



Ethics in Buddhism and its Importance in Each Person

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Abstract:

“Ethics in Buddhism and its Importance in Each Person.” This may be a topic that might not surprise the audience, but it certainly causes them to worry and think; even individuals who have not personally experienced living a moral life admire and advocate for those who do. I chose this topic, because we have found in the teachings of the Buddha a great treasure of moral values that are essential for our human happy life.

I also had gone through this topic to confirm the values of true happiness that Buddhism can provide dedication to people and life by emphasizing the role and responsibility of each individual to the matter of Virtue. The most practical solution is for every one of us to live an honest life and to follow the basic precepts that the Buddha taught Buddhists. Because, precepts (*Sīla*) serve as a barrier that keeps us from making mistakes in our daily lives, as well as fostering a good mentality and performing activities that benefit ourselves and others.

Keywords: Buddhism, Ethics, Each Person, Morality, and Etc.

Introduction:

The development of society is gathering steam at an accelerating rate. As a direct result of the actions taken by some individuals in the pursuit of their own self-interest in order to fulfil their requirements, other individuals take those same actions without considering the potential repercussions. This is because there is a correlation between the seriousness of the situation and the weight of the reputation that is attached to it. As a direct result of this, they are unable to keep the wellbeing of the nation and its people in mind, which adds to a fall in the morality of the people.

In point of fact, the world is today coping with the greatest significant problem that has ever confronted humanity throughout the entirety of human history. People have lost touch with who they are at their core and their connection to their inner spiritual being, which has led to the development of a problematic situation. They still go from place to place with a lot of money, material items, positions of authority, notoriety, and the pleasures of

ordinary life. The disregard for moral and ethical principles is another symptom of the absence of human values in our society. In view of the aforementioned troubling situations, those who are developed to humanity are calling on everyone to awaken and return to the original human ideals in order to participate to repairing the lost morals: “The world is interested in building a new moral order to save humanity from the destruction of war. In Vietnam, we are also dealing with social evil and degrading ethics.”¹

As society becomes more complicated, the cultivation of human morality becomes increasingly vital. This is because morality is the most important basis, the land to protect the first step, the fundamental to bring people to the source of happiness and tranquilly for themselves, their families, and society as a whole. In addition, this article was written because certain aspects of contemporary culture have manifested themselves in certain ways. To begin, ethics is a topic that is well known and discussed, and it is something that everyone needs to put into practice in order to bring happiness to themselves, their families, and society as a whole. Of course, it is not natural morality that has, nor was it from nice words or fancy phrases. Rather, it was not from either of them.

A life that is fed in a holy way is one that is moral because it rids the world of evil and makes room for good. It makes itself known in the manner in which individuals are treated and interacted with on a day-to-day basis. As a result, morality can be understood to have the same significance as happiness and ought to be cultivated in the same manner as happiness itself. Above and beyond that, morality is also the individual obligation that we have towards ourselves, our families, and society as a whole. It refers to a person who has a great deal of responsibility. It indicates a lack of integrity or morals. That person’s life will be filled with misery from start to finish. The people do not respect one another. Even the person’s family and the community in which they reside are impacted as a result of this person’s actions. I wish to stress this point to bring attention to the fact that each of us is accountable for upholding ethical standards.

It is the obligation of each individual member of the family to bring up the ethical problem that exists inside the family. Obviously, a real-world example, such as parents, needs to come before discussing this topic. They are the ones whose children require absolute moral responsibility and direction in order to comply with this task, and they are the ones who need to take on this responsibility themselves. Because we all want to be happy, having a morality that is caring and nurturing is essential.

The concept of morality refers to living one’s life in such a way as to abstain from doing bad things and to perform acts that are beneficial to oneself, one’s family, and society as a whole.

Not to do evil,

To do good,

To purify one’s mind,

¹ Ven. Thich Minh Chau, *Buddhist Ethic*, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, Published 1995, p.5

*This is the Buddha's teaching.*²

The connection between people, both on an individual level and at the level of society as a whole, is what is meant to be understood by the phrase “ethical relationship.” This is a type of social relationship that falls within the broader category of Within a class's socio-economic form or ethical value system, movement and evolution can also be seen. Ethical relations mobilize and change in accordance with the development of society. Self-awareness and a willingness to participate voluntarily are two of the defining elements of ethical relationships.

The study of ethics contributes to humanitarianism and human society by facilitating the development of people's capacity to lead fulfilling and fruitful lives. When it comes to international relations, morality is an indication of a nation's identity, and it serves as the foundation for increasing the amount of trade and interaction that takes place between the nation with Ethics and other nations. The maintenance of sociopolitical stability, which ethics helps to accomplish, is one of the factors that contributes to the advancement of socioeconomic conditions.

If a society's moral principles decline through time, this will be reflected in the society's weakness as well as its deterioration, which is characterized by the gradual loss of the good, the progression; an increase in the bad, the regression; and this will slow down the process of development, which ultimately results in human beings creating their own social organizations.

Thus, we see that ethical issues are significant to each human being. We need to be aware and responsible for our behavior. All of our Buddhists must abide by the (*Sīla*), or five commandments, that the Buddha outlined for his followers. That includes the prohibitions against homicide, theft, sexual misbehavior, lying, and intoxication. The Buddhist concept of the five precepts has a broader significance. It's presents in both traditional and contemporary moral systems. The five tenets are summed up in the following commandments:

Murder is never an acceptable option.

You are forbidden to engage in sexual misconduct with another woman.

Theft is expressly forbidden for you.

You shall not give a false witness against your neighbor.

You are not permitted to covet your neighbor's possessions in any way, shape, or form. This includes not desiring your neighbor's woman or his male or female child, his ox or his ass, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.³ To say that the five precepts imply a universal basis of morality is sufficient for this discussion. According to what *Kamala Jain* has mentioned:

It is regarded as the fundamental code of behavior for every individual, whether it is in respect to the individual's own self or to the society of which he is a part, and it has been acknowledged as such by every religion and social

² The Dhammapada 183.

³ See in Pramedhidhammaporn (Prayoon Mererk). *Buddhist Morality*. Bangkok: Mahāchulālongkorn Buddhist University, 1994, p. 89.

system. Whoever disregards these fundamental principles, which are applicable to one's own life as well as to society at large, is thought to be harmful to himself or to society, and is either a criminal or a sinner.⁴

1. The First Precept

In order to properly observe the first precept, a Buddhist must make the commitment to refrain from killing, causing the death of, or giving permission for the destruction of any living being. A "living being" can refer to anything that possesses life, from the tiniest insect to a person. This tenet is applicable to all kinds of living things. It is prohibited to murder people in addition to animals under this law. The development of the virtuous qualities of loving kindness and compassion, which are to be extended towards all different sorts of beings, is the goal of the practice of this precept.

According to the Commentary, the act of killing can be performed in six ways. They are as follows:

1. killing by own hands;
2. incite others to killing;
3. Killing at a distance by means such as shooting an arrow or a gun, throwing a grenade, or pelting with stones, etc
4. Killing people by digging pits and entrapping them within them;
5. Killing people by mantras or occult sciences;
6. Killing people by force or magical psychic powers.⁵

2. The Second Precept

A violation of the second principle occurs whenever an individual takes something that does not belong to them with the aim to steal it, regardless of the means by which the theft is committed or the nature of the thing that is taken. In addition, this principle forbids committing a crime against the property of other people, which in turn promotes the moral use of one's resources in order to maintain one's standard of living. There are five requirements that must be met before a person can be considered to have committed the offence of stealing and for it to be considered a violation of the precept. Here is a rundown of the items in question:

1. The fact that the stolen item belonged to another person;
2. when one is aware that something belongs to another;
3. The purpose of committing the theft;

⁴ Kamala Jain. *The Concept of Pañcasīla in India Thought*. Varanasi: Parshvanath Vidyashram Research Institute, 198, p. 240.

⁵ Dhammasaṅgani Atthakathā. (A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics), (PTS), 1993, p. 129.

4. The application of a technique or the making of an effort;

5. The real utterances of the thing itself.⁶

2. The Third Precept:

The refraining from *Kāmesu micchācāra*, which is most commonly rendered as “sexual misconduct,” is the subject of the third and final precept of ethical conduct. This precept as it is required for the laity is not a full prohibition of sexual intercourse; rather, it allows the fulfilment of sexual desire in a limited form by limiting one’s sexual act to only one’s own spouse while abstaining from immoral sexual actions and adultery. In other words, it allows one to fulfil sexual desire in a manner that is restricted.

This non-sexual precept advises each of us to be conscious of living a lawful life as a wife or a husband in order to offer safety and happiness to family and relatives by being a lawful example for them to follow. By adhering to this precept, we prevent the happiness of our family from being disrupted and we protect the life of children from sexual abuse and harm. At the same time, we support saboteurs of the other’s sex because they are the products of an unorganized society. They may or may not be related to us, depending on the situation.

4. The Fourth Precept

The refraining from using *Musāvādā*, which is typically rendered in English as either “false speech” or “lying,” is the subject of the fourth and last commandment of proper conduct. The commentary refers to *Musāvādā* as bellows, saying, “Lying is applied to the effort of the body and speech, on the path of one who is deceitful, to destroy the benefit of others, the intention setting up the bodily and verbal efforts to deceive other.”⁷

5. The Fifth Precept

The fifth and final commandment of good conduct is to refrain from engaging in conversation about fermented intoxicants, alcoholic beverages, and illegal drugs. According to the Buddha, a householder who takes pleasure in the Dhamma should not partake in intoxicating substances, nor should they cause others to drink, nor should they permit others to drink, knowing that drinking leads to drunkenness as its end.⁸ Inebriated fools are more likely to perform malicious acts, as well as encourage other inebriated individuals to carry them out. This is something that should be avoided due to the fact that it is both intoxicating and favored of fools.

Above are the five moral responsibilities, or precepts, that a Buddhist is expected to uphold in order to live a life that is not only happy and tranquil for themselves but also for their families and for society as a whole. Naturally, a Buddhist can develop and improve one’s own morality and happiness by practicing the Buddha’s teachings more than or as much as is possible, in order to do so. Through the cultivation of the ten excellent *Kamma*, the practice of

⁶ Ibid, p. 22.

⁷ Ibid, p. 130.

⁸ Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā. (*Commentary of the Group of Discourses*), p. 69.

meditation, and the observance of the Buddha's eight commandments, we can get a more profound understanding of the Buddha's teachings. Every one of us Buddhists strives to embody various manifestations of morality in our day-to-day lives. It is our obligation to figure out how to bring the ethical principles discussed in the suttas to life and how they might help to the development of happiness on an individual, familial, and societal level.

Terms associated with Buddhist ethics either directly or indirectly contribute to the formation of a constructive and beneficial way of life for the people. People learn the wonderful motives behind living a life that is helpful for both themselves and others as part of the moral lessons that are imparted by morality. In addition, persons who study Buddhist ethics learn to comprehend the law of cause and effect over the course of three generations. To have such an understanding is to exercise self-mastery; it does not include the creation of evil, and it frees one from the necessity of bearing the consequences of having suffered. Those who engage in criminal activity will be duly punished by the law and will suffer the consequences of their actions in the future.

You won't be able to lose your personality, and you'll be stuck dealing with things you don't want for the rest of your life if your conscience won't let you do some things. If your conscience won't let you do certain things, you won't be able to lose your personality either. As a consequence of the higher level of intelligence that humans possess in comparison to other animals, a greater quantity of suffering is experienced. As a consequence of this, in order to alleviate the suffering of humanity, there is a demand for both human morality and an ethical process that involves cause and effect. Those who are raised in environments that encourage the development of strong moral standards are more likely to conduct lives that are not just helpful to themselves but also to the greater social society as a whole.

On the other hand, individuals who live their lives in a manner that is immoral and irresponsible, going after their own carnal impulses, lose their admirable features and contribute to the degeneration and discontent of society. They do this by going after their own desires. Because Buddhism lays such a heavy focus on morality, we, as Buddhas, undoubtedly have an advantage when it comes to making constructive contributions to and protecting the morals of our community. This is because Buddhism places such a strong emphasis on morality.

The concept of ethics in Buddhism is derived from the most fundamental sense of happiness, which is referred to as joy. The experience of bliss, or joy, is a state of mind that can be attained via the observance of the Buddhist precepts and the practices of meditation. Therefore, the practice should be utilized as a measuring rod for transforming evil into good, for changing incorrect deeds into good deeds, and for following a natural way of life. This component of Buddhist ethics can be understood in a positive light, according to one interpretation. The fundamental principle that underlies Buddhist morality is compassion, which can be seen as "the ethics of profound affection for all activities and aims." A person must have self-control and a constructive way of living in their words, thoughts, and deeds in order to adhere to the virtuous ethics that are practiced in Buddhism. These ethics are known as the virtuous ethics.

In order to have a meaningful social existence, one must prioritize doing good deeds, avoiding doing evil deeds, and spreading love to all of humanity. This ethics is a liberating ethics in addition to being a pleasant and cheery ethics. “Morality is the good tendencies in our minds, which create the cuter words and action that make everyone around us transformed, happy, beneficial.”⁹ And Morality is Virtue and good cause we should do.¹⁰

The term “ethics” refers to the most fundamental human principles that should guide one’s actions in life and is used as a standard against which each person’s actions can be judged. The concepts of ethics that have been presented so far demonstrate that morality is the ideal ladder for humanity to climb in order to become more flawless and sublimated for ourselves in social life. It is necessary for us to be familiar with *kusala* and *akusala*. What is good behavior? The behavior can be broken down into three components: thinking, speaking, doing good, and doing evil. The Buddha devised *kusala* and *akusala* as methods for determining the behavioral nature and morality of individuals.¹¹

The ethics of Buddhism are a way of life that elevates the position of humans. It illustrates that humans have the potential to achieve ultimate emancipation, or the highest level of morality, provided that they have sufficient amounts of willpower and energy. It is possible to say that it is a comprehensive morality, whether applied to laypeople or ordination. We have the belief that those who live their lives according to the Buddhist code of ethics will enjoy a peaceful life. The teachers in schools will have the respect of their students, friends will love and support one another, and society as a whole and the globe as a whole will have everlasting peace and happiness.

Science and technology have, in the modern era, enabled a solution to be developed in answer to the needs of humanity. In addition to this, it was responsible for the scientific culture, which led to a decline in the decent and moral behavior of humans. Human people are to blame for all of these problems since their selfishness, callousness, and lack of morals are the root causes. The Buddha stated that “the main cause of suffering that nowadays beings must receive that is our own craving.”¹²

It is clear that Buddhist ethics places a high priority on having an immense love for people and for all beings. They also place a high value on seeking to alleviate the suffering of individuals as well as all beings. In modern terminology, the concept of “selflessness” refers to the way in which the morality of humanism lays a significant premium on helping others. The importance of living a good life is central to the Buddhist code of ethics. People have the capacity to practice self-control and self-restraint in order to live a pure life, a life of renunciation, and to satiate none of their baser cravings. This is possible because people have the ability to govern and restrain themselves. Buddhist ethics are the ethics that persistently remind individuals to comprehend the idea of cause and

⁹ Thich Chan Quang, moral psychology, 2005. P5.

¹⁰ Many authors, Vietnamese Dictionary, 2000. P .319.

¹¹ And sages, what is the basic of akusala? Greed is the basic of akusala, anger is the basic of akusala, ignorance is the basic of akusala. Sages, so called the basic of unwholesome. And sages, what is goodness? Giving up killing is good, giving up stealing is good, giving up wrong actions in craving is wholesome, giving up lying is good, giving up saying two-way tongue is good, giving up evil speech is good, giving up frivolous words is good, no greed is good, no anger is good, right view is good. Sages, so called goodness. How is the basic goodness? No greed is the basic of good, no anger is the basic of wholesomeness, no ignorance is the basic of wholesomeness. Sages, so called the basic good (Majjhima, 1. Right view sutra, P.113).

¹² Venerable. Minh Chau translated, *Majjhima III*, Dhammacakkhappavattana.

effect as a just and objective reason. Buddhist ethics are the ethics that were developed by the Buddhists. This is due to the fact that Buddhist ethics is the ethics that was formed by Buddhists. The emphasis placed on achieving basic improvements in one's thinking, speech, and actions is central to the Buddhist code of ethics. We can observe the progression of society in the present day, and a significant number of young people have a poor level of moral awareness.

The outcomes of various situations can be determined by a single action. Karmic fruition is only that subset of results that impinges upon the doer of the action due to the moral nature of the cause and the intention behind the deed.¹³ Regardless of what we choose to do in our day-to-day lives, we will always be subject to feedback that has an impact on us. It is possible to bring about joy or sorrow, as well as good or evil. The following are some of the teachings of the Buddha that are found in the upajjhathana Sutta of the Anguttara Nikaya:

*I am the product of my own actions;
I am a direct inheritor of my actions.
Deeds are matrix; deeds are kin; deeds are foundation;
I will become an heir to whatever deed I perform,
Regardless of whether it is a good or evil conduct!*¹⁴

Integrity cannot be cultivated in the absence of morals since the workings of society are extremely convoluted. In order to live, we have to come to terms with two parts of life: the material and the spiritual. Even though we place a high value on worldly possessions, we cannot in good conscience lead an unethical life. Morality is a genuinely vital value for human personality, and it plays a significant part in the life of society.

Conclusion:

In particular, Buddhist ethics conveys a profound faith in individual human beings. In a society that is disorganized, people are acting contrary to their nature, and as a result, they are dishonoring themselves. There are certain individuals in today's society whose sole concern is to fulfil the desires they have for themselves, regardless of the implications their actions may have on morality and ethics. Since that time, the quality of life for humans has declined.

When communities are seen to be vibrant with the most important moral things within themselves, it makes us so much happier and makes us feel a great sense of pride. We are really delighted when humanity incorporates the teachings of the Buddha. After the Buddha attained perfect enlightenment, he began to teach all sentient beings about the intrinsic worth of their lives, including the value of human life. As a result, we are blessed with countless opportunities to engage in virtuous activities. These principles are not only important for each person in particular,

¹³ Bruce Reichenbach. "The law of Karma and the principle of causation", philosophy East and West, volume 8, number 4, Oct 1998, P.399

¹⁴ The Anguttara-Nikaya, vol.III, edited by Robert chalmers-London: The pali text society, 1976, p.72; the book of the Gradual sayings (Anguttara-Nikaya) or more- numbered suttas, vol. III (The book of the fives of sixes), translated by E.M. Hare, which and introduction by Mrs. Rhys Davids. London: The pali text society, 1973, p.59.

but also on a broader scale for families, schools, and society. Because, its states that “morality is also the responsibility of each individual to himself as well as to family and society. Even morality is happiness and the building of happiness for oneself morality is happiness and society is the responsibility of each person”.¹⁵

People who live their lives according to moral values are always respected and appreciated by those in their immediate environment; even when confronted with challenging circumstances, they continue to feel a sense of safety and freedom.

A whiff of perfume from aromatic flowers
It cannot fly against the wind,
The scent of Virtues people
Against the wind blowing everywhere¹⁶.

Traditional moral standards are kept within the context of the family. The routine and the education of the family are both shaped by this. This moral virtue is continuously upheld and further developed in modern times. To achieve this goal, we must abide by the five fundamental teachings of Buddhism, or precepts, so that we may fill our lives with as many joyful experiences as possible. The moral ideals that are the basis of a healthy spiritual practice are what enable each of us to love and care for our fellow humans. That is the only thing that can adequately define human beauty.

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¹⁵ Ven. Thich Minh Chau, Digha- Nikaya, Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, published 1991, p.98.

¹⁶ Dhammapada.54.

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13. Dhammapada.54.

