

The background is a vibrant, abstract pattern of thick, wavy, interlocking lines in shades of blue, green, orange, pink, and white. Overlaid on this pattern is a grid of semi-transparent white squares, creating a layered, collage-like effect. The text is centered and rendered in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**THE WORLD OF
METTEYYA
IS AT THE TIP OF OUR NOSE**

BUDDHADĀSA BHIKKHU



Those Important Things We Tend to Overlook Series #2

THE WORLD OF SRI ARIYA METTEYYA IS JUST AT THE TIP OF OUR NOSE
by Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

Translated from the Thai [โลกพระศรีอาริย์อยู่แค่ปลายจมูก]
by Dhammavidū Bhikkhu

First edition e-published, on the occasion of the 114th birth anniversary
of Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, by Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives, 2020

© Buddhadāsa Foundation, May 2020

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons
Attribution–Non Commercial–No Derivatives 4.0 International License

Cover design inspired by ‘Les Quatre Nobles Vérités,’ an acrylic painting
by Pierre Wittmann (Ref. 529)

Photograph of Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu from the Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives
collection (Ref. D-143)

Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives (BIA)
Vachirabenjatas Park
Nikom Rot Fai Sai 2 Rd.
Chatuchak, Bangkok, 10900 Thailand
Tel. +66 2936 2800
suanmokkh_bangkok@bia.or.th
www.bia.or.th

« *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

Buddha dāsa Indapañño

Mokkhabalārāma

Chaiya, 2nd November 2530

Contents

<i>Anumodanā</i>	
Contents	
The World of Sri Ariya Metteyya Is Just at the Tip of Our Nose	1
About the Author	I
About the Translator	II
Recommended Reading (Books)	III
Online Resources	IV
Buddhadāsa Foundation	V
Buddhadāsa Indapañño Archives	V

The World of Sri Ariya Metteyya Is Just at the Tip of Our Nose

A talk given on 14th April 1979 at Suan Mokkhabalārāma

Good people, all those interested in the Dhamma, this discourse given during the Visākha Pūjā season is the second in the series devoted to ‘those important things we tend to overlook.’ At this time we’ll take as subject: ‘The world of Sri Ariya (Metteyya) is just at the tip of our nose.’

Such a statement is likely to cause feelings of unease in the minds of some, because nobody approaches this subject in this particular way, the tendency being to say that we must wait for many more thousands, or tens of thousands of years to pass before the religion of Metteyya can manifest. I say that the world of Metteyya is right at the tip of our noses; the response to that is to claim that I’m joking, talking irresponsibly.

Be assured that I’m speaking responsibly, honestly, with the intent of letting people see for themselves that the world of Sri Ariya Metteyya really is just at the tip of our collective nose. The majority however, won’t get that at all.

If we were to make this into a pair of subjects then we might say that the world of Metteyya is right at the tip of our nose while *nibbāna* is to be found on our forehead. Once again, the majority of people won't see that, neither will they be able to accept it.

Looking at the forehead business first: the one whose forehead it is won't be able to see it, even if there was a diamond in the middle of one's forehead one wouldn't be able to see it directly. The world of Metteyya is at the tip of our nose, but, usually, when both of one's eyes are focused on the nose its actual tip can be only vaguely seen, the tip of the nose isn't really visible; if you don't believe this try to see the tip of your nose and you won't be able to see it clearly, only vaguely. Hence this is something we need to talk about so that we can see how the world of Metteyya could be just at the tip of our nose.

In this series of lectures the aim is to talk about only those important things we tend to overlook, of which there are several to be attended to.

In the first discourse of this series we looked at the fact that people in this world don't see that humanity is at an end, that is, we don't see that the human world is lacking in humanity, that, individually, we've ceased to be truly human. To be unable to recognize this is to overlook it.

Today we'll talk about something else we tend to overlook: that the world of Metteyya is just at the tip of our noses but we don't see it, we tend to overlook it.

....

To begin with we should talk about what the world of Metteyya actually is. Be aware that, in general, every religion has, in their own way, the tradition of Sri Ariya Metteyya; every nationality, speaking whatever language and following whatever religion will have this tradition which will accord with the form and character of their religion, just the name they use being different. In Asia there are the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Christian religions.

In Hinduism they speak of the tenth avatar of Narayana called 'Kalki avatar.' The Hindus count the Buddha as the ninth Narayana avatar and await the appearance of the tenth, who is still to come. They describe this tenth avatar as being a person who'll ride on a white horse and arrange all matters so that peace and tranquillity reigns. In Thailand this person riding on a white horse is Metteyya.

When this tenth avatar arrives this world will become the world of Metteyya, and will be a world of peace and happiness, a world without *dukkha*. But they do say that there are still many tens of thousands of years to go before this can happen, that it's not imminent, it's not just at the tip of our nose.

Buddhists know Metteyya as the future Buddha, the Buddha-to-come, at which time this world will have a religion more stable and stronger than any today; the Buddha himself had said that there'll be more noble people around, more of everything, and people will experience peace and contentment at such a time.

Summing the matter up: at that time there won't be anything capable of causing anxiety, agitation, people will be satisfied with

their lot in life; there won't be any violence, and, therefore, no need to live behind locked doors, so that when building a house there'll be no need to include locks. People being universally good there'll be no need to fear thieves or malefactors either, and no need to discriminate between the various people one meets with when outside the home. Although one will still know one's wife, husband, children, friends, etc. on the street one won't discriminate one person from another, everyone we meet with being good, decent human beings. Plus, when wanting anything at all there'll be special trees called 'wishing trees' to be found in every direction, from which one's needs can be satisfied. Everything will be sweetness and light. Even, finally, communications, transportation, to the point that the water in the rivers will seem to flow down or up at the convenience of those who use boats. Everything will be as it should be.

There are many details involved but it's not necessary get into too many of them, however, we can sum it all up by simply saying that here won't be any *dukkha*, that everyone will be at peace, will be contented, that there won't be any bad people, no enemies, and that everything will be as it ought to be. We'll need, however, to feel a lot of desire if the religion of Metteyya is to make its appearance, if it's to arise, and will need to be willing and able to follow instructions, to do this, do that, in order to be born into such a world.

Now we come to the Christian religion, which is much respected by people in the world, and which also has its version of the Metteyya legend, but rendered in the Hebrew tongue – which is the basis of the Jewish and Christian religions – as 'Messiah,' a word which is

somewhat close to the word 'Metteyya,' although whether it's a transliteration isn't certain: 'messiah,' '*metteyya*,' certainly they're similar.

The Jewish religion, which the Christians also adhere to, relates that this Messiah will arise into the world and will deliver the Jews from their problems, that is, from all the forms of *dukkha*; the details are clearly set out in their scriptures. All really want this, that is, that the Messiah appears, because then there'll be happiness full and complete.

When Jesus appeared and was proclaimed to be the Messiah – 'Lord Sri Arya Maitreya' in the Thai language – some didn't accept him, they accused him of being a fraud, accused him of deception, of extreme profanity; they didn't accept him as the Messiah so looked for a way to get rid of him, finally arresting and crucifying him, that is, they put him to death. The declared Messiah may have been so, but those adhering to the religion of that time took him and put him to death, hence he didn't succeed in his mission. The Christians, however, believe that Jesus was the Messiah and that he gave his life to help those who didn't believe in him to believe that he really was the son of God, was the Messiah.

We can see that all religions have this Metteyya tradition, which, however, still hasn't produced the hoped for success. Now, I say that the world of Metteyya is right at the tip of our noses, but that we fail to recognize it.

What does its recognition rely on? It relies on the development of a Dhamma principle which forms the deep heart of all religions. If there's the sort of practice which can reach the heart of any religious system then the world of Metteyya will immediately arise from that.

What is the heart of religion? Specifically, it's the ability to feel love for other people. Please remember these words: 'feeling love for others,' they lie at the heart of every religious system. Whenever the heart of any system is properly practised then the world of Metteyya immediately manifests, right there and then.

But there'll probably be those who'll object and deny that everyone in the world can love everyone else. I didn't say that it could or couldn't happen, only that the world of Metteyya, or the religion of Metteyya, would appear when everyone *could* love everyone else. Think about it: after all, any and all religions teach *mettā* and *karuṇā*, teach the love of others.

The word '*metteyya*' means 'love' or 'one who loves' or is related to love, or it means *mettā* itself. We like to leave the word '*mettā*' untranslated, even so '*mettā*' is love, but not love of the sensual sort, rather it's that purified, Dhammic kind of love.

'*Sri*' means beautiful in the purified, Dhammic sense, '*ariya*' means noble in the purified, Dhammic sense, while '*Sri Ariya Metteyya*' represents the manifestation of that pure, Dhammic form of love for all. *Sri Ariya Metteyya* has no other meaning than loving others. Whenever there's the arising of that highest form of love, right there and then the world of Metteyya will manifest.

In this initial stage we should get a proper understanding of the words 'loving others.' Feeling love for children, our wife, our husband, our nephews and nieces, our grandchildren, etc. isn't loving others in the true sense, because such affection tends to create division; as regards our children, our wife, husband, etc. it's a matter of loving selfishly, which is divisive. Wife, husband, etc. don't have the meaning of 'others' in the true sense, rather they're 'others' in the 'me' and 'mine' way, hence the love we normally feel for our children, our wife, our husband, etc. doesn't add up to *mettā*, to loving others in the pure, Dhammic sense.

Now we like our drinking companions, our gambling friends, and so on – our corrupt companions – but this isn't *mettā* because it still involves that 'self' which selects certain people as being those we love, hence it's still a matter of 'me' and 'mine.' When we can love our neighbours, not because they have any meaning for us, or because they're useful to us, but with a pure, unselfish mind, that would be called loving others. So understand the words 'loving others' properly.

Now, seek out that feeling of love for others – where is it? Everyone, try, right now, to find the feeling of love for others within ourselves. Have we ever felt love for other people? It's not about the love we feel for those close to us, but that pure, unselfish love of others in general, do we have that? We may not be able to find it; just as we're unable to see the tips of our own noses so we can't find any love for others either.

Finding real love for other people in this world right now is almost impossible, because the world is full of exploitation, of violence of every kind, everywhere. There's no real love for others at all. We should be able to see and accept this, if we can't accept such a statement then go, try to find someone somewhere who displays real love for other people.

Why don't we feel love for others? Sometimes it's because they're better looking than us, we don't like them because they're better looking than us, or because they dress better, look smarter than us, or because they're richer, then we don't love them, rather we'll be jealous of them. Perhaps we see them as our equals, or as more skilful than we are, so we feel jealousy. Our thoughts incline in that way. Hence we don't feel love for others. It's clearly been the case everywhere and throughout the ages that people don't feel love for each other, unless, that is, someone is useful to somebody. This problem becomes us, becomes a part of what we are. Hence religion on the primary, moral level involves teaching, explaining, encouraging people to feel love for others.

The first religion to arise in the world had this problem to deal with. The wise, those who were the leaders, understood that people didn't feel amity towards each other, and that, as a consequence, there was killing, fighting, etc. When there's no love between people there's robbery, embezzlement, deception, sexual promiscuity, fornication, wrong speech, deception in every which way, there's carelessness, the doing of bodily harm, and so on because of the lack

of mindfulness and clear awareness, plus there's indulgence in intoxicants which can cause a complete loss of mental balance.

Thus it's taught that loving others is important. It's considered very smart to teach just one precept – love of others – from which the five *sīlas*, the five trainings will arise and spread out.

At this time it can be seen that because people don't feel love for each other. The human world is full of killing, thievery, adultery, deception, and harmfulness of every sort springing from a lack of mindfulness and clear understanding. This tells us that, in some former time, the *sīla* practice arose, or grew out of love for others as a protection against the five forms of wrong conduct.

Now it's hard to come by, that love they began with so long ago is no longer extant. But it can be said that it will be full and complete on the day that Metteyya manifests, that is, people, then following the religion of Metteyya, will experience *mettā* in the fullest sense. Hence any love for others won't be full and complete until the day of Metteyya arrives.

We can create the world of Metteyya together by feeling love for one another. If everyone in the world at this time could feel love for everyone else this world would, in the blinking of an eye, or in the time it takes to throw a switch, become the world of Metteyya. So, is this right at the tip of our noses? Think about it. It is something we can do, something that, if we're going to do it, will be done in the way explained. Whether we do or don't do anything is for us to decide.

But the truth is that the world of Metteyya is right at the tip of our nose, it's that close, but we, generally, won't do anything about it.

Hence, if we want this world to become the world of Metteyya we need to help it happen by making love for others arise, that's all, then such a world will, step by step, appear, and in not too long a time love for others will cover the world.

At this time world organizations, like the United Nations, don't think, don't even dream in this way, instead they're concerned more with creating disunity, separation, aversion, with gaining advantage, and so on, and not at all with creating amity between people and nations, hence there's no love for others in this world.

Governments don't think about encouraging people to love each other, that would be too good, too much morality. They try to rectify national problems through economics, politics, and force of arms, or whatever, and not through right moral behaviour. They don't see that *sīla* can help solve a nation's problems.

I say that if there's no *sīladhamma*, and especially no love for others, then any economy will be in dire straits, which will be very dangerous for mankind; politics will become debased, will fill the world with trouble and strife, with confusion, with chaos. Whatever path is chosen, if it's not connected to right moral behaviour, to *sīladhamma*, it will prove ultimately destructive.

Hence economics, politics, military matters, or whatever, anything at all which is much revered in the world, is it based in morality, in *sīla*? If it is it will certainly be beneficial, being allied to

the religion of Metteyya. But if it isn't it becomes an enemy. Hence we need to think about loving others.

At present economies, local, national, or global can't improve because there's no love for other people, so economic liberties are being taken. Politics can't get better in this world, no matter which country we look at, because there's no love between people, rather people seek advantage, and, in a manner of speaking, suck the blood, the essence of others.

Note this: *sīladhamma*, which is rooted in the love of others, will help this human world to become a peaceful, cool, and contented place, to soon become the world of Metteyya once we, all of us, can feel love for others. Now, sometimes we're among our blood relatives, among those we love, mother, father, etc. When we're among such how secure, how content do we feel? Work it out for yourself, with the religion of Metteyya we'll experience feelings of happiness, contentment, akin to the times when we're with our relatives. This will be the case once it's been understood, once it's seen that the world of Metteyya is right at the tip of our nose. If we can love other people it will be as if everyone is related.

If everyone felt love for us in the same way that our mother did, how would that be? If people in the world loved each other in the same way that their mothers loved them, how would that be? Here we mean a mother in the true sense of course, not one who kills her children, or anything like that.

If everyone loved in the way their mothers loved them, how would the world be? There'd be certainty, trust, contentment – happiness according to the meaning of the word 'Metteyya.'

'*Metteyya*' means 'love,' or it can mean 'friendliness,' or even 'dwelling together in friendliness.' The *Metteyya* religion is such that people can come to live together in friendliness of the most elevated sort. This we can liken to a world where there are only people who feel love for each other, where we live amongst people who love us in the same way our mother loved us – think about it.

Hence, we might help build the religion of *Metteyya* by practising *mettā*, just that one thing. However, some will shake their heads at that, say that it's difficult and won't accept the practice. I would ask that we, at this time, have the intention, that we vow to do just one thing, that is, to love one another – are there any takers? I believe that of those sitting here there probably won't be many with the necessary courage, because they won't have faith in it so won't believe that they can do it, and because they'll see it as being exceedingly difficult.

But if we want the religion of *Metteyya* we must help make it happen. We can do that through discussion, by talking about love for others, by pointing out its great value, by coaxing, by persuading we can help create understanding and recognition of the value of *mettā*. Is such possible? We leave it with you to find out for yourselves. It might come about through persuasion, through explanation, through education: this would be one way. Another way would be through enforcement, through some form of control.

Such occurred during an era close to the Buddha's time, the era of Ashoka the Great: Ashoka required people to have love of others, animals included, as is evidenced by stone carvings, edicts from that time requiring that people love others. This is the enforcement of love for others which is still an option, however, in this day and age when democracy is preferred, such can't be applied, there has to be freedom of choice.

I'll consider this 'love for others' in some detail, and ask four questions: 'What is it? Where does it come from? What is it for? How can it be acquired?' which follows the form of the four noble truths of Buddhism.

When it's asked: 'What is loving others?' we can say that 'loving others' is an ability of the fully developed mind. The mind which isn't developed at all hasn't any way of really feeling love for others, while the mind which is partially developed can somewhat create this ability. It's only the completely developed mind, the mind which has been released from gaol, that can have that love for others which is full and complete. The mind of the worldly person is imprisoned, is always in gaol, in prison, so can't come out and love freely; that prison is our selfishness.

Selfishness is instinctual, and has been accumulating from birth up to the present, so that now the mind is full with it. The mind is caged, imprisoned by selfishness, and isn't free to come out and love others. Hence there's no *mettā* for the mind which is so captured. Only the *arahant* mind can be said to be free, to have escaped from this particular gaol.

For the *arahant* loving others is effortless, immediate and automatic, without the need for intention. We might intend to feel love for others but cannot because there's something binding the mind. But if we destroy the binding agent we'll be able to escape and the love of others will then arise immediately and automatically; 'self'-love, selfishness having been completely destroyed the mind will be free to experience real love. In truth the ability to love others represents freedom, liberation – becoming free, having escaped from the prison of selfishness. Right now it's about effort, about preparation, about preparing the ability to love freely.

We have a duty to escape, to find safety, we'll then feel that love for other people so that we can help them too. Hence the duty of human beings is to save themselves and then to help save others, which, in the ultimate sense, has to be done with that love for all beings which comes from the final destruction of selfishness.

To sum up: love of others is a characteristic of the fully developed mind, the mind which is released, which is freed from the *kilesa*, the defilements which bind. To use an analogy, it's as if the mind has escaped from the prison of selfishness, so that now there's automatically the feeling of love for other people.

If it's asked: 'This love of others, where does it come from?' well, the conditions underpinning it are both external and internal. Externally, our environment, our surroundings, as well as our training, teaching etc. provide the necessary conditions; there's also coercion, compulsion, which can be employed to make people feel love for others.

As in infants' schools where there'll be persuasion blended with control, so that the children will come to love others, come to help each other, come to avoid quarrelling. These infants won't fight with each other because they'll have love of others ingrained, hence they'll tend towards generosity, towards helping each other; as when one having fifty satang, or one baht, will be happy to give a friend who hasn't anything five or ten satang. There's a little control, or persuasion – not really control – involved which encourages those children to acquire the habit of loving others.

Now, the internal conditions involve *satipaññā*, in that one needs to observe with *satipaññā* the benefit of loving others, that is, the feeling of security, of safety involved, and to have love expand, spread outwards into the world, spreading out until those 'others' disappear. It may be strange to hear that we increasingly spread love around, expand it outwards, so that we can get rid of the notion of 'others' completely, and can come together as 'one' – which is a basic religious principle. People need to see something most profound here, that if we, because of developing *mettā*, can come to live together as one without any concept of others, that then is the condition for the arising of that love which is really profound.

It's taught as a principle that we can't live in this world all alone, that we must live together with other people, hence we need to love each other; recognition of this is a good place to start, to begin letting real love for each other arise; just avoiding violence, not being a danger, not doing harm, isn't enough. Non-violence isn't loving others, it isn't as elevated as *mettā*. We need to go further.

At present the doctrine of non-violence is much praised as being the ultimate; Mahatma Gandhi proclaimed this teaching. In today's world there's *sīladhamma*, morality, and the doctrine of non-violence. However, the doctrine of non-violence doesn't emphasize love for others so might cause one to deviate into something other than that. We're not satisfied with it and prefer to emphasize *mettā*. Now, when we can feel love for others what will happen? Well, it will produce more than non-violence would, will go further, will help, support, sustain one in every way.

As has been said, a characteristic of the Metteyya age is that there'll be 'wishing trees' in every corner of a city and anyone who wants anything can go and take it, there being no lack, no shortage. This, in a manner of speaking, will be so because of the presence of that universal love and the consequent breaking down of the 'self' and 'others' scenario, at which time there can be no discriminating between individuals, no ownership, so no locked doors – *mettā*, love for others, replacing our locks and keys.

It's clear to see that the religion of Metteyya must arise at a time when the world is developing materially. At present there's much development of materialism, illustrated by us going to the moon, and so on, and by the invention of wonderful labour-saving devices, etc. But there still being a shortage of *mettā* those wonderful devices often get used against other people. The inventions of this age, the creations of *satipaṇṇā*, are used to destroy because there's a lack of love.

When the age of Metteyya arrives there'll be full love for others, hence these inventions, these devices will be used to help others so that contentment will rule both within us and without in the external world. The mind being with the Dhamma then any devices, any inventions of ours will get used in a way which isn't harmful.

The religion of Metteyya, how will it arise, and from where will it come? It will come from the perfection of the mental and material worlds. As regards the mental, ultimately it's about loving others, nothing more. As for the material side of things, we can guarantee that such won't be used for evil, for harmful purposes, hence the material side of things will be perfected too; it will be a time when material progress is full and complete. Thus, in the religion of Metteyya, in the world of Metteyya both the mental and the material will reach perfection.

Now materialism has developed markedly, there's been too much development, it's become inflated, while there's a shortfall as regards mental development, because there's no real love for others. If we could resolve this one problem by just making real love for others arise, the world would then become the world of Metteyya in the blinking of an eye. Is this right at the end of our noses? Think about it.

People aren't real, genuine human beings, there's this small problem: human beings aren't really human, our humanity is lacking. As described in the first talk of this series the human world is engaged in getting rid of humanity; there aren't any truly human beings because we aren't brave enough to practise loving others.

But if we would become human beings happy to practise *mettā* there wouldn't be any problem. We might then create the world of Metteyya in the blinking of an eye. Hence we say it's right at the end of our noses. Do we want this or not?

Now, the third question: 'What is its benefit?' Loving others, what benefit does it bring? It brings the desired result, that is, we dwell happily, much as we would if we were surrounded by our relatives, or by people who love us like our own mother did.

The benefit – happiness – divides into two kinds, that of the individual, and that of the whole, of society at large, there needing to be benefit for everyone.

Now, if we practise loving others then we practise the heart of all religions. We become one who feels love for others, our religion delivers, and we get the best thing we could get, be it Buddhism, Christianity, or Islam, the heart of our religion comes to be in us; we get this benefit. When *mettā* is continuously practised our selfishness gradually melts away until, one day, there's nothing left, it's all gone, and with that one is ennobled in the religious sense.

This is how it all works. It's not me making this up, or fooling around. Try to do away with selfishness, reduce selfishness to such and such an extent and the defilements will be reduced accordingly. *Lobha*, greed, *dosa*, aversion, and *moha*, delusion, will be similarly reduced; selfishness decreases by so much, the defilements decrease accordingly. As our ability to feel love for others increases so the

defilements decrease: selfishness being reduced by so much, the defilements are similarly reduced, the two being related.

Hence simply live feeling love for others and, one day, selfishness will be gone and we'll be *arahant* experiencing the fullest feeling of love, just as the Buddha did.

For ordinary people it's difficult to feel love for others, even a noble individual who's yet to attain the *arahant* level mightn't love fully. It's only those who've truly put an end to selfishness, who are already *arahant*, who can feel love for other people fully and completely. The most expanded, most wide-ranging love for others is that of a Buddha, because of what they are their kindness is boundless, their *mettā* full and complete.

Now, the result of loving others is that a person becomes ennobled in the Buddhist sense; if, however, we haven't yet gone that far we'll still be able to live happily with a contented, satisfied mind, a mind with ease and certainty, and with *mettā*, with some degree of love for others.

The benefits to society we've already mentioned, in that we, all of us, will experience the world of Metteyya – that will be the societal benefit. Hence both sides of the equation receive benefit.

Here's the last Buddhist question: 'How, or by what method do we develop love for others?' We do it using Buddhist methodology, that is, by developing *sammādiṭṭhi*, right understanding, or, more fully, by developing the fourth noble truth called *dukkha-nirodhagāminīpaṭipadā*, that is, the path.

Dukkha, samudaya, nirodha, magga; the fourth of these, *magga*, or *dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipadā*, is the path of practice which puts an end to *dukkha*. The path is generally referred to in the Buddhist scriptures as the ‘noble eightfold path’ and consists in the aforementioned *sammādiṭṭhi*, right understanding, plus *sammāsaṅkappo*, right intention; *sammāvācā*, right speech; *sammākammanto*, right physical activity; *sammā-ājīvo*, right livelihood; *sammāvāyāmo*, right effort; *sammāsati*, right mindfulness; and *sammāsamādhi*, right concentration, which we, here, regularly meet with and understand as being factors of the *magga*, the path.

Now, can we use this principle to create love for others? I say we can. But we’ll need to expand the meaning of *sammādiṭṭhi*, hence, just as not loving others is *micchādiṭṭhi*, and is very much a wrong understanding, so loving others now becomes *sammādiṭṭhi*, which is very much a right understanding. We create *sammādiṭṭhi* first and the rest will follow along. Therefore, develop *sammādiṭṭhi* as love for others to the utmost degree, and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right intention, *sammāvācā*, right speech, etc. will follow along in its wake.

In this way we use a Buddhist principle to create something new so that we can solve the problem of evil, that is, of *dukkha*. We say that the right way to solve our various problems, to quench *dukkha*, is, as the Buddha said, the noble eightfold path.

However, in some suttas when talking about the eightfold path, or *dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipadā*, the Buddha did mention two other things – *samatha* and *vipassanā*. I can still remember this:

‘What is the path?’ and the answer: ‘The path is *samatha* and *vipassanā*.’ The Buddha, it seems, taught in this way too.

If the path changes form to become *samatha* and *vipassanā* it means that we need to make use of *samādhi* and *paññā*.

The first, *samatha*, method requires that we concentrate, we develop *samādhi* along with *mettā* in order to, eventually, become a comrade in *dukkha*, in birth, ageing, sickness, and death. We develop and then project *mettā* all around. The mind being trained to love, that love is then projected out in all directions: to the north, south, east, west, above, below. This is the *samatha* method: controlling the mind as desired and causing love for others to arise in conjunction with *samādhi*.

The second method is *vipassanā*, this is the ‘clear-seeing’ of *satipaṇṇā*. We need to comprehend clearly what love for others is, how it is, what its benefit is, etc. until clear-seeing arises to the extent of being *vipassanā*, or *paññā*.

If one goes by the *vipassanā*, or *paññā* route then it’s not difficult, and will make it possible for us to see what’s at the tip of our nose. Just now we’ve said that it was hard for anyone to see that, so, develop *vipassanā* and it can be experienced – and more than that can be experienced: what’s at the forehead can’t be directly seen either, but if there’s *paññā*, knowledge, and *vipassanā*, clear-seeing, then *nibbāna* can be experienced right there.

Hence, develop wisdom so that we can come to see the value of loving others, then expand this *mettā*, this loving mind, using the

samatha technique; we'll have *samatha* and *vipassanā* working in combination, like a pair of horses pulling the cart of the mind to its destination – *mettā*, love for others.

Thinking about how one trains the mind so that it can be clear as regards love for others would be a good thing, and how one would have to control it so that love for others arises.

Even now we aren't into loving others. Because someone is prettier than us we're jealous, envious, we don't feel love towards them, but that will be changed by the power of wisdom, of *vipassanā*; that we think like that isn't right, isn't correct anyway, we need thought patterns which are the opposite of that, which are right, are proper. Now we meet with some things and feel envious, there's no love in that. We're just too childish, we need to think like adults, to understand in a more profound, a broader manner, then we'll be able to put an end to jealousy and envy. Understanding the benefits of loving others the mind will gradually incline in that direction.

Start practising love of others from today, and, if we've yet to make a start in taking care of the mind in this way, then today means today; and give marks, positive or negative marks depending on what happens on a daily, monthly, or yearly basis. Depending on how many positive marks have been awarded one will know how much love for others has been developed.

I call this 'loving others.' We've looked at it using Buddhist principles, that is, we've asked: What is it? Where does it come from? What is its purpose? What method do we use to get it? It's to be

hoped that you'll remember and make use of this technique. We've talked for some time and in some detail, perhaps you should review what's been said so as not to forget.

This, the second important thing that we tend to overlook, has formed the subject of a discourse in this place. The second important thing that we tend to overlook is that the world of Ariya Metteyya is right there at the end of our collective nose, we tend to overlook it so we don't get any benefit from it. On another day we'll look at some other regularly overlooked thing of importance.





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

Dhammavidū Bhikkhu, originally from England, ordained as a monk in 1995 and has lived at Suan Mokkh, Chaiya, in South Thailand since then. He has helped to teach meditation to foreign retreatants at Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage and Dipabhāvan Meditation Center at Samui Island. As a translator from Thai into English, he has been particularly interested in *The Dhamma Proclamation* series, a multivolume collection of Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu's major teachings.

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*
- *Void Mind*

Online Resources

- www.bia.or.th
- www.suanmokkh.org
- www.dipabhavan.weebly.com
- www.soundcloud.com/buddhadasa
- www.facebook.com/suanmokkhbangkok

Buddhadāsa Foundation

Established in 1994, the Buddhadāsa Foundation aims to promote the study and practice of Buddha-Dhamma according to Ven. Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu's teachings. It encourages compilation and translation of his works from Thai into foreign languages, as well as supports publication of translated teachings for free distribution.



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.

