself?
  - was it easy to keep to?

# The Five Precepts

## INFORMATION SHEET

The precepts are training guidelines which Buddhists follow. They are not commandments to be obeyed. On the video we hear some Western Buddhists explain how and why they follow the precepts.

### 1. To abstain from harming living beings

“Buddhists are vegetarian because we don’t want to harm animals. The greatest harm you can do to another living being is to kill it. Anything we do to someone without their agreement is an act of violence. The non-violent path is not a path for cowards.”



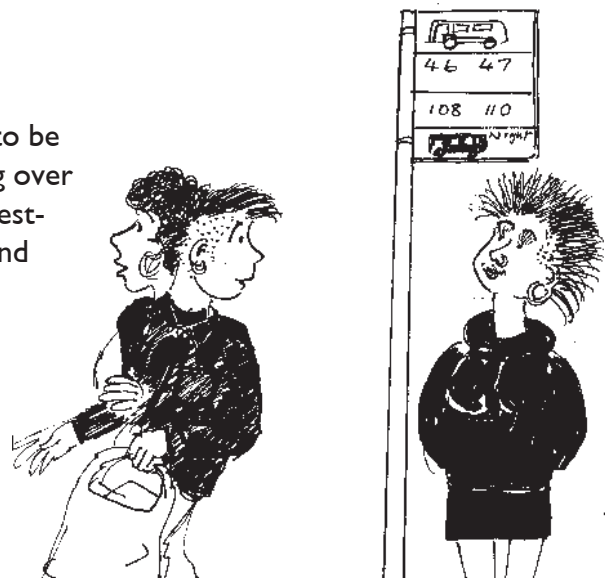
### 2 To abstain from taking the not given

“Pinching money will have a bad effect on me, even if no-one finds out - I’ll know that I’ve acted badly. Making an effort to give whenever I have the idea has a big effect on me, never mind the other person!”

### 3. To abstain from sexual misconduct

“If I’m in a relationship with someone, then I try to be happy and content with them, rather than looking over my shoulder all the time for someone more interesting. If I’m not in a relationship, I try to be happy and content with that state too.

Sex isn’t the most important thing in my life.”



#### 4. To abstain from false speech

“Lying has a bad effect on us. We’re not able to become happier and friendlier if we lie and have secrets. Telling the truth doesn’t always mean saying just what you think.”



#### 5. To abstain from taking intoxicants that cloud the mind.

“One of the reasons why I meditate every day is to develop a clear mind. If I was to take alcohol or drugs they’d only make my mind cloudy and dull. It’s not that anyone says to me “don’t drink” - the precepts don’t work like that. I’ve decided for myself”

## ACTIVITIES

- Each precept has two parts, behaviour to avoid and behaviour to develop. Copy and complete this list of the 5 precepts, filling in the behaviour to develop.

Behaviour to avoid	Behaviour to develop
1. To abstain from harming living beings	1.
2. To abstain from taking the not given	2.
3. To abstain from sexual misconduct	3.
4. To abstain from false speech	4.
5. To abstain from taking intoxicants that cloud the mind	5.

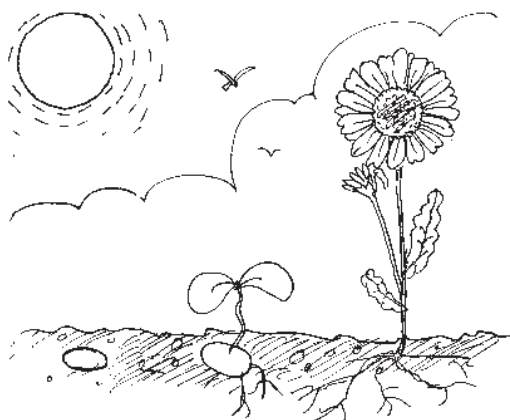
- Think of five guidelines you would like to see the people in your school or community live by. Write them out as behaviour to avoid and behaviour to develop.
- If you were a Buddhist, which precepts would you find most difficult to follow? Write a short explanation saying why.
- Write down the rules of conduct of a faith other than Buddhism. Compare and contrast them with the Buddhist precepts.

# Karma

## INFORMATION SHEET 1

### “ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES”

Buddhism teaches that all things inevitably change. Because of this it is possible to change things for the better. We can see evidence of this all around us. A seed changes to become a flower.



If we exercise we become fitter. Our thinking can improve through study. Buddhism says that we can even do the same with our hearts and minds. By choosing how we act now, we create our future happiness.

The Dhammapada, one of the best-known Buddhist texts, begins with these verses:

*Our life is shaped by our mind: we become what we think. Suffering follows an evil thought as the wheels of a cart follow the oxen that draw it.*

*Our life is shaped by our mind: we become what we think. Joy follows a pure thought like a shadow that never leaves.*

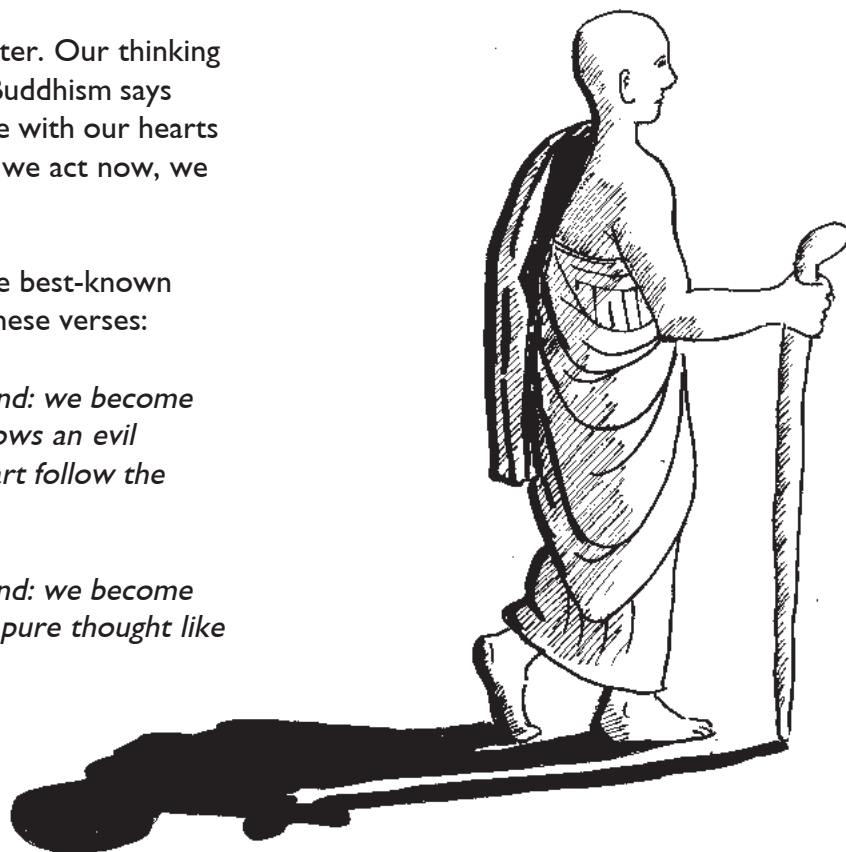
Buddhism says that such change is possible because of the ‘Law of Karma’.

The word ‘karma’ means action.

The Law of Karma states that

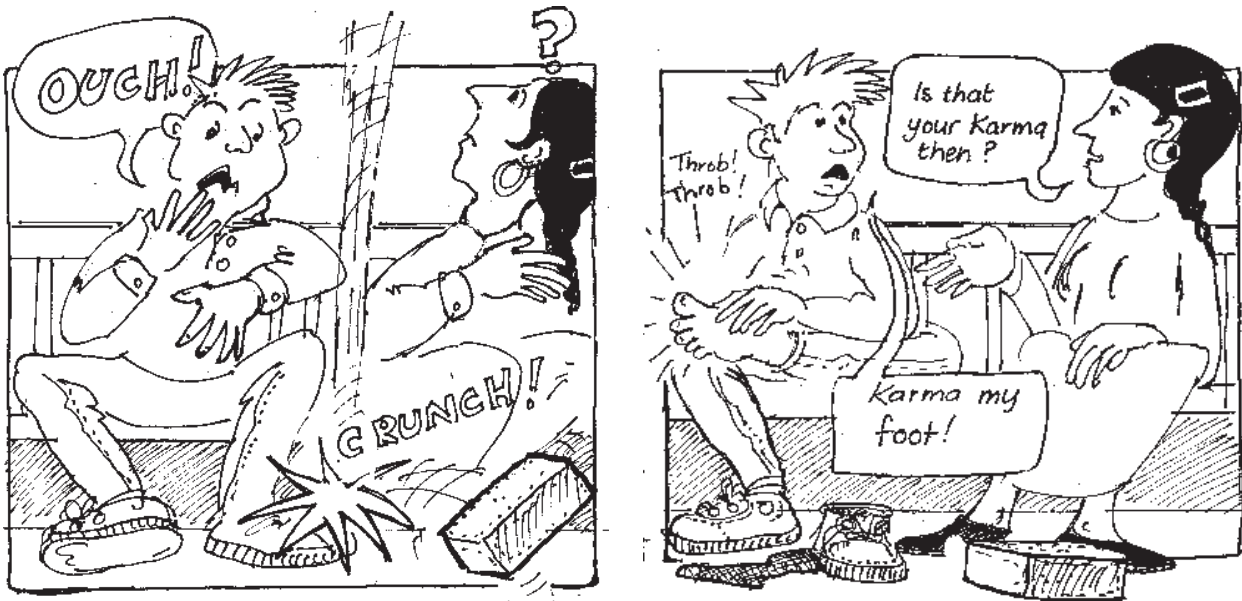
**ACTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES:** positive actions have positive consequences; negative actions have negative consequences.

Everything we do, think or say has an effect on the world around us and on ourselves. Change will happen to us anyway, but it is possible to change ourselves, and the world around us, for the better.



Here are three important things to remember about the Law of Karma:

- The Law of Karma only applies to 'willed' actions, things that we intentionally do, think or say. To help them to choose which is the best way to act, Buddhists have five precepts, or training guidelines.
- The Law of Karma does not account for everything that happens. There can be many reasons why something happens.
- Instead of looking to the past, the Law of Karma focuses on how our actions can shape the future.



An Indian Buddhist, explains what karma means to him:

*"When we were Untouchables, we were told that to suffer like this was part of our Karma. But now we know this is wrong. That's not what Buddhism teaches about Karma. Everything that we do has an effect on ourselves and on the world. It can have a positive effect or a negative effect, so this means that I have the power to shape my life. I am responsible for the success of my life ... If we want to change the world we have to start with ourselves and this will have an effect on others too."*

## ACTIVITIES

- Design a poster to illustrate the 'Law of Karma' - actions have consequences.
- Make up a short story or drama about the effect of a helpful deed, or the effect of an unkind deed.
- A friend of yours is in a lot of trouble and has written to you for help. Write a reply suggesting what he/she can do.



# The Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara

## INFORMATION SHEET

Compassion is a very important quality for Buddhists to develop. The mythical figure of Avalokiteshvara represents limitless compassion. Avalokiteshvara is a Bodhisattva - a being who has dedicated his, or her, life to helping all living beings to be free from suffering. Here is one version of the story of how Avalokiteshvara came to have eleven heads and a thousand arms.

**M**any centuries ago there was a monk called Avalokiteshvara. For much of his life he practised meditation in a cave in the Himalayas.

After meditating for many years, he reached a point where he was just about to gain Enlightenment. But at this point he became aware of a very faint sound, coming from a long way away. He listened more closely and heard many voices crying out and weeping.

He looked down from the cave and saw millions of living beings suffering in all sorts of ways. People were dying in fires, in shipwrecks and in war. Others were suffering through illness or hunger, or through their family or friends dying.

As he saw all this suffering, Avalokiteshvara felt an enormous wave of compassion well up inside him. He no longer wanted to gain Enlightenment just for himself; instead, he wanted to help all who experienced suffering. So he made a great vow. He would work to help all living beings become free from suffering and gain Enlightenment for themselves. He wanted to succeed in this vow so much

that he wished his body to split into a thousand pieces should he ever hesitate, even for a second.

Avalokiteshvara then entered into a long and deep meditation on compassion. When he emerged from this meditation he looked around - all he could see were people still suffering. He began to doubt that he could

help. Instantly his body shattered into a thousand pieces. But from the great compassion he felt for all living beings, the small pieces of his body took a new shape. His head became eleven heads, and his body now had a thousand arms.

With eleven heads Avalokiteshvara could see in all directions. With a thousand arms

he could work even more effectively to help suffering beings.

When Buddhists think of Avalokiteshvara they are reminded of limitless compassion. This is what Avalokiteshvara means to them. They can also be reminded of compassion by chanting his mantra - which represents compassion in sound form.

The mantra is: OM MANI PADME HUM



---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- Imagine you are the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Re-tell the story of why you made your great vow to help all living beings, and how you came to have a thousand arms and eleven heads.
- Make up a poem or a song which describes your response to the suffering in the world and what you might do about it.
- For Buddhists, the lotus is a symbol of growth and development. Find out about other Buddhist symbols. Use these symbols to make a design.
- A Bodhisattva takes a vow to help all beings. Investigate other vows that people might take.



## Programme 4

# The Sangha

Contents	Page
<b>Teacher's Notes:</b>	
The Spread of Buddhism	36
Worship	37
Meditation	38
Stilling Exercise	39
<b>Information Sheets:</b>	
The Spread of Buddhism	41
Worship	43
Meditation	45



# The Spread of Buddhism

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Over the centuries, as Buddhism spread, many different schools or traditions were established, creating a richness and diversity of Buddhist practice. New schools tended to form for different reasons:-

### Difference of vinaya

Some schools split off on the basis of the vinaya - the detailed set of codes of conduct governing monastic life. Monks or nuns following the same vinaya would live together.

### Doctrinal and philosophical differences

Doctrinal and philosophical differences did not prevent monks living in the same monastery if they shared the same vinaya. The Theravada school of South East Asia is the only non-Mahayana school surviving from the early split in the Sangha, which occurred about 60 years after the Buddha's Parinirvana.

### Buddhism in the West

The Theravada School of South East Asia was the first school of Buddhism to have an impact on the West. The Theravada scriptures, the Pali Canon, was translated and studied by Western scholars towards the end of the nineteenth century.

World War 2 brought American servicemen into contact with Japanese Zen Buddhists. During the 1950's, Zen Roshis, or teachers, began to establish Centres in the United States of America.

Following the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950, many of the teachers, or Rimpoches, of the various Tibetan schools of Buddhism fled to the West, establishing centres in Europe and the U.S.A.

During the 1960's, new Western movements, such as the F.W.B.O. emerged. They sought to apply Buddhist principles in a Western context.

As Western scholars continue to discover and study the Buddhist scriptures, a clearer picture of the complex development of Buddhist doctrine is emerging. For the first time, it has become possible to gain an over-view of the whole Buddhist tradition, with its variety of schools, practices and doctrines.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Friendship

Ananda and the Buddha were lifelong friends.

- Why is it good to have friends?
- What sort of person makes a good friend?
- How can you be a good friend?
- Have you ever been lonely?
- What causes people to be lonely?
- What effect does being lonely have on people?
- What can be done about loneliness?

### Groups

Since the time of the Buddha, groups of his followers have chosen to live together.

- How might living together help Buddhists?
- Do you belong to any group, club or community?
- Why do you belong to the club or group?
- How does being with others who have the same interests help you?
- Are there any disadvantages to being a member of a group?

### Change and Tradition

As Buddhism spread, it developed different traditions.

- What do you understand by the word 'tradition'?
- Can you think of a tradition that you follow?
  - in your family
  - in your school
  - in your community?
- Why do you follow it?
- What might cause it to change?
- Is change always for the better?
- Are there some things that should not be changed?
- How can you have change without losing what was good about the traditional way of doing something?

# Worship

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Ritual and devotion play an important part in Buddhism, although the particular form of worship varies from one tradition to another. In theistic religions, God is the focus of worship. But Buddhists do not believe in God; so what, and why, do Buddhists worship?

Buddhists worship in order to give expression to their gratitude to the Buddha for his teaching (the Dharma) and in appreciation of his life and example. By worshipping, Buddhists also acknowledge their own potential for unlimited growth and development towards the ideal of Enlightenment, which the Buddha represents.

Through worship, Buddhists express, nourish and encourage positive emotions such as well-wishing, confidence, appreciation, determination, aspiration, inspiration and joy- all states of mind which help them in their practice of the Dharma.

The word **Puja** simply means worship. On the video, after a Tibetan puja, we move to Manchester. This puja, performed by Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, is mostly spoken in English, but some sections, notably the 'Going for Refuge' verses and the precepts, are chanted in Pali, the ancient Indian language. Chanting the Refuges and Precepts in this traditional way connects the worshippers with Buddhists all over the world and down the ages. Mantras, which frequently form part of devotional practices, are also chanted in the traditional manner.

### The Shrine

The shrine is the focus of worship. Although it may vary in style from one tradition to another, a shrine is usually composed of a raised platform or stand on which a Buddha-image, or 'rupa' is placed. The stand may be quite plain or covered with richly coloured cloths or hangings. The shrine is not the same thing as an altar because there is no element of sacrifice in Buddhist worship. It is usually situated in a shrine-room: a quiet and peaceful place, set aside for the practice of meditation and worship.

### Offerings

The three traditional offerings are flowers, incense and candles, or light. (see information sheet)

Frequently, seven bowls filled with water are also placed on the shrine. These seven bowls symbolise the seven things traditionally offered to an honoured guest in ancient India. In offering them to the Buddha, Buddhists are treating him as an honoured guest. The seven traditional offerings are: water for washing, water to drink, flowers, incense, lamps or light, perfume and food.

Other gifts and ritual objects may also be offered in the course of a puja.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Refuges

For Buddhists, the Three Jewels of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, are refuges. Buddhists believe that taking refuge in them brings about happiness.

- What things in your life can you trust?
- What things can you not rely on?
- What makes you happy?
- Who can you turn to for support?

### Worship

Buddhists worship the Three Jewels as the three most precious things.

- What are the three most precious, or important, things in your life?
- Do you worship them?
- How do you worship them?

### Offerings

During a puja, Buddhists make offerings of flowers, candles and incense - representing beauty, wisdom and the ethical life.

- What things do you find beautiful
- What effect does beauty have on you?
- Do you think it is important that there is beauty in people's lives?
- Why?
- In what ways can people cause harm to themselves, or others, through ignorance?
- Does knowledge help people to be happy and lead better lives?
- What things do you think it is essential for people to know in order to lead a happy and meaningful life?
- Does everything we do have an effect on ourselves or others?
- Can you give examples?
- Can you think of anything that does not have an effect?

# Meditation

## TEACHER'S NOTES

Buddhist meditation is a graded system for training the mind and developing both wisdom and compassion. It is an indispensable practice for Buddhists.

### Stilling exercises in the classroom

On the next page is a simple 'stilling exercise'. It takes about 10 minutes to lead through, although it can be lengthened slightly if this is appropriate for the pupils. It focuses on awareness of the body as a way of developing concentration.

While it is not appropriate to teach meditation to pupils in the context of an R.E. lesson, much benefit can be obtained from doing simple 'stilling exercises'. This exercise can give pupils a sense of some of the difficulties we are likely to encounter when we try to quieten our minds, as well as a hint of the pleasure and benefits to be gained. It can be done in the classroom using normal classroom furniture. It does not need special equipment, such as meditation cushions or stools.

It can easily be led by a teacher with no experience of meditation.

It is recommended that you read the exercise through several times and, if possible, try it yourself, before using it with the pupils. Use a quiet yet natural voice and adopt an unhurried and even pace. Pause for a few moments after each instruction to allow pupils time to follow the suggestions. Do not rush.

Make sure you leave enough time to complete the exercise. It can be jarring to be suddenly halted by the school bell, and the benefits could be lost through a hurried conclusion to the lesson.

Pupils will get most out of the exercise if there is enough time at the end for them to talk about how they found it.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

### Questions to think about after the exercise.

- How did you find it?
- Had you ever done anything like this before?
- Was there anything you found difficult about the exercise?
- Was there anything you found easy, or particularly enjoyed?
- How easy did you find it to concentrate on what you were trying to do?
- If you found yourself distracted, what sort of things distracted you?
- Can you remember how you felt before the exercise?
- How do you feel now?
- When you were invited to look at your 'internal landscape', what was it like?
- Had anything changed when you returned to this at the end of the exercise?
- What did you learn from trying to do this exercise?
- How do you think that this sort of exercise might help people?

# Stilling Exercise

We are going to do a short 'stilling' exercise. It is the sort of exercise you might do if you were learning to relax and let go of stress. It will give you some idea of what it might be like to learn to meditate. It is not meditation in the proper sense, nor is it a religious practice. We are not trying to 'empty our minds' but simply to begin to quieten them for a short while and let go of stress and tension.

If you do not want to take part in the stilling exercise, you can simply sit quietly, making sure that you don't disturb those people who *do* want to give it a try.

If at any point you want to stop, just open your eyes and sit quietly until we have finished.

To get the most from this exercise, we need to be able to sit in a position that is comfortable but which allows us to feel bright and alert and lets our energy flow rather than sending us to sleep.

You could try sitting on a chair, with both your feet on the floor, so that you feel grounded and stable. Try not to collapse into the back of the chair or lean too far forward. Let the chair support you and feel it taking your weight. Feel your weight flowing down through your seat and legs.

Find a position for your hands where they will be still and relaxed. You could let them rest on your thighs, or hold them together in your lap.

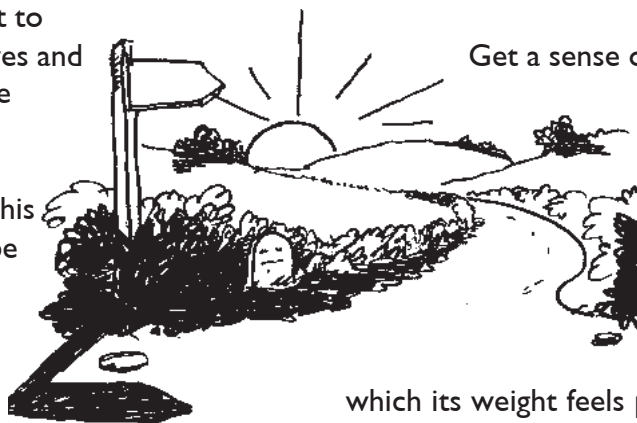
Get a sense of the lower part of your body being firm and grounded, like the base of a

great mountain, or the roots of a tall tree. Allow your upper body to rise up from this stable base with a sense of lightness and dignity.

Let your spine follow its natural curve. Soften and broaden the skin on your back.

Allow your shoulders to drop back and down, melting away any tightness or tension you may have there. Feel how your arms drop away from your shoulders.

Sense the position of your hands; let them be soft and relaxed.



Get a sense of the back of your neck being long; tuck in your chin slightly and soften the throat area.

Move your head backwards and forwards gently until you find the point at which its weight feels perfectly balanced on the top of your spinal column.

Soften the skin on the face. Feel your forehead to be broad and smooth.

Relax the jaw.

Keep the tongue soft in the mouth.

If you are happy to do so, gently close your eyes, alternatively, keeping your gaze soft, look down at the ground a little in front of you. We are trying to turn our attention inwards and don't want to be distracted by the things around us.

If there are noises, try not to follow them with your mind - just let them be there.

## STILLING EXERCISE CONTINUED

Now gently try to turn your attention inwards.

Be curious about yourself.

Can you get a sense of what your 'internal landscape' is like?

Is it bright or dull - clear or foggy?

Is there a colour, or a shape, or an image associated with it?

Are you happy or sad, bored or interested, sleepy or speedy?

How do you feel right now?

Do you know how you feel?

Maybe you are a mixture of things - that's fine. Maybe you can't tell how you feel - that's fine too.

Whatever you find when you look inwards - just note it in an interested and friendly way.

Now turn your attention to your chest area. Can you get a sense of your breath coming in and going out?

Don't try to change or force your breath in any way - just become aware of the breathing process.

Notice any changes or movement caused by the breathing process:  
the rise and fall of the chest area;  
the rise and fall of the abdomen;  
the movement of the lower ribs;  
the stretch of the skin across the back;  
any movement in the shoulders.

Can you feel the slight brushing of your clothing against your skin as you breathe?

We have been breathing since the moment we were born, but most of the time we are completely unaware of it.

Now, for a few moments, see if you can follow a single breath:

Follow its journey from the first touch of the air against your nostrils; through your nasal passages; down the back of your wind-pipe and into your lungs; feel your chest and lungs gently expand with the breath; then watch the breath turn and begin its outward journey.

If your mind wanders off and you find yourself thinking of other things, just gently bring yourself back to your breath.

Allow yourself to enjoy breathing - to enjoy sitting there.

*(Pupils may continue to gently follow the breath in this way for as long as it is appropriate.)*

What is your 'internal landscape' like now? Has it changed at all?

In what ways has it changed?

Now very gently broaden your awareness again: get a sense of yourself sitting here in the classroom; feel your feet on the floor and your contact with the chair; become aware of any noises around you; and of the people around you; and, when you are ready, gently open your eyes and change your position.



# The Spread of Buddhism

## INFORMATION SHEET

Buddhism originated in Northern India around the year 560 BCE. About 250 years later, during the reign of the Emperor Ashoka, (289-232 BCE) Buddhism began to spread throughout India. Asoka also asked monks to take the Dharma to other countries: South-East to Sri Lanka, north towards Nepal and Tibet and west towards the kingdoms of the Greek Empire.

Over the centuries, the practice of Buddhism gradually spread, until at one time a third of the population of the world was Buddhist. As it took root in different countries, Buddhism adapted to different cultures without sacrificing its basic principles. This resulted in the development of several different forms, or schools of Buddhism. Many of these schools have now spread to the West.

### THERAVADA BUDDHISM

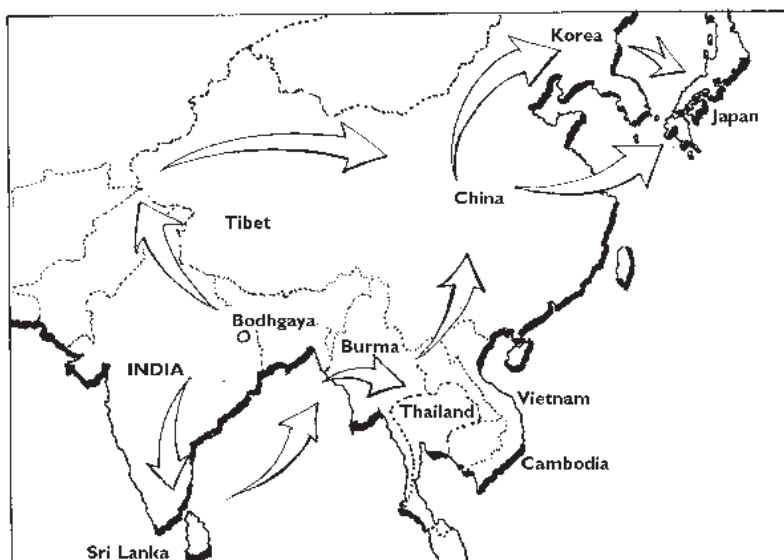
In the countries to the South and South-East of India people practise a form of Buddhism known as Theravada. The yellow-robed monks of this school study and teach the Dharma. They regard the monastic life as very important and stress that living by the vinaya, or the monastic rule, is the best way to become Enlightened. Many boys follow the monastic life for a time as part of their upbringing. The lay people follow the Buddha's teaching and help the monks by giving them money, food and robes.

### MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

Mahayana literally means the 'Great Way'. The people in the countries to the North and North-East of India follow this form of Buddhism. There are many different 'schools' of Mahayana Buddhism.

Mahayana Buddhism emphasises the importance of compassion. It has as its ideal the Bodhisattva - someone who strives to help all beings to gain Enlightenment for themselves.

Buddhism spread to China at the beginning of the Christian era and to Japan about 500 years later. The Pure Land schools are based on devotion to the Buddha Amitabha. The Zen school of Buddhism lays stress on meditation as the way to gain Enlightenment.



### VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM

Vajrayana literally means the 'Diamond Way'. This form of Buddhism spread from India to Tibet around 700 CE. Ritual and worship plays a particularly important role. Many Tibetans chant mantras or special sacred phrases as they go about their daily lives. Tibetan monks and nuns wear maroon robes.

### BUDDHISM IN THE WEST

Buddhism began to become well known in the West from about 1950 CE. Most of the major Buddhist traditions are now being practised by westerners.

There are also specifically western movements. One such movement is the **FWBO** (the **F**riends of the **W**estern **B**uddhist **O**der)

The FWBO is founded on the basic Buddhist principles. It tries to find ways to practise them in today's world. People in the FWBO strive to make the Three Jewels of Buddhism (the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha) more and more central to their lives.

Members of the Western Buddhist Order itself are not monks or nuns; neither are they lay people. Some choose to live a celibate

life (without sexual activity); some have sexual partners or are married with children. For them, the commitment of trying to live by the Buddha's teachings is more important than a particular lifestyle.

Members of the Western Buddhist Order wear a kesa (a small white or golden-coloured stole) around their neck when teaching the Dharma, meditating or performing puja. They do not wear robes.

Every year there is a conference for all the main Buddhist schools in Europe.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

● Re-tell the story of the last days of the Buddha's life as if you were his good friend Ananda.

● In the early Buddhist sangha there were three main types of life style:-

**Forest dwellers**, who lived a very simple life in seclusion in the forest, devoting most of their time to meditation.

**Monastic communities** - monks, or nuns, usually lived on the outskirts of a village, supported by the local people. They remembered and recorded the Buddha's teachings, and spent their time teaching the dharma and meditating.

**Lay followers** -who lived at home with their families while practising the Buddha's teaching.

Make a list of the things you think that these three kinds of followers would have in common. Make a list of the things that would be different about their lifestyles.

● Choose one of the schools of Buddhism that interests you. Find out more about it and prepare a short presentation.

# Worship

## INFORMATION SHEET

“ **Buddham saranam gachami** *to the Buddha for refuge I go*  
**Dharmam saranam gachami** *to the Dharma for refuge I go*  
**Sangham saranam gachami** *to the Sangha for refuge I go* ”

### Worship

Although there is no God in Buddhism, worship is an important Buddhist practice. For Buddhists, the Buddha stands for the highest ideal to which human beings can aspire. For a Buddhist, trying to gain Enlightenment is the most worthwhile aim in the world.

Buddhists worship in order to express their appreciation of the life and teachings of the Buddha. When they worship, they also acknowledge their own potential.

### Puja

Buddhist worship is called ‘**Puja**’. Different Buddhist traditions have developed their own forms of worship. Within some traditions, pujas can be very colourful and complex.

On the video, we see the Tibetan monks at Zhekar Choede monastery, as well as members of the Buddhist sangha in Manchester, performing a puja. The two pujas look very different, but their purpose is the same - to help members of each sangha develop and express positive feelings for the path that they have chosen to follow.

The puja performed by members of the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order is mostly spoken in English, but the Going for Refuge verses, and the Precepts are chanted in Pali, the ancient Indian language. Chanting the Refuges and Precepts in this traditional way connects the worshippers with Buddhists all over the world and down the ages.

### Offerings

Offerings are usually made during a puja. The three traditional offerings are flowers, candles and incense. People come up to the shrine to make their offerings. As an additional mark of respect and devotion they may also bow or prostrate.

### Flowers

Flowers open from buds into full bloom, but then soon fade, wither and die. In turn, new flowers will grow. One of the Buddha’s most important teachings is that of impermanence. The offering of flowers remind Buddhists both of beauty and impermanence.

### Light/Candles

This offering is made with lamps or candles. The light of a candle flame reminds Buddhists of the wisdom of the Buddha, which helped to banish the darkness in people’s minds. Buddhists believe that this same wisdom can be kindled in our own hearts and minds.

### Incense

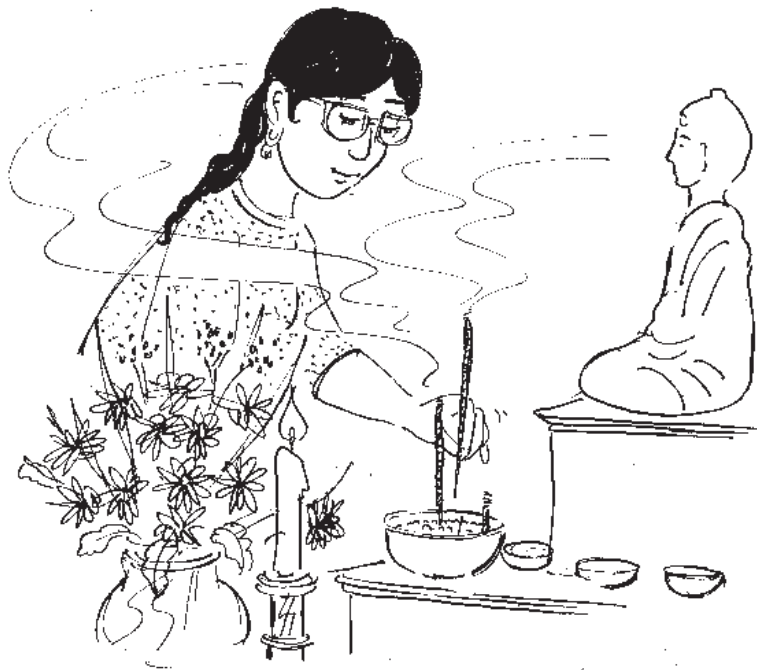
This offering is made with sticks of incense. The fragrance of the incense spreads into every corner of the room. It reminds Buddhists that if we act in a kind and wise manner, the positive effects of our actions will be felt all around, even spreading throughout the world.

---

## ACTIVITIES

---

- Draw the three traditional offerings and write about what they mean to Buddhists.
- Write a short poem, song or prayer, expressing a desire for the welfare of the world.
- Design a place of worship.
- Compare and contrast Buddhist worship with that of other religions.



# Meditation

## INFORMATION SHEET 1

Buddhists meditate in order to develop calmer and more positive states of mind. Eventually, they hope to achieve the mind of a Buddha - a mind that is perfectly clear and still, like the water of a great lake.

When the Buddha taught meditation he said that, to begin with, our mind often isn't clear. He compared the mind to water in different states:-

"...when we are **restless and anxious**, our mind is like the water of a rough and choppy lake."

"....if we are tormented by **anger**, our mind is like boiling water, hissing and steaming."

".....when all we can think of is what we **want**, our mind is like water clouded by different coloured dyes."

".....sometimes our mind seems like a pond full of weeds that are so thick we can't even see the water - this is how it is when we're **sleepy** and full of **laziness**."

".....even worse is when our mind is like a stagnant pond, full of evil-smelling mud and slime. Then we have **no confidence** in ourselves, we can't even be bothered to try; we have given up."

Buddhists believe that through meditation and the practice of the precepts they can change themselves for the better.



## ACTIVITIES

- Draw a picture to illustrate each of these states of mind and label each one.
- Draw two more pictures to illustrate positive states of mind and say what they are.
- Write a short stilling exercise and make a tape of it.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A glossary of names and terms used in the resource

Many Buddhist terms are expressed in Pali and Sanskrit, languages of ancient India. Where applicable, both the Pali and Sanskrit version of terms are given.

<b>Sanskrit</b>	<b>Pali</b>	
	Anatta	Insubstantiality - one of the three 'marks' of existence.
	Anicca	Impermanence - one of the three 'marks' of existence
Ashoka		The Buddhist Emperor of India in the 3rd century BCE. He built columns and stupas at places associated with the Buddha's life and was instrumental in the spread of Buddhism.
Avalokitesvara		'The Lord who looks down (in compassion)'. An archetypal Bodhisattva.
Bodhgaya		The holy site associated with the Buddha's Enlightenment.
Bodhi		'Awakening' or Enlightenment
Bodhisattva		'Enlightenment being', or 'being-dedicated-to-attaining-Enlightenment-for-the-sake-of-all-living-beings'.
Buddha		'One who is awake to the Truth'
DharDO Rimpoche		(1917-1990) A Tibetan Lama who founded the school for refugees in Kalimpong, Northern India.
Dharma	Dhamma	'The Truth'; also the teaching of the Buddha
Dharmachakra		'The wheel of the Truth' (or teaching). It often has eight spokes representing the Noble Eightfold Path.
Dr. Ambedkar		(1891-1956) The Indian cabinet minister and leader of the ex-untouchables who converted to Buddhism with 400,000 followers in October 1956.
Duhkha	Dukkha	'Suffering' - the first Noble Truth and one of the 3 'marks' of existence.
Gautama		Family name of the Buddha.
Karma	Kamma	'Action' - the Law of Karma states that actions have consequences.
Kushinagar		The holy site associated with the Buddha's death (Parinirvana)
Magga		'Way' - the fourth Noble Truth.
Mahayana		'Great Way' One of the three major forms of Buddhism.
Mantra		A sacred sound symbol.
Mudra		A ritual gesture or hand movement, especially as found in Buddha images.
Nirodha		'Cessation' - the third Noble Truth
Nirvana	Nibbana	'Extinguishing of the fires' of greed, hatred and ignorance. The state of Enlightenment.
Pali		The ancient Indian language in which the scriptures of the Theravadin Canon were preserved.
Parinirvana	Parinibbana	The final passing away of the Buddha.
Puja		Worship
Samudaya		'Cause' - the second Noble Truth.
Sangha		The company of those who follow the teachings of the Buddha.
Sarnath		The place where the Buddha first taught the Dharma.
Siddhartha		The historical name of the Buddha.
Stupa		A special structure which often contains relics and is a focus of worship.
Theravadin		'Way of the Elders'. School of Buddhism prevalent in South-East Asia.
Vajrayana		'Diamond Way'. One of the three major forms of Buddhism.
	Vinaya	Rules of monastic life followed by monks and nuns.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TEXT	ILLUSTRATION	LAYOUT	COVER DESIGN	SPECIAL THANKS
Padmasri Adiccabandhu Kalyacitta	Adiccabandhu Aloka	Mokshapriya Bodhiketū	Dhammarati	Paul Dewhirst Shakyajata

**The Clear Vision Trust** produces high quality resources to support the teaching of Buddhism in schools. We also specialise in INSET.

For further information about the Friends of the Western Buddhist Order, or details of local Buddhist Centres, please contact:

Manchester Buddhist Centre  
16/20 Turner Street,  
Manchester M4 1DZ  
United Kingdom  
Tel 0161 834 9232

London Buddhist Centre  
51 Roman Road,  
London E20 0HU  
United Kingdom  
Tel 020 8981 1225

First published in Great Britain in 1996 by  
The Clear Vision Trust  
(Registered charity no. 1019669)  
16/20 Turner Street  
Manchester M4 1DZ

tel 0161 839 9579  
fax 0870 139 1699  
email [education@clear-vision.org](mailto:education@clear-vision.org)

This publication contains copyright material which may not be reproduced without the written permission of The Clear Vision Trust. The information sheets may be copied or reproduced, for classroom use, by the purchasing establishment only.

May all beings be well!      May all beings be happy!