

# **DHAMMA**

*For Sick People*

**Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu**



DHAMMA FOR SICK PEOPLE

by Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

Translated from the Thai by Santikaro Upasaka

First edition e-published by Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives, 2020

Second, augmented edition e-published by Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives, 2020

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« *The gift of Dhamma surpasses all other gifts.* » (Dhp 354)

## *Anumodanā*

To all Dhamma Comrades, those helping to spread Dhamma:

Break out the funds to spread Dhamma to let Faithful Trust flow,  
Broadcast majestic Dhamma to radiate long-living joy.

Release unexcelled Dhamma to tap the spring of Virtue,  
Let safely peaceful delight flow like a cool mountain stream.

Dhamma leaves of many years sprouting anew, reaching out,  
To unfold and bloom in the Dhamma Centers of all towns.

To spread lustrous Dhamma and in hearts glorified plant it,  
Before long, weeds of sorrow, pain, and affliction will flee.

As Virtue revives and resounds throughout Thai society,  
All hearts feel certain love toward those born, aging, and dying.

Congratulations and Blessings to all Dhamma Comrades,  
You who share Dhamma to widen the people's prosperous joy.

Heartiest appreciation from Buddhadāsa Indapañño,  
Buddhist Science ever shines beams of Bodhi long-lasting.

In grateful service, fruits of merit and wholesome successes,  
Are all devoted in honor to Lord Father Buddha.

Thus may the Thai people be renowned for their Virtue,  
May perfect success through Buddhist Science awaken their hearts.

May the King and His Family live long in triumphant strength,  
May joy long endure throughout this our world upon earth.

from

*Buddhadāsa Indapañño*

Mokkhabalārāma

Chaiya, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2530

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# Dhamma for Ordinary Sick People

*A talk given on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1982<sup>1</sup>*

This Dhamma talk is for stimulating the intelligence of people who are ill. Please read carefully and consider thoroughly.

## **Illness Is Ordinary and Natural**

Illness ought to be seen as natural occurrences for all physical *saṅkhāras* (bodies), whether humans or other animals, because *saṅkhāras* undergo change.<sup>2</sup> Whenever there is change, it can be up or down. Upward change feels comfortable and healthy. Downward change creates illness. When physical *saṅkhāras* get successively older, most of the change is painful and ill. This fact needs to be seen

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<sup>1</sup> This talk was addressed to a general audience, both present and listening to recording, many of whom were in their elder years. Some of them would have had traditional Buddhist beliefs about future lives. At the same time (July 1982), Tan Ajahn's own health was up and down.

<sup>2</sup> Here, the context suggests the common understanding of *saṅkhāras* as physical bodies. Usually, Tan Ajahn uses the term in its universal meaning (all conditioned things) or specific meanings as found in *paṭiccasamuppāda* teachings. Here, he doesn't specify physical *saṅkhāras* but his audience probably understood *saṅkhāras* to be 'bodies.'

as it truly is: all *saṅkhāras* are just like this. In short, pain and illness are normal and natural for physical *saṅkhāras*.

### **Illness Reminds Us to Be Clever**

Let us examine the reason why this illness happens. We ought to consider in a beneficial direction, that is, to see that this illness occurs to warn us. Illness doesn't exist to make us suffer or be sad. There's nothing about it to be sorry for or suffer over, which have no benefit because physical *saṅkhāras* are just like this. Rather, illness is to warn us and teach us to be more intelligent, rather than suffer. Illness informs us to be ready for the ultimate quenching without remainder of *dukkha*. If we as yet spin around in *saṃsāric* cycles we necessarily suffer with birth, aging, illness, and death. If you don't want birth, aging, illness, and death to occur, then don't spin around in cycles of *saṃsāra*.

### **To Go beyond *Dukkha*, Must Quench without Remaining**

Now, illness and fever have arrived to caution you, to demonstrate how life is. If you wish to be free of this sort of existence – namely, illness – you must prepare yourself for quenching without anything left over. This remainderless quenching is the cooling of *saṅkhāras* that leaves no fuel behind for further birth. Even though the body isn't ready to break up, the heart volunteers for dissolution. To put it directly, we are fully willing to be without Ego from this moment. We volunteer to be free of Ego right now. Our hearts release regarding everything and give up all matters concerning *saṅkhāras*. End all

matters concerning these *saṅkhāras* so that there's no thinking in terms of Ego and Mine remaining. We are aware that insisting on wandering around within *saṃsāric* cycles leads to being like this (sick). There's no end to it. If you wish to stop being like this, then quench the feelings of *saṅkhāras* as being Ego and Mine. With no more feeling that anything is me or mine there's quenching.

### **Don't Take *Saṅkhāras* Personally**

*Saṅkhāras* naturally get sick. If we cling to them as 'our *saṅkhāras*,' the pain and illness become ours, too. So we suffer, we're sad or disappointed. If we are uncompromising with a new intention, with intelligence and mental fortitude, we commit to letting the *saṅkhāras* be their own story. Let the *saṅkhāras* happen according to their own business; don't hang on as 'mine' or 'ours.' The story of *saṅkhāras* is they don't last; they're impermanent. *Saṅkhāras* are *dukkha*, stressful, and undependable. *Saṅkhāras* are *anattā*, without essential or lasting selfhood. What we wish for is stopping, quieting, and cooling, which is the story of *nibbāna*.

### **Release Mind into Freedom**

Mind must look to see in this way so it doesn't grasp physical matters as being mine or about me. Let physical *saṅkhāras* get sick or decay naturally, so that they aren't clung to as my pain, my illness, or my death. Mind won't be bound up with illness and death. Instead, mind is freed from pain, illness, and death. In this freedom there's no going and returning within the cycles of *saṃsāra*.

This is the warning that illness brings us, so that we will be smarter. Illness doesn't visit to make us suffer. It doesn't demand that we suffer. It merely reminds us to be fully prepared for remainderless quenching of feeling there is Ego and Mine. It challenges us to quench Ego and Mine. It doesn't tell us to hurry up and kill ourselves, which would be pointless. Instead, it reminds us to quench clinging to 'me' and to quench clinging to anything as 'mine.' This is what I mean by warning us to quench without remainder. When clinging to 'me' and 'mine' is quenched, there is nobody to be born, age, feel ill, and die.

### **Preparing Oneself for Remainderless Quenching**

Now we will explore in more detail how to prepare ourselves for quenching without remainder. I will divide our preparation into three parts or stages.

*Stage One:* Review your life and consider how you have completed all the many worldly things that were your role in the world. You did what you needed to do for livelihood, raising children, friendships, and caring for parents. You have finished all your worldly duties. This part of life is completed.

*Stage Two:* Recollect all the good and wholesome things that you have done in life. You have given gifts and donations, you lived ethically, you cared for and served other beings, you contributed to the public good, and so on. Things of a good and wholesome nature have been accomplished in line with your station and abilities. You

fulfilled the opportunity of having been born human. The goodness you could do in life has been completed.

*Stage Three:* Reflect how that's enough of cycling through such conditions over and over again. That's enough! That's enough of wandering in saṃsāric cycles. If born human, you will go through all the same stuff yet again. Enough then! Even if born a *devatā*, you will still have to die again, will still go through the anxiety and suffering due to *kilesa*, no better than humans. That's enough of being born, whether *devatā* or human. If one accomplishes the goodness and wholesomeness necessary for *devatā* birth, it's certain that one will be born *devatā*. However, birth as *devatā* doesn't mean the end of suffering. There will still be the *devatā* kinds of *kilesa* and these cause suffering, too. There will be fear and mental illnesses from *kilesa* oppressing the heart. That's enough of doing good for the sake of being born as *devatā*.<sup>3</sup>

Even if there's birth on a higher level, if occasionally born as a *brahma* god, there's still 'self,' still Ego and Mine, subject to birth, aging, illness, and death yet again. Even *brahmas* cling to Ego, in fact, more so than ordinary people. That existence is so comfortable and easy that the avoidance of death is more intense. The clinging to Ego and Mine is intense. The more they don't want to die, the more they

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<sup>3</sup> *Devatās* or *devas* are the inhabitants of the sensual paradises who feast on nectar and ambrosia, serenaded by celestial musicians. The wiser among them visited the Buddha some nights and illumined the area where he was staying. Metaphorically, *devatās* are living on easy street without having to labor for their comforts and pleasures.

fear death. These *brahmas* suffer because of death, although they live for eons.<sup>4</sup>

Recycling in births as this and births as that – let it go. Whether human, *devatā*, or *brahma*, that's enough of saṃsāric migration. Rebirth as human is 'too much,' rebirth as *devatā* is 'too much,' and rebirth as *brahma* is still 'too much.' So enough of saṃsāric cycles.

Please reflect along these three lines. The worldly business that a good citizen ought to do, I have done. The goodness and virtue, I have done. Cycling around through *saṃsāra*, I've had enough. That's enough. Now for quenching without remainder. Time to stop.

Let's review once again that establishing in remainderless quenching and realizing peaceful happiness involves being mindful of and contemplating that all worldly matters – in, of, and for the world – have been completed by you. Second, all the goodness for the sake of birth in another world is also accomplished by you. Then there are no further reasons for being born again. That's enough with *saṃsāra* and its cycles, enough of all the endless wandering.

All three of these reviews demonstrate 'that's enough!' That's enough of worldly activities. That's enough of good and generous activities for the sake of another world. That's enough of transmigrating due to the power of karma (volitional action). Don't cling to karma; don't cling to its fruits; seek only quenching without any remainder. That's enough of enduring the torment of birth, aging,

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<sup>4</sup> *Brahmas* live on more sublime planes, untainted by sensuality.

illness, and death yet again. Just stop. That's enough of recycling between death and birth. Volunteer for remainderless quenching, radical calming without any Ego and Mine left over, thoroughly cooled in *nibbāna*.

Now it's very clear that illness and death are dangers that menace us. We receive them as ours and so they threaten and bite us. These ungrateful beings that we take on as ours then turn around and bite us. If we don't take them as ours, they won't bite us. To conquer these illnesses and death, we must relinquish all clinging in this world. If we continue to like and hope for things of this world, illness and death will continue to threaten us. They will squeeze and torment us, causing us to be afraid, to regret, and to suffer. If we toss them away, no longer nurturing them, such clinging won't be able to squeeze us anymore. Should illness and death threaten us with fear, we won't be afraid. When they come to make us regretful or frustrated, we won't be sorry. When they come to make us suffer, we won't suffer.

Please observe with care that we suffer because of hoping to be in the world, still caught in the world, still caught in the beautiful things that we love and that make *saṃsāra* pleasing for us. Once we can see that these are temporary, illusory things that trick us into suffering, we won't hanker after such bait, such pretty things, such deceptions, again. We no longer will wish to consume the bait, to enjoy the pleasures and fun of the world, or heavens, or wherever.

There's no wish to be born as anything no matter where. They're just illusory stuff that tricks us time after time.

Whenever there's seeing that nothing is worth having or being, whether in this world or others, whether this kind or some other, without exception, the heart naturally inclines to enter *santi* (peace). This is the calm quenching without remainder, because there's nothing lovely and satisfying to cling on. It doesn't see anything worth wanting or taking. It naturally inclines to remainderless quenching. Please observe well how greatly nature helps us let go.

Right now, examine in your heart that there's nothing in this world or any other worth having and nothing worth being. There's nothing worth taking as 'me' or 'mine.' There's only one thing worth having or being – the peaceful well-being of calm *citta* (psyche), quenched without remainder. Mind is cool in *nibbāna* because mind doesn't cling to anything to create *kilesa* or anxious agitation. It lets go of all clinging that creates agitated friction. This is the meaning of liberated mind, peaceful heart, and cool nibbānic psyche.<sup>5</sup>

*Nibbāna* is experienced and clearly known as this heart cooled because there's no heat in *citta*, there aren't any *kilesas* of *citta*, there's no clinging to cause any *kilesas*. This absence of heat and fire, and of wandering in cyclic existence as this and that, is the coolness of *nibbāna*. However change occurs, no birth, no aging, no illness, and no death occurs. There's no birth, aging, illness, and death that's

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<sup>5</sup> Heart, mind, and psyche are used interchangeably for Pāli *citta* and Thai *jitjai*.

Mine, because there's no Ego. Quenching Ego is to thoroughly quench in coolness. Ego is where heat sets up shop. Quenching Ego is coolness.

Look well into how illness has come to warn us: that's enough. That's enough of wandering around in saṃsāric cycles. Seeing the danger in illness, seeing the danger in death, don't fall for the bait that causes illness and death. That is, don't cling to anything; don't hope for having anything as Me or Mine in the world. Look forward only to peace, the calming and cool quenching of *nibbāna*. No more transmigrating again.

This is the supremely appropriate time for cultivating clear, bright understanding that is correct concerning saṃsāric cycles. This is the opportunity to know birth, aging, illness, and death thoroughly. Recall the Buddha's words, 'Relying on us as *kalyāṇamitta* (splendid, noble friend), transcend birth, aging, illness, and death.' How does one transcend birth, aging, illness, and death? No Ego. No Mine to take birth, aging, illness, and death as Mine. Release birth, aging, illness, and death into quenching as *nibbāna*. No more saṃsāric cycles. Please make the most, the highest benefit, of this time.

This concludes a Dhamma teaching for reminding those of us who are seriously ill.



## **Special Reminder for Dhamma Comrade Facing Death**

*A talk given on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1981 at Suan Mokkh*

*This talk was given in Suan Mokkh's outdoor grove, where the majority of Ajahn Buddhādāsa's public talks took place. As becomes gradually clear, this talk also had a special purpose. Phra Tulayabaksuvamanda, a retired high-ranking government official and close Dhamma comrade of Ajahn Buddhādāsa was ill and dying. Tan Ajahn spoke to the heart of the situation for this long-term supporter who was familiar with the deeper aspects of Buddhist teaching. Thus, it is a reminder more than a new teaching: a review to prepare for the inevitable. Readers who are new to the emptiness teachings of Buddhism that Ajahn Buddhādāsa emphasized might keep the context of this special talk in mind. Although we may not feel ourselves to be in the same situation as his old friend, we never know how soon it will arrive.*

May I take another opportunity to stimulate the mindfulness and intelligence of someone who is sick. I will explain how you can

quench the harm and suffering of sickness using the Heart of Buddhism. We employ the Heart of Buddhism for the most benefit at these times when we are sick. Please listen with good attention.

I've spoken about the Heart of Buddhism many times, so it will be familiar to you. However, some people will have forgotten and others only remember when feeling well and in good health. Once sickness takes over, we can be forgetful and muddled. It's worthwhile to review this teaching so that it can be beneficial when one is confronted with illness.

The Heart of Buddhism can be spoken of in many terms. However, the most concise, focused, and correct wording is in the short phrase 'all things are just so.' Pain is just so; pleasure is just so; the feeling of neither-pain-nor pleasure is just so. Sickness is just so; not recovering is just so; healing is just so. Don't be happy or sad, up and down, about your illness. It's just what it is. In Pāli, 'just so' is *tathatā*; in Chinese, *yoo-si* (如是); Thai, *chen-nan-eng*; and English, *thusness*.

Let's review our many discussions in the past. *Tathatā* means 'just like this' or 'simply thus.' Everything is just so. Things having causes and conditions are just so. That which has no causes or conditions is just so. In other words, *saṅkhāras* (concoctings) are just so. *Viṣaṅkhāra* (non-concocting) is just so. *Saṅkhāras* are just so in their ways.<sup>1</sup> *Viṣaṅkhāra* is just so in its way. *Nibbāna* is just so in its

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<sup>1</sup> *Saṅkhāra* can mean different things in Thai and in Pāli. Here, Tan Ajahn uses the term in its universal meaning (all conditioned things, phenomena arising from causes and

peaceful, cool way. In conclusion, there isn't anything that isn't just so in its particular way.<sup>2</sup>

What are the results of recognizing just-so-ness or thusness? Perhaps you can recall from the many talks about it. Here, we'll recall the essence of those talks briefly. The sorts of things that have causes and conditions, *saṅkhāras*, pass through arising, maintaining, and ceasing. Their arising is just so, their maintaining is just so, and their ceasing is just so. Consequently, birth is merely thus, aging is merely thus, illness is merely thus, and death, too, is merely thus.

Please contemplate this deeply until experiencing the truth that our good health is just so, and that any sickness occurring in us is just so. If this sickness passes through its causes and conditions that too is just so. If dying, that also is through the thusness of its causes and conditions. We find thusness in every single thing and none of them strike us as strange. Death isn't strange and not dying isn't strange either. All is just so. Mind (*citta*) seeing thusness is at peace. Without anxiety and struggle, mind is cooled in *nibbāna* until that *citta* is finished. There's one more quenching and then it's all over. Nothing can be suffering for this sort of mind. This is the kind of *citta* that doesn't suffer.

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conditions, and that change and pass away through causes and conditions). Later, the context may suggest the common Thai understanding of *saṅkhāras* as physical bodies.

<sup>2</sup> *Visaṅkhāra (nibbāna)* is that which is not concocted or conditioned and does not concoct. Mind experiencing it is unconcocted.

This is what we do. We investigate and see that birth, aging, illness, and death are matters of thusness. We realize their thusness in each of them. Birth, aging, illness, and death are natural and ordinary, but don't assume there's nothing we can do about them. We can stop birth, aging, illness, and death by not clinging to them as Ego or as Ego's self. Don't cling to anything as Ego's self.<sup>3</sup> Then, where could these conditions occur, and to whom could they happen, when there's no separate self to be born, age, get sick, and die?

The karma business is the same. Having created karma for a long time, in the end one becomes weary of recycling according to karma (one's intentional actions). Then what can one do about it? Listen carefully. Stop creating Ego and karma is done. Without this Ego to create karma, we can stop it. We have the power to stop karma, so that it has no poison or viciousness ever again. All of this is simply thusness. Carrying on under karma's power is thusness. No longer being subject to karma is thusness. In other words, acting correctly in line with the highest Dhamma, which can end karma, through the natural law of thusness, is also thusness. Let things happen just so. They are just so; don't turn them into Ego. Let all things be thus according to their natures. Don't take them as Ego or Mine.

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<sup>3</sup> Tan Ajahn has used *tua-goo* to express a blatant sense of self that easily becomes selfish, *goo* having come to be a crude colloquial pronoun in modern Thai. I've translated *tua-goo* as 'Ego' here in the popular sense of 'he has a big ego.' The capitalization is to mark his particular coinage and distinguish it from more technically defined psychological terms concerning ego and self. I use 'Mine' to translate the corresponding *khong-goo*, belonging to *goo*. Later in this talk he uses softer terms such as 'us' and 'ours,' which I have rendered literally. Ego and Mine make life self-centered and thereby foster suffering.

On this point, the Buddha explained how, by relying upon him as *kalyāṇamitta* (good-friend), beings will be beyond birth, aging, illness, and death. This is possible because he taught us how to renew our minds by not being born into Ego and Mine. This reality is beyond birth, aging, illness, and death, it's beyond transmigrating through karma.

By relying upon the Buddha as *kalyāṇamitta*, we quench Ego and all problems end of themselves. In other words, *anattā* (not-self) takes charge, the lack of separate self takes charge. Everything lacks self-essence, personal being, and absolute individuality; thus, there's nobody to be born, to age, to get sick, and to die. There's nobody to transmigrate because of karma. There's simply natural *saṅkhāras* carrying on according to their causes and conditions. In other words, it's all just so, thusness. Things happen thusly through the law of *idappaccayatā*.

This law of *idappaccayatā* (conditionality) is of great importance. It means that having this as condition (*paccaya*), this occurs. Every happening depends on conditions. For example, because there is Ego, Mine occurs. Ego is the condition for clinging to various things as Mine. Wealth, money, possessions, and the like become Mine. They become heavy on top of Ego, who suffers because of them, perhaps out of fear of losing them. If mind rests in thusness and experiences thusness, such clinging doesn't happen. Nothing can take over such a mind and cause suffering.

Relying on thusness, we live and practice correctly, lifting mind out of suffering. *Sanḅhāras* will be born, age, get sick, and die – don't worry about them. Let the *sanḅhāras* take care of themselves. We see thusness and experience thusness: such things have no troubling meaning, they're just so. Mind removes itself from being agitated with such things when it doesn't take them as Mine. When we take poisoned, dangerous things into Ego, suffering and torment will occur. So don't take anything on with clinging; otherwise, that very clinging will bite the one who clings. It creates suffering. Don't cling and nothing can create suffering.

Relying on the Buddha as *kalyāṇamitta* in this way, throughout life and until the very end, when mind quenches, the Buddha is still with us, that is, knowing 'just so, merely thus.' Knowing thusness is the same as the Buddha whispering in our ear and reminding that 'it's just so, don't consider it yours.' Relying on the Buddha as *kalyāṇamitta*, we receive the highest benefit in this way. Not appropriating anything as one's own is to have the heart of Buddhism with oneself.

The heart of Buddhism is thusness. Seeing thusness, seeing *tathatā*, is to having thusness distinct and clear in our hearts. This is the same as the Buddha staying with us, right in front of us, reminding us to be aware and not forgetful. All things are just so. There's no need to take them as 'ours' or as 'us.' They aren't under our power and 'we' is to be caught in clinging. Feelings, thoughts, and suppositions of being 'us,' aren't actually us. Through concocting

according to natural laws we think of us. This 'us' is something shifty and ephemeral; there's no real us to be found.

Now, illness is changing naturally according to natural laws. Illness arises, it changes and transforms. It arises, it changes and transforms. Don't take on such symptoms as ours. Ordinarily, we can see this when we aren't reacting. When everything is healthy and at ease, we should realize these facts: don't let mind cling to anything. When mind doesn't cling to anything, there's no suffering. When the time comes for the concocting conditions of this body to cease, we must recall these facts and there won't be any *dukkha*.

Death is not ours. It's merely the activities and symptoms of *saṅkhāras*. When *saṅkhāras* naturally create such activities and symptoms, it isn't our own doing. It isn't our death. There's no 'me' in this. We lack thoughts of 'me.' There's no self to be the owner of this death. Simply see it as the activities and symptoms of nature occurring ordinarily. Of course, quenching must occur. Quenching is certain.

My wish is that you will know how to practice within your heart so that if it's time for quenching, for ending, and death is truly happening, you will see it as the business of *saṅkhāras*, of the body. It doesn't belong to anyone, it isn't ours. I composed a poem about this. I'd like to read it for you to bring peace of mind and so that when the *saṅkhāras* are breaking up and quenching you will be able to laugh at death.

All concocted things are not permanent.  
They arise and create more *saṅkhāras* in their way,  
then quench naturally in their fashion.  
They don't endure – they are just like this.

This collection of *saṅkhāras*, really, are the same.  
They will reach their end today most surely.  
Nobody is born or dies, there can only be  
These very *saṅkhāras* quenching ordinarily.

Peacefulness occurs with the quenching of *saṅkhāras*.  
They quench in coolness, are *nibbāna*, concocting finished.  
Mind-Body quench today, merely natural activities,  
without any germs to return and be born again.

This is the Heart of All of Buddhism. All of Buddhism comes down to this: all *saṅkhāras* and *visaṅkhāra*, too, are just so. When they reveal and demonstrate thusness, there's no reason to be stuck or upset. There's nothing that's a problem. Let go so mind is empty-free. Mind releases everything by not clinging to anything in any way.

Now I'll chant some verses from the Pāli for you.<sup>4</sup> Please listen wholeheartedly. Close your eyes, collect your mind, and listen deeply:<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Most of the following lines can be found in the standard set of chants recited every day in temples throughout Thailand.

<sup>5</sup> The audio recording of this chanting by Tan Ajahn is available online: *Chanting for a Sick Dhamma Comrade*.

*Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccāti      yadā paññāya passati*  
*Atha nibbindati dukkhe      esa maggo visuddhiyā*

With wisdom seeing that all saṅkhāras are impermanent,  
One is disenchanted with the painful things one has fallen for:  
This is the path of Nibbāna, the ultimate purity.

*Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhāti      yadā paññāya passati*  
*Atha nibbindati dukkhe      esa maggo visuddhiyā*

With wisdom seeing that all saṅkhāras are dukkha,  
One is disenchanted with the painful things one has fallen for:  
This is the path of Nibbāna, the ultimate purity.

*Sabbe dhammā anattāti      yadā paññāya passati*  
*Atha nibbindati dukkhe      esa maggo visuddhiyā*

With wisdom seeing that all dhammas are not-self,  
One is disenchanted with the painful things one has fallen for:  
This is the path of Nibbāna, the ultimate purity.

*Saṅkhārā paramā dukkha      tesaṃ vūpasamo sukho<sup>6</sup>*

Concoctings are ultimate dukkha, their calming is happiness.

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<sup>6</sup> Chanted at a central point in cremation rites.

*Nibbānaṃ paramā suññaṃ<sup>7</sup> Nibbānaṃ paramā sukhaṃ*

Nibbāna is the supreme emptiness, Nibbāna is the supreme happiness.

*Nibbānaṃ paramā vadanti Buddhā.*

Nibbāna is Supreme, so say all Buddhas.

*Itipi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇa-sampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti.*

The Blessed One is far from defilement, perfectly self-awakened, impeccable in conduct and understanding, well-gone, knower of the worlds, the unsurpassed master of those fit to be tamed, the teacher of devas and humans, the awakened, knowing, blossomed one, the explorer and expounder of Dhamma.

*Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo sandiṭṭhiko akāliko ehipassiko opanayiko paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi ti*

Dhamma is so perfectly explained by the Blessed One, to be realized by oneself, in practice and fruition unlimited by time, for inviting others to come and see, leading ever deeper into the heart, to be experienced personally by the wise.

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<sup>7</sup> This reference to emptiness was central to both the Buddha's and Tan Ajahn's teachings.

*Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho ujupaṭipanno  
bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho ñāyapaṭipanno bhagavato  
sāvakaśaṅgho sāmīcipaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho  
yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni atṭha purisapuggalā esa  
bhagavato sāvakaśaṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo  
añjalikaraṇīyo anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassā ti.*

The Community of the Blessed One's Disciples who have practiced well, who have practiced directly, who have practiced insightfully, who have practiced successfully: namely, the four pairs of Noble Ones, the eight individual realizations. These indeed are the Saṅgha of the Lord's Disciples, who are worthy of gifts and hospitality, who are worthy of offerings and veneration, who provide an unsurpassed opportunity for goodness in this world.

Please consider this as a personal visit from me. Although I was unable to come physically, I have come in voice, which fulfills my intention.

May you be able to maintain mind so that it inclines towards the remainderless quenching of Ego and the remainderless quenching of Mine. Don't take any suffering to hold as Mine and don't take the changes of physical *saṅkhāras* to hold as Mine. There won't be any mind that clings to things in order to suffer because of seeing the thusness, the *tathatā*, of all *saṅkhāras*.

Please see clearly in this way every moment and no problems will remain. There will be calming and quenching in all aspects with nothing remaining to be born again.





## **About the Author**

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu was born in 1906, the son of a southern Thai mother and an ethnic Chinese father. He followed Thai custom by entering a local monastery in 1926, studied for a couple years in Bangkok, and then founded his own refuge for study and practice in 1932. Since then, he has had a profound influence on not only Thai Buddhism but other religions in Siam and Buddhism in the West. Among his more important accomplishments, he:

- Challenged the hegemony of later commentarial texts with the primacy of the Buddha's original discourses.
- Integrated serious Dhamma study, intellectual creativity, and rigorous practice.
- Explained Buddha-Dhamma with an emphasis on this life, including the possibility of experiencing Nibbāna ourselves.
- Softened the dichotomy between householder and monastic practice, stressing that noble eightfold path is available to everyone.
- Offered doctrinal support for addressing social and environmental issues, helping to foster socially engaged Buddhism in Siam.

- Shaped his forest monastery as an innovative teaching environment and Garden of Liberation (Suan Mokkh).

After a series of illnesses, including strokes, he died in 1993. He was cremated without the usual pomp and expense.

## **About the Translator**

Santikaro trained as a bhikkhu under Ajahn Buddhādāsa during the final years of his life (1985-1993). During that time, Santikaro translated for Ajahn Buddhādāsa both orally during talks and interviews, as well as in printed works. Santikaro continues translation and other Dhamma work at Kevala Retreat in Wisconsin, USA, and is a close collaborator with the Buddhādāsa Indapañño Archives.

## Recommended Reading (Books)

- *Buddha-Dhamma for Inquiring Minds*
- *Christianity and Buddhism*
- *The First Ten Years of Suan Mokkh*
- *Handbook for Mankind*
- *Heartwood of the Bodhi Tree*
- *Keys to Natural Truth*
- *Living in the Present without Past without Future*
- *Mindfulness with Breathing: A Manual for Serious Beginners*
- *Natural Cure for Spiritual Disease: A Guide into Buddhist Science*
- *Nibbāna for Everyone*
- *No Religion*
- *Paticcasamuppada: Practical Dependent Origination*
- *The Prison of Life*
- *A Single Bowl of Sauce: Teachings beyond Good and Evil*
- *Under the Bodhi Tree: Buddha's Original Vision of Dependent Co-Arising*

## Online Resources

- [www.bia.or.th](http://www.bia.or.th)
- [www.suanmokkh.org](http://www.suanmokkh.org)
- [www.kevalaretreat.org](http://www.kevalaretreat.org)
- [www.liberationpark.org](http://www.liberationpark.org)
- [www.soundcloud.com/buddhadasa](https://www.soundcloud.com/buddhadasa)
- [www.facebook.com/suanmokkhbangkok](https://www.facebook.com/suanmokkhbangkok)

## **Kevala Retreat (Liberation Park)**

Kevala Retreat (Liberation Park) is a Dhamma refuge in the USA's Midwest inspired by Suan Mokkh. Here, Santikaro and friends work to nurture a garden of liberation along the lines taught by Ajahn Buddhādāsa, where followers of the Buddha-Dhamma Way can explore Dhamma as Nature and in the Pāli suttas.



## **Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives**

Established in 2010, the Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives collect, maintain, and present the original works of Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu. Also known as Suan Mokkh Bangkok, it is an innovative place for fostering mutual understanding between traditions, studying and practicing Dhamma.

