

มาทําสถาปัตยกรรม



ชยสิทธิ์ ภาณุ





มัลย์ลายมือ

ช่วยสร้างโลก

พิมพ์แจกเป็นธรรมทาน

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โทรศัพท์ ๐-๒๘๐๐-๒๒๓๙๒



'มาลัยคามมณี' คือหนังสือที่รวบรวมคำสอนสั้นๆ ที่อาตมา
เขียนไว้เพื่อเผยแพร่ธรรมแก่ผู้มีจิตศรัทธาในต่างประเทศ
พร้อมด้วยบทแปลภาษาไทย โดยพระอาจารย์ภูวณ ปิยสันโด
หนังสือนี้จัดพิมพ์ในโอกาสอันเป็นสิริมงคล คือการมีอายุครบ ๕
ร้อยของคุณหม่อมราชวงศ์ รัชชทาตนะนันท์ หรือครูอ่อน ในวันที่ ๑-
สิงหาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๙ นี้

อาตมาขออวยพรให้เมตตาคุณของผู้มีส่วนร่วมในการพิมพ์
หนังสือเป็นธรรมทานครั้งนี้ และขอให้คุณพระศรีรัตนตรัยจงคุ้มครอง
รักษาครูอ่อน ให้มีอายุเจริญงอกงามในทาน ศีล และภาวนา
ให้รุ่งเรืองไปทั่วทุกอณูแห่งเทว

พระอาจารย์ ชัยสาร

Going into nature means entering a world that has its own rules, rules that make no compromises with your desires. You cannot bargain with nature. You cannot bully it. Nature is unmoved by your tears. If you are to survive in nature you must respect it. You must learn its ways and adapt to them.

When you are respectful and humble, patient, alert and intelligent then nature will bless you with joy and understanding. This is true of both the world around us, and the world that we discover when we close our eyes in meditation.

Ajahn Jayasāro

It is common for us to focus too much on what makes us different from each other. This over-emphasis leads to arrogance and insecurity, prejudice and fear.

As Buddhists we seek to prevent this imbalance by constantly returning to an awareness of those things that unite us all. We reflect on the simple indisputable truth that everyone of us are companions in birth, old age, sickness and death. Everybody wants to be happy. Nobody wants to suffer.

We don't deny differences or ignore them. But we recognise them within the context of our shared nature as sentient beings in a challenging and fragile world

Ajahn Jayasāro

Wherever there is gain there is loss .
Wherever there is status there is loss of status.
Wherever there is pleasure there is pain.
Wherever there is praise there is blame.

We desire gain, status, pleasure and praise.
We fear and dislike their opposites. But
these things are inseparable . The more
we attach to the impermanent states that
we like, the more we suffer when they
disappear.

Gains and losses ebb and flow. There
is no stability . The wise person takes
nothing for granted and so at a time
of gain is not intoxicated and at a time
of loss is not brought to despair

Ajahn Jayasāro

There are many stories in the Suttas in which Māra, 'the Evil One', disguises himself in various ways in order to deceive the Buddha. But the Buddha is never fooled. In every case, he merely says 'I see you, Māra' and Māra, disappointed, disappears.

These stories teach us that it is our ability to see mental defilements clearly for what they are that is our greatest protection. With mindfulness we say calmly to ourselves 'I see you, greed', 'I see you, anger', 'I see you, anxiety'. Because these defilements are simply unwelcome guests, not who we are, having been fully recognised and acknowledged, they retreat.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Farmers clearing a field for cultivation for the first time meet many obstacles. They may have to dig out roots that reach down much deeper than they thought. Often there are rocks concealed beneath the surface, some quite small but others big boulders. Farmers persevere because they know that if they want to cultivate that land and grow delicious and nutritious food, they have no choice.

Be patient in the cultivation of your mind-field. Do not allow yourself to get angry with your tree roots and hidden rocks. Nobody who has ever completed this work has regretted the time and effort it took to do so. On the contrary, when looking back at their efforts and the fruits of it, the great masters say that if they had endured a struggle a hundred times as hard, or a thousand times, it would still have been worthwhile.

The defilement of māna, or conceit, is rooted in two ideas; one is measurement and the other is holding up a flag.

We measure ourselves against others. We hold up an idea of ourself like a flag, as if to say: 'Look at me. This is who I am.'

There are three kinds of conceit:

'I am superior to you'

'I am inferior to you'

'I am equal to you'

In religious groups 'I am inferior to you' is often mistaken for humility. In democratic societies

'I am equal to you' is often not seen as conceit at all.

But whenever we have a fixed idea of who we are, whether superior, inferior or equal to others, we fall into the trap of conceit.

Ajahn Jayasāro

We tend to assume that when we find an idea difficult to understand, it must be profound. But in fact, arguments expressed in unnecessarily long words and jargon are often quite shallow. Language is being used in them to disguise the idea rather than reveal it, and to intimidate the student.

The most profound matters are not so difficult to understand intellectually. What could be simpler to explain than impermanence? The challenge is to train the mind to the level that the intellectual understanding may act as a springboard to a direct life-changing insight, beyond the reach of words

Ajahn Jayasāro

If a masseur discovers a sensitive area on a person's body, that person doesn't say, 'Oooh! That's painful; Please don't massage there. Massage where it doesn't hurt.' On the contrary, although it feels unpleasant, the person is pleased that now the location of the problem has been discovered, work to alleviate it can begin.

When we look into our mind we should cultivate a similar attitude. When you discover an area of mental discomfort do not move away from it so quickly. Gently probe and massage until the craving that lies beneath the emotion can be revealed and healed.

Ajahn Jayasāro

ถ้าหมอนวดกดโดนจุด คนที่ถูกนวดย่อมไม่ร้องโอดโอยว่า “เจ็บเหลือเกิน อย่า
นวดจุดนี้เลย ขอนวดตรงที่ไม่เจ็บเถอะ” แต่ตรงกันข้าม แม้จะรู้สึกเจ็บ บุคคลนั้น
ย่อมยินดีที่ได้พบที่มาเป็นปัญหา ต่อจากนั้นการลงมือเหยียวยาจึงจะเริ่มต้นได้
เวลาพิจารณาดูจิตใจ เราควรใช้ท่าที่แบบเดียวกัน เมื่อค้นพบจุดขัดข้อง อย่ารีบ
หันเหความสนใจไปทางอื่น ให้อดทนอยู่ตรงนั้น ค่อยๆ คลำ ค่อยๆ เฝินจนกว่า
ต้นเหตุและอุปาทานที่เพงเร็นอยู่ในอารมณ์นั้นจะเพยออกมาและได้รับการเหยียวยา
ในที่สุด

ร้อยเรื่องราว

One day recently a student of mine was praised for being kind. As a result, he immediately felt a warm feeling in his heart. Later, he wondered whether his reaction was a mental defilement. He asked me "Do truly wise people feel pleasure when they are praised?"

I replied that wise people do not see themselves as the owners of their good qualities. They don't crave praise for their goodness or become attached to it. But they may feel a kind of joy, just as gardeners may feel when people praise the beauty of flowers in their garden.

Ajahn Jayasaro

As Buddhists we study our humanity. We learn about our body and mind, and how to prevent them from becoming a source of suffering. Looking at the body we begin with those parts that can be easily seen: head hair, body hair, nails, teeth and skin. Are these things truly attractive? Do they really belong to us? Consider skin for example. People identify with skin a lot. They worry about its texture and its colour. In Asia women want pale skin; in Europe they want a tan. Huge sums of money are spent every year on beautifying the skin. But what exactly is skin? Here are some of my favourite skin facts:

50% of dust in the home is actually dead skin. Globally, skin accounts for about a billion tons of dust in the atmosphere. The number of bacteria living off each person's skin is about 1,000,000,000,000.

By examining the objects of desire and attachment more closely, the unrealistic assumptions on which they are based become clear, and the path to freedom opens up.

If you think again and again about something you are afraid might happen – perhaps something concerning your family – a number of things occur. Firstly, a mental habit will be formed that can easily become an obsession, draining all your energy. Secondly, because the images that appear in your mind become very vivid and the emotions that arise very strong, you may assume that the fear is reasonable, and the bad thing likely to occur, when in fact that may not be true at all.

With mindfulness, we must recognise that a mental image is simply a mental image, an emotion is simply an emotion. The thing that we fear may or may not be likely to occur, but the strength of feeling that the matter evokes is not a reliable guide in deciding what action to take.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Yesterday was Mahā Pavarānā Day, the last day of the Sangha's annual three-month Rains Retreat. On this day monastic communities come together to perform a ceremony in which every monk makes himself open to admonition from every other monk for any inappropriate behaviour he may have committed during the retreat.

The willingness to sincerely open ourselves to admonition from all those around us, irrespective of seniority, is one of the surest ways to get to know our blind spots and deal with them. The willingness to offer admonition at the right time and place, with kindness and well-chosen words, is one of the signs of a true friend.

Ajahn Jayasāro

I once read a story in which two friends, anxious to get rich, heard about an island populated by people with just one eye set in the middle of their foreheads. They decided to sail to the island, kidnap a one-eyed person and sell him to the zoo in their local city. On arriving at the island, however, they were spotted by a group of young one-eyed men, captured by them, and sold to the island zoo.

How often does it happen that at precisely the time when we believe ourselves to be most smart, we are in fact most foolish? The results of greed and selfishness are rarely as neat and immediate as in this story, but sooner or later they do manifest. Recognising this truth from examining our own experience and that of those around us leads to restraint and wisdom

Ajahn Jayasāro

There are always good arguments for not meditating. Apart from the favourite, 'I'm too busy', there are many others: 'it's too early, it's too late, I'm too hungry, I'm too full, I'm too tired, I'm too restless'. We always seem to be 'too' something or other to meditate.

Please don't make meditation into a burden. Try seeing it as spending quality time with your mind. Don't fight with yourself. Be reasonable, gentle and firm. Agree that yes, I am busy; yes, I am tired, and so on. But rather than deciding that given these factors you won't meditate at all, choose to meditate just a little bit, just for a short while, just for a few minutes. Decide, 'I will do it, without expectations, as an offering to the Buddha, as an offering to my teachers. You may find that you meditate longer than you intended.

Ajahn Jayasāro

We can recognise fear and anger as normal reactions to aggression, without lashing out wildly in order to make those feelings go away. We cannot expect too much from this world. As long as foolish immature people can find justification for their actions in philosophies and religious texts, there will never be true peace.

What we can do is to cultivate a boundless compassion accompanied by a wisdom that is calm, cool and alert. The wisdom we need to deal with complex problems comes from clarity of mind, not outraged emotion.

The Buddha taught us that hatred is never overcome by hatred. If we hate those that hate us then we too become haters, no better than them. All that results is that the total amount of hatred in the world increases

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha said that without wisdom being close to the teacher or the teachings we are like a spoon that gains no knowledge of the taste of the food. With wisdom, we are like the tongue that knows every taste of the food. Proximity to great masters is not enough in itself. One long-time disciple of Ajahn Chavaver overcame his bad temper. Finally, one day, he killed someone in a fit of rage. Not long after he died in prison, not of a physical illness, but from his feelings of shame.

So where does this wisdom come from? We can't just decide to be wise. What we can do is to be sincere in letting go of all those habits and attachments that impede the flow of wisdom. We approach the Dhamma with a mind which is open and attentive, humble, alert and calm.

Ajahn Jayasāro

We spend a lot of time in our lives waiting for something we want. It might be waiting to be served in a shop, waiting for a traffic jam to end, waiting for someone to say yes to a request, or perhaps waiting for someone to forgive us. There are so many different things we wait for. But what exactly is waiting? How is it different from normal sitting, standing or lying down. Why does it seem to make time slow down so much?

Look to see how the feeling of waiting arises when we allow our minds to drift into the future. Subjectively, waiting is the sense that we are filling in the time between now and when the event in the future occurs. But that sense of waiting so easily leads to tension and frustration. Why not keep the mind in the present and use this interval between the awareness of a need and the moment of its resolution to dwell in calmness and clarity? These short periods of time need not be a source of suffering. They can be enjoyed.

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha taught that only when people are free of worries concerning the essential needs for clothing, food, shelter and medical care, can they progress spiritually. Rather than overlooking the importance of material development the Buddha recognised that it forms the necessary foundation for the fulfilment of the deeper spiritual needs. Problems arise when material development becomes the sole focus of life. The results of such an approach range from stress and depression to drug abuse and suicide. A balanced life is one in which we take care of both inner and outer needs. But as inner needs are not so obvious and outer needs are much more pressing, time for inner cultivation does not often present itself. We must make time for it.

It was February 1976. I was a teenager travelling alone through southern India. I remember climbing down from a crowded bus after a long dusty journey ~~at~~ the edge of a large town. It was already dark and I walked through the town looking for a cheap place to spend the night. As I rounded a corner I heard a voice shouting out to me. I looked over to see a woman sitting at the side of the road by an old cooking pot, dishing out lentil soup to her many children. She insisted that I sat down with them and take a plate of soup and some bread. I was very hungry and the simple food tasted delicious. When I looked up, I saw the woman was watching my enjoyment with a look of genuine affection and satisfaction on her face, as if she had just fed her own grown-up son rather than a stranger.

Almost forty years have passed by. There must have been times on my travels when I was treated unkindly but I can't remember them now. The kindness of people like this poor woman however, living in rags on the street with her children, has never left me. Please do not underestimate small acts of kindness. They have a power and an influence and a beauty that lasts for a very long time.

Ajahn Jayasāro

ในเดือนกุมภาพันธ์ พ.ศ. 2519 ตอนนั้นอาตมายังเป็นวัยรุ่น ก่อตั้งทีมไปตามลำพังในแถบอินเดียใต้ จำได้ว่าหลังจากเดินทางคลุกฝุ่นมาทั้งวัน อาตมาก็ลากขาลงจากรถเมสที่แน่นเอี้ยดบริเวณชานเมืองใหญ่แห่งหนึ่ง ตอนนั้นเริ่มมืดแล้ว และต้องตระเวนหาโรงแรมราคาถูกสำหรับคืนนั้น ขณะเดินมาถึงมุมถนนก็ได้ยินเสียงตะโกนเรียก เมื่อหันไปก็เห็นผู้หญิงคนหนึ่งนั่งอยู่ข้างถนน กำลังตักแกงถ้วยจากหม้อเก่าๆ ใบหนึ่งแจกจ่ายให้ลูกๆ เธอคะยั้นคะยอให้อาตมานั่งร่วมกับเด็กๆ และทานแกงถ้วยกับจาปาตี ตอนนั้นอาตมาหิวมากจนอาหารธรรมดาๆ ก็แสนอร่อย เมื่อเงยหน้าขึ้นก็เห็นผู้หญิงคนนั้นมองการกินอย่างมีความสุขของอาตมาด้วยสายตาเอ็นดูและมีสีหน้าพอใจราวกับเพิ่งจะตักอาหารให้ลูกชายที่โตแล้วมากกว่าจะตักให้คนแปลกหน้า

เวลาผ่านไปเกือบสี่สิบปีแล้ว ในระหว่างการเดินทางที่ผ่านมา คงต้องมีหลายครั้งที่ได้รับการปฏิบัติที่ไม่ดีนัก แต่เมื่อถึงเวลานี้อาตมาก็จำเหตุการณ์เหล่านั้นไม่ได้แล้ว ในทางตรงกันข้าม ความเอื้ออารีของผู้หญิงยากจนที่สวมเสื้อฟ้าซอมซ่ออาศัยอยู่ข้างถนนกับลูกๆ ของเธอ กลับไม่เคยเลือนหาย จากความทรงจำของอาตมา เราไม่ควรมองข้ามการกระทำเล็กๆ น้อยๆ อันเนื่องจากความกรุณา เพราะเป็นการกระทำที่มีพลัง ส่งอิทธิพลต่อจิตใจ และเป็นความงดงามที่จะคงอยู่แม้เวลาผ่านไปนานแสนนาน

ร้อยเรื่องราว

When you are alone, one way of increasing mindfulness during daily tasks is to vary the speed at which you perform them. Making all your movements very deliberate, almost as if you are moving in slow motion, is a good exercise for developing awareness of the body, for calming the mind, for being aware of intention, and all the thoughts and emotions that normally flash through your mind. At other times it can also be helpful to do things very quickly. Trying to perform everyday actions such as getting dressed at speed and without mistakes brings a sharpness and energy into our minds, and a healthy exhilaration.

Ajahn Jayasāro

When sitting and walking meditation are practised alternately, meditators are able to greatly extend the length of time they can meditate. Alternating the two kinds of meditation allows meditators to develop awareness both in stillness and movement, thus independent of posture. If either sitting or walking is preferred, then the preferred option can be longer, but the other option should not be abandoned altogether. The particular value of walking meditation is that it produces an awareness more easily integrated into daily life than that which is cultivated in the sitting meditation. Walking mindfully in nature, up and down on a path some twenty to thirty paces long, in the shade of tall trees, is a wonderful practice! Walking meditation is especially valuable for those discouraged by painful feelings during sitting meditation.

Today is the 24th anniversary of the death of Ajahn Cha. His disciples have gathered together in his monastery for three days of Dhamma practice in his honour. This afternoon thousands of people will circumnambulate the stupa in which his relics are enshrined in a beautiful ceremony of remembrance.

All the qualities of the Kalyānamitta, the True Good Friend, were possessed by Ajahn Cha. He inspired his disciples with love and affection, with respect and with the determination to practice his teachings and follow in his footsteps. He was patient with the defilements of his disciples. He never became discouraged in teaching them. He willingly endured much pain and suffering in order to teach the Dhamma. He was a master of effective communication, adapting his words and manner to the needs of his audience. He was able to reveal the Dhamma in a clear, direct way that made even the most profound subject understandable. He never misled any of his disciples. He never abused his authority or ~~their~~ trust in him.

His life was the most wonderful gift to the world.
At his feet, I bow my head.

In a group of a hundred people, silence can only occur when all hundred people co-operate — not an easy thing at all. In a group of a hundred people, however, noise and disturbance may be caused by a single person.

A forest that has stood for a thousand years may be destroyed by a single fire. A building that took hundreds of years to complete may be destroyed in a single bomb blast. Good kamma accumulated over many lifetimes may be destroyed by a single moment of anger.

Care for the good. Learn how to protect it. Never take it for granted. Goodness is a beautiful and fragile flower.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Liang Phau Liam, Liang Phau Cha's successor as abbot of Wat Pa Phong only went to school for a few years. Nevertheless, without academic training he has designed and overseen the construction of many monastic buildings, including the large Dhamma Hall in his own monastery. He has also worked as a craftsman and a labourer on these projects. He does everything in a calm, unruffled way. He is a great teacher of mindfulness in action.

One evening after a long hot day on a major construction project some lay guests visited him. They asked when the work would be finished. Liang Phau Liam replied, 'I finish every day.' Liang Phau meant by this that whenever his body left the work site his mind left too. He didn't carry worries and unresolved issues with him. This is the value of a well-trained mind. When it needs to think and plan and solve problems, it does so; when there is no need to think it can put down the thinking until it's time to work ^{one more} ~~again~~. This may sound impossible but monks like Liang Phau Liam prove that through practice of the Buddha's teachings it can be done.

Ajahn Jayasaro

หลวงพ่อดี๋ยม ชูธรรมโมเป็นเจ้าอาวาสวัดหนองป่าพงต่อจากหลวงพ่อดี๋ชา ท่านเข้ารับการศึกษาในโรงเรียนเพียงไม่กี่ปีเท่านั้น ถึงจะเรียนมาน้อย แต่หลวงพ่อดี๋ก็ออกแบบและควบคุมงานก่อสร้างในวัดหลายแห่ง รวมทั้งศาลาปฏิบัติธรรมขนาดใหญ่ในวัดหนองป่าพงด้วย หลวงพ่อดี๋ยังเป็นทั้งช่างและกรรมกรไปพร้อมกัน ท่านทำงานด้วยความสงบสุขุม และเป็นแบบอย่างที่ดีเยี่ยมของการทำงานอย่างมีสติ

เย็นวันหนึ่ง หลังจากท่านคุมงานก่อสร้างกลางแดดร้อนจัดตลอดวัน โยมคนหนึ่งมากราบคารวะและถามท่านว่างานก่อสร้างจะเสร็จเมื่อไหร่ ท่านตอบสั้นๆ ว่า “เสร็จทุกวัน”

หลวงพ่อดี๋หมายความว่า เมื่อตัวท่านเดินออกจากสถานที่ก่อสร้าง ใจท่านก็ออกมาด้วย ท่านไม่เก็บความกังวลหรือปัญหาค้างคาไว้ในใจ

จิตที่ฝึกดีแล้วเป็นเช่นนี้ เมื่อต้องการจะคิดหรือวางแผนแก้ปัญหา ก็สามารถคิดได้ แต่เมื่อไม่จำเป็นต้องคิดก็สามารถวางความคิดได้ จนกว่าจะถึงเวลาที่ต้องคิดอีกครั้งหนึ่ง

เรื่องนี้อาจฟังดูเหมือนเป็นไปไม่ได้ แต่ครูบาอาจารย์อย่างหลวงพ่อดี๋ยมแสดงให้เราเห็นว่า การปฏิบัติตามคำสอนของพระพุทธรองคค์ช่วยยให้เราวางจิตอย่างนี้ได้

ร้อยเรื่องราว

An old story tells of the day on which Jīvaka, the Buddha's physician, graduated from his medical studies at Taxila University. On that morning Jīvaka's teacher gave him the task of walking out in the countryside surrounding the university for the whole day and of bringing him back specimens of every kind of plant with no medicinal properties whatsoever. Jīvaka returned in the evening, head downcast. He had been unable to find a single plant with no medicinal properties at all, and he was sure that he had failed his exam. But his teacher smiled and said 'Now that you have realized that every single plant has a medicinal property of one kind or another, you are ready to leave the university, go out into the world, and begin healing.

All unenlightened beings suffer. With Right View, every single experience, welcome or unwelcome, pleasant or painful, may be used by students of Buddhism to cure the ignorance and craving that causes that suffering. Our love of learning and capacity for learning enables us to go beyond a life in which we are endlessly struggling to escape the unpleasant and hold tightly to the pleasant.

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha once told of a tar trap used by hunters in the Himalayas to catch monkeys. Intelligent monkeys keep well clear of these traps, but foolish inquisitive monkeys go up to the trap and put a paw into the tar. Immediately, a monkey who does this realises that it is stuck and thinking to free itself, grabs with the other paw. Now it is even more stuck. Thinking, 'I'll free both of my paws,' it grabs with its foot and the foot gets stuck too. Thinking, 'I'll free both of my paws and my foot,' it grabs with its other foot. Now that both paws and both feet are stuck, it tries to save itself by grabbing with its mouth. Now, completely stuck, all it can do is wait for the hunter to arrive.

Some sensual pleasures are so addictive that once we form an initial attachment to them, it is almost impossible to free ourselves. Indeed, when lacking wisdom, our very struggles to escape may make the situation worse. For this reason, wise people are aware of their limitations and keep far away from such sticky tar-like experiences

Ajahn Jayasāro

The more you worry about things the more of a habit it becomes. Worry becomes an addiction. If you don't have something rational to worry about you find something irrational. Worrying about a form of suffering that may or may not occur in the future, you create suffering for yourself in the present. Worry doesn't affect your mental health alone. It depletes your immune system and makes you vulnerable to many kinds of physical illness.

So what can you do? The most important thing is to shift your attention from the object of worry to the experience of worry itself. And what is the first thing to notice? It has a beginning and an end. It comes and goes. A very simple observation but a profound one. Worry is merely a visitor to our mind; it doesn't live there. When worry appears, don't welcome it and don't try to drive it away. Recognise 'worry' as 'worry', an unwelcome visitor. If you do this patiently again and again, you will create a new healthy habit of mind. Worry will fade away.

Ajahn Jayasāro

A good reason can always be found to do the wrong thing. The more educated people are the easier they find it to justify wrong actions. Indeed, many intelligent people are able to prove to themselves that the wrong thing is, in fact, the right thing. The ability to convince oneself and others that the wrong thing is the right thing is a dangerous gift.

The untrained mind cannot be fully trusted. As long as our mind still lacks mindfulness, inner peace and wisdom it can be its own worst enemy. Keep observing your mind. Through constant observation you will develop the ability to recognise when you are starting to lie to yourself. Only when you understand the way that desire and attachment arise in the mind, can you protect the mind and make it truly trustworthy.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Having no choices in life is depressing. But having too many can cripple us. When there are a great many options to choose from, fear of making the wrong choice, or of not making the very best choice, can mean that we make no choice at all.

There are so many Buddhist teachings and traditions to choose from these days. It is wonderful that in the modern world there is such easy access to the Dhamma. But that easy access brings with it its own dangers. If we can turn on or turn off the Dhamma with the tap of a screen, we risk becoming mere passive ~~etc~~ consumers of Dhamma rather than its students. The Dhamma is challenging us to use the tools it provides to take responsibility for our lives. Choose a path and learn the Dhamma by committing to that path through the smooth times and the rough.

Ajahn Jayasāro

It is sometimes said that the Buddhist teaching of contentment leads to passivity. If we are content with what we have already, people say, then why struggle to improve anything? If everybody in a country were content then how could there be any economic development?

In fact, the teaching of contentment is never separated from teachings on right effort and diligence. The value of contentment is that it protects our mind from being consumed by thoughts of jealousy, depression and resentment when we compare ourselves with others who have more than us, or when we dwell on all the things that we don't have. Even when conditions are difficult we should try to be at peace with them, see their good points, during our efforts to improve them. Then we don't have to wait until we reach our goals some time in the future before we can be happy.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Notice the different feelings evoked by the words 'this body' and 'my body', 'this pleasure' and 'my pleasure', 'this pain' and 'my pain'. Observe how the sense of ownership arises, how it feels, and how it passes away. The sense of 'me' and 'mine' is not always present in the mind. When it arises, suffering appears. When it passes away, suffering ceases.

When a human being emerges from its mother's womb we say it's born. This kind of birth occurs only once in every lifetime. But in Buddhism the word 'birth' has a second meaning. It refers to the arising of the sense of 'me' and 'mine' in the ~~mind~~ mind, and all of the suffering that comes with it. This kind of birth takes place a great many times every day. We could say that in our practice of meditation we are learning a natural means of birth control. The non-arising of the sense of 'me' and 'mine' means the end of birth and with it the end of death. The Buddha called this Nibbāna the Deathless Realm

Ajahn Jayasāro

When we have difficulties with other people, we usually think that it's mostly their fault. We think, 'How much better our life would be if that person wasn't around!' But if the situation does change and the person we are blaming for our suffering leaves, why is it, that before long, someone else takes their place? If this happens it's an indication of a pattern. We need to look more closely within.

It would be wiser to look on these people as our teachers. Sometimes we say that they 'press our buttons'. Another way of putting this is to say that they draw out the defilements in our hearts. The discomfort is not really due to us having to be with these people. It is rather that we are being forced to face things inside us that we would rather not see. For this reason we can say thank you to all the difficult people in our life for reminding us how much work on our defilements we still have to do. And get down to work

Ajahn Jayasāro

Imagine living in a cottage on the side of a mountain. You can hear the sound of a chainsaw in the forested valley below. It is a very irritating sound, and because the noise is not even, it is hard to ignore. But after some time you get more used to it. Minutes pass without you being aware of the sound, but when your mind is drawn back to it again you realise that your body and mind have been tense the whole time.

And then the noise stops. It is not an absolute silence. You can still hear the wind in the trees and the singing of the birds. But these sounds don't disturb the silence. They seem like parts of it.

The cessation of suffering may be understood in this way. Cessation is not extinction. It is like the end of the sound of the annoying chainsaw. Nature, the wind, the trees, the birds remain.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Some people take no interest in what other people think or feel. They are very confident. They think they are smart. They do what they want to do and refuse to take any responsibility for the suffering they cause other people. They think they are winners and everyone else are losers.

Other people care too much about what other people think or feel. They worry all the time about how they are being judged for their actions. They want everyone to like them. Sometimes they do things they know are wrong because they crave the praise of others and fear criticism.

The first group of people take themselves as refuge.

The second group take other people as refuge. These refuges are narrow, foolish and unsafe. The Buddha taught us to take the Dhamma as our refuge. This means basing our life on generosity, precepts and inner cultivation.

Ajahn Jayasāro

A new year makes us think of new beginnings. But we can only truly move forward when we know where we have come from, how we have got to where we are now, and what destination we hope to reach. This means we need to know how to take a step back from all our daily activities and spend a little time ~~there~~ considering the big picture of our life. Start the new year with wisdom.

The more short-term are the goals of a person, an economy, a nation, the more reasonable it seems to focus on material progress. The more long-term the goals, the more necessary it seems to focus on values. The wise approach is to consider the two together. Identifying our core values and then pursuing short-term goals that promote them, or, at the very least, do not undermine them, is the way to sustainable progress both on the individual and social level.

On this Thai New Years Day of 2559 may the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha bless and protect all that is good and noble in our hearts, and in this dear country

Ajahn Jayasuro

A Noble Truth is one that ennobles the person who truly understands it. 'There is suffering' is a Noble Truth. 'I am suffering' is not. Enlightenment occurs only after we have seen suffering as a conditioned phenomena. Only depression, self-aversion and self-pity result from taking it personally.

The understanding that 'there is suffering' arises from observation of experience. The assumption that there is an 'I' that is suffering arises from a lack of observation of experience.

Whenever we don't pay attention to the reality of our body and mind, we create the sense of 'I'. In Dhamma practice we learn how to stop taking this 'I' so seriously, and ultimately how to let it go.

Ajahn Jayasāro

One day during my teenage years, I remember entering a huge library and feeling deeply discouraged. In those days I was thirsty for knowledge, I wanted to know everything, and yet at that moment I became aware that even if I was to spend my whole life in that library and do nothing but study, I would only ever be able to read a small portion of the books gathered in it. Then as I stood there overwhelmed, I remembered a question posed by a great Indian sage, 'What is the one thing, knowing which, you will know all things?' I realised that it was all very simple. I didn't need to read all the books in the world. I needed to study and understand my own mind.

There is so much we need to learn to survive in this world and prosper. But the most important thing of all is to know the one who knows.

As a schoolboy I was quite curious. I liked asking questions and looking at things from unusual angles. One day I received an essay I'd written back from my English teacher. Commenting on the ideas in my essay, he'd written in the margin 'Not all questions that can be asked need to be answered.' More than forty years later I still feel grateful ~~to~~ to my teacher for this comment.

We can waste so much time asking questions that don't need to be answered. In doing so we neglect asking questions that should be asked. Calming the mind and choosing the best questions to ask in any difficult situation is an important life skill to develop.

Here is an example of a question that should be avoided. When a problem arises, or a mistake is made, the common tendency is to ask, 'Who is to blame?' This question over-simplifies issues and sets people against each other. A better question to ask is 'what did each person or each party involved contribute to this problem or mistake. Looking at contributions rather than deciding who is to blame leads to clarity and intelligent solutions

Ajahn Jayasaro

Renunciation of attachments seems intimidating because it feels as if we are being asked to give up things which give us a lot of pleasure - or, at least, more pleasure than pain.

If we still perceive things in this way there can be no renunciation in the Buddhist sense. True renunciation can only occur through clear seeing.

By looking again and again at our mind we see that, in fact, the pleasure that we receive from our attachments is much less than we thought, the suffering much more. When we see this truth with a peaceful mind we throw off the attachment without regret.

Ajahn Chā said it was like a fisherman who grabs a poisonous snake from a net thinking it is an eel. The moment he realises what he is holding he throws it as far away as he can.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Even with teachers who care for us so much and give us so many wise teachings we find progress on the path to be slow and difficult. How much more difficult it would be without a teacher! And how marvellous that the Buddha realised supreme enlightenment all by himself! He completely eliminated every kind of mental defilement, and achieved absolute perfection in virtue, wisdom and compassion without anyone to show him the way. For this reason we bow at his feet.

Even to successfully explain very simple matters to people we know and love can be a real challenge. How wonderful that the Buddha was able to explain the most profound matters with words that have touched the hearts of people all over the world for over 2600 years! For his skill and patience in teaching the Dhamma we bow at his feet.

Even to create a family or an organisation or an institute that can thrive and prosper for two generations is a great achievement. The Buddha created a monastic order that has survived over a hundred generations, and has preserved his path to liberation and transmitted it to countless beings.

For his wisdom and kindness in ensuring the happiness of future generations, we bow at his feet.

ถึงแม้จะอยู่กับครูบาอาจารย์ที่ดูแลเอาใจใส่เรามากและให้ข้อคิดคำสอนอันฉลาดเฉลียว เรายังรู้สึกว่าการปฏิบัติธรรมให้ได้ผลเป็นของยากและล่าช้า ถ้าไม่มีครูไม่มีอาจารย์จะยากเย็นกว่านี้สักแค่ไหน และเป็นสิ่งน่าอัศจรรย์เพียงใดที่พระพุทธรองค์ตรัสธรรมด้วยตัวพระองค์เอง ทรงกำจัดกิเลสทั้งปวงและทรงเข้าถึงความสมบูรณ์สูงสุดในศีล ปัญญาและความกรุณา โดยไม่มีผู้ใดขัดขวางหนทาง ด้วยเหตุนี้ เราจึงน้อมกราบพระพุทธรองค์ด้วยเศียรเกล้า

ลำพังการอธิบายเรื่องธรรมต่างๆให้คนที่เรารู้จักหรือคนที่เรารักเข้าใจอย่างแจ่มชัดก็ไม่ใช่เรื่องง่ายเลย เป็นเรื่องที่น่ามหัศจรรย์เพียงใดที่พระพุทธรองค์ทรงพระปรีชาในการอธิบายสิ่งที่ลึกซึ้งที่สุดด้วยถ้อยคำที่ประทับใจคนทั่วโลกมานานกว่าสองพันหกร้อยปี เราน้อมกราบในพระปรีชาสามารถและขันติธรรมในการสอนของพระพุทธรองค์ด้วยเศียรเกล้า

ลำพังการสร้างครอบครัว องค์กรหรือสถาบันใดๆ ให้ดำรงอยู่และเจริญรุ่งเรืองมากกว่าสองชั่วอายุคน ถือเป็นความสำเร็จอันยิ่งใหญ่ พระพุทธรองค์ทรงสร้างสถาบันสงฆ์ที่ดำรงคงอยู่มานานกว่าร้อยชั่วอายุคน และสถาบันนี้ยังคงดำรงหนทางสู่ความหลุดพ้นและถ่ายทอดคำสอนสู่สรรพสัตว์ทั้งหลาย

ด้วยพระปัญญาคุณและพระมหากรุณาธิคุณในการยังประโยชน์สุขต่อชนรุ่นหลัง เราน้อมกราบพระพุทธรองค์ด้วยเศียรเกล้า

ร้อยเรื่องราว

There are two kinds of harmony: one supportive and one destructive. In the destructive kind of harmony the members of a group avoid speaking about anything that might bring up bad feelings or create conflict, even when certain topics need to be discussed. The unspoken agreement in this kind of group is 'I won't say anything about your behaviour if you don't say anything about mine. Lack of overt conflict is mistaken for social harmony.

In the supportive kind of harmony, the members of a group are devoted to the true welfare of both themselves and others. They humbly accept that they have blind spots and make mistakes. They open themselves up to words of advice and admonishment from those around them. They take on the responsibility of offering words of advice and admonishment at a suitable time and place, having first made sure of the facts and cleansed their mind of anger. Even though there may be some hurt feelings every now and then, the kind of harmony that develops from this way of living together is strong and nourishing.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Once upon a time a young man did a great service for the king. The king gave him a reward of one hundred gold coins. The young man stuffed the coins into his pockets and rushed home to his family. When he arrived home he counted the coins again. Only ninety nine remained. He realized that one of his pockets had a small hole and a coin had slipped through it. He was so upset about losing that one gold coin that he forgot to feel happy about the ninety nine coins that he still possessed.

In the course of performing some good action, we often make a small mistake. We tend to suffer so much over that small mistake that we forget all the good kamma we made before and after it.

The wise person analyses the mistake and takes measures to prevent it happening again. He mends the hole in his pocket and moves on.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Moment by moment we identify with aspects of the body and mind as being self, or belonging to self. We say 'my body', 'my feelings', 'my ideas', 'my hopes', 'my fears' and so on. But if these things truly belong to us, why do we have so little power over them? Why, for example, can't we just decide to be less anxious and more happy? Why can't we forbid our body from getting old? In what sense does this body and mind belong to us at all?

The Buddha taught us that the false idea of a permanent independent 'me' who is the owner of experience is the fundamental cause of human suffering. All mental defilements spring from this one mistake. As meditators we must train to create the inner strength, stillness and happiness to enable us to see the body and mind clearly. Then we will discover for ourselves that there is simply a natural flow of phenomena with no owner to be found. This is the Buddha's path of liberation.

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha taught us to constantly turn our attention to impermanence. But few people take his advice. Impermanence seems so obvious that most of us don't see the value of spending time reflecting on it. In fact, the simple truth of change is incredibly profound. The suffering that we experience in life is proof that we don't really understand change, because the more we understand change the less we suffer, and the one who truly understands change is liberated from suffering.

Consider: 'This pleasure is unstable.' 'This pleasure cannot last.' 'This pleasure is changing moment by moment.' 'This pleasure has an end.' 'This pain is unstable.' 'This pain cannot last.' 'This pain is changing moment by moment.' 'This pain has an end.'

Investigating in this way is the path to wisdom.

พระพุทธรองค์ทรงสอนให้เราหันไปมองความไม่เที่ยงอยู่เสมอ แต่น้อยคนนักที่จะทำตามคำสอนของพระองค์ ความไม่เที่ยงนั้นเห็นได้ชัดเสียจนเรามองไม่เห็นประโยชน์ในการหมั่นพิจารณา แท้จริงแล้ว ความเปลี่ยนแปลงอันเป็นธรรมดานี้ ลึกซึ้งอย่างเหลือเชื่อ ความทุกข์ที่พบเจอในชีวิตเป็นข้อพิสูจน์ว่าเรายังไม่เข้าใจ ความเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างแท้จริง เพราะยิ่งเข้าใจความเปลี่ยนแปลงเราก็กยิ่งทุกข์น้อยลง และบุคคลที่เข้าใจความเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างแท้จริงย่อมเป็นอิสระจากความทุกข์ ลองหมั่นพิจารณาดูอย่างนี้ 'สุขนี้ไม่เที่ยง' 'สุขนี้ไม่อยู่กับเราตลอดไป' 'สุขนี้เปลี่ยนแปลงไปทุกขณะ' 'สุขนี้ดับไปได้' 'ทุกข์นี้ไม่เที่ยง' 'ทุกข์นี้ไม่อยู่กับเราตลอดไป' 'ทุกข์นี้เปลี่ยนแปลงไปทุกขณะ' 'ทุกข์นี้ดับไปได้'

การพิจารณาดูอย่างนี้เป็นหนทางสู่ปัญญา

พระพุทธรองค์ทรงสอนให้เราหันไปมองความไม่เที่ยงอยู่เสมอ แต่น้อยคนนักที่จะทำตามคำสอนของพระองค์ ความไม่เที่ยงนั้นเห็นได้ชัดเสียจนเรามองไม่เห็นประโยชน์ในการหมั่นพิจารณา แท้จริงแล้ว ความเปลี่ยนแปลงอันเป็นธรรมดานี้ ลึกซึ้งอย่างเหลือเชื่อ ความทุกข์ที่พบเจอในชีวิตเป็นข้อพิสูจน์ว่าเรายังไม่เข้าใจ ความเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างแท้จริง เพราะยิ่งเข้าใจความเปลี่ยนแปลงมากขึ้น เรายิ่งทุกข์น้อยลง และบุคคลที่เข้าใจความเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างแท้จริงย่อมเป็นอิสระจากความทุกข์

ลองหมั่นพิจารณาดูอย่างนี้ 'สุขนี้ไม่เที่ยง' 'สุขนี้ไม่อยู่กับเราตลอดไป' 'สุขนี้เปลี่ยนแปลงไปทุกขณะ' 'สุขนี้ดับไปได้' 'ทุกข์นี้ไม่เที่ยง' 'ทุกข์นี้ไม่อยู่กับเราตลอดไป' 'ทุกข์นี้เปลี่ยนแปลงไปทุกขณะ' 'ทุกข์นี้ดับไปได้'

การพิจารณาดูอย่างนี้ย่อมเป็นหนทางสู่ปัญญา

ร้อยเรื่องราจ

In a forest monastery the bell is rung for the first time every morning at three am, and then at intervals throughout the day, signalling each event in the daily schedule. The value of the bell is not restricted to announcing the time. Monks are taught to use it as a means of establishing mindfulness. How do they feel when they hear the sound of the bell? Is their immediate reaction one of enthusiasm, pleasure, indifference or resistance? How does their reaction to the sound of the bell vary throughout the day and from one day to the next?

Simplifying our life allows us to observe our reactions to the regularly recurring elements in it. By observing again and again how our mind reacts to repetitive events we gain insight into how our mind works, to its prejudices, its desires and fears, its resolution and goodness.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Change we cannot control is frightening. The usual reaction to it is to search for something that does not change. Dogmas recorded in holy books seem to provide that. In times of rapid and bewildering changes fundamentalist religion flourishes. Superstition and prejudice infect people like a virus.

In Buddhism we look at the sense of insecurity, without trying to suppress it with beliefs. When we investigate our ~~mind~~ life with a mind calmed by meditation we can see that there is no solid 'me' facing a threatening unstable world. Our body and mind is changing moment by moment due to causes and conditions, some of which we may influence, some we may not. The more we understand inner and outer change, the more our anxiety dissolves. We find our refuge not in beliefs, but in observation of the way things are

Ajahn Jayasāro

One of the inspiring qualities of wise people is their ability to sense the appropriate behaviour in different places and different times, with different groups of people and different individuals. They know when it is the right time to ~~talk~~ speak and when it is the right time to listen; when it is the right time to lead and when to follow; when it is the right time to be active and when to be passive. They don't always follow their own way like a singer with only one song. They don't just blindly follow what everyone else is doing. Through the practice of Dhamma they are able to be both flexible and firm.

The ability to act in harmony with the needs of time and place is undermined by desires and fears, by anger and prejudice, and by mental confusion. It is strengthened by mindfulness, clear awareness of context and environment, and by respect for others.

Anger is always likely to arise when our desires are frustrated. Anger easily overcomes our mind when we want people to be a certain way or act a certain way, and they show that they are not who we would like them to be, or they don't act in the ways that we want them to act. Anger is especially likely to arise if the people involved are important to us, or have the power to affect our lives. Anger becomes especially strong when we are afraid, or when we think we are right. 'I am right. They are wrong,' is a dangerous thought because it makes anger seem sensible and correct.

The Buddha taught us to learn to observe the way things change according to causes and conditions. When we do this we see that we cannot control the world we live in. Our desires are just one small element of the flow of events. We don't have to passively accept everything as kamma or fate, but we do need to stop forming unrealistic expectations of ourselves and others. With a calm mind we can steadily work towards solving problems by dealing with their supporting conditions

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Supreme Patriarch, H.H. Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, constantly encouraged people to take responsibility for their lives, to recognise that by putting their faith in the Buddha and by trying to put his teachings into practice, everyone - monastics and lay Buddhists - can contribute to making Thailand a better, happier and more peaceful land.

He once wrote

"A good heart can cool the world down, and an evil heart can set it on fire. This is an inarguable truth, and the reason why we must train our own minds, and encourage others to train theirs. One heart, the heart of just one person, can have a visible effect. One good heart, just one good person, is capable of helping people to live together in happiness and peace."

We can honour the Supreme Patriarch by putting his faith in us to the test. Through our commitment to the Buddha's teachings can we truly make a difference to our families and communities?

Ajahn Jayasāro

On your birthday celebrate the love of your mother. Remember that you have gained this precious human birth because of the love and sacrifices of your mother. How much discomfort your mother willingly experienced for nine whole months so that you could be born! If she gave birth naturally, your mother endured the most painful experience that a human being can know so that you could gain this precious human birth. She did this gladly. When she saw you for the first time she cried for joy. It is this human birth, this human body and mind that gives you the opportunity to realise peace, wisdom and compassion. On your birthday remember your mother who made this life possible. On my 58th birthday, I offer this reflection and my blessings to you all.

It is easy to forget how unstable and unpredictable our life is. We often live carelessly, as if we were going to live forever. We waste precious moments as if they were as cheap and plentiful as grains of sand.

The Lord Buddha teaches us to wake up to the simple truth that we can take nothing for granted. We may be separated from our loved ones at any moment. We don't have enough time to get angry and upset with them over silly, petty things. Our time together is so short. Let us use it as well as we possibly can.

Ajahn Jayasāro

food for the heart

The meter of a poem
does not restrict the poet.

The composer's score
does not restrict the musician

Precepts do not restrict
the student of Buddhism.

Intelligent boundaries
adopted voluntarily
are not the enemy of creativity
but a vessel in which it can flourish

Ajahn Jayasāro

In daily life the training in Right Speech is one of our most important practices. We should seek to develop speech that is :

- 1) true
- 2) useful
- 3) timely
- 4) kind
- 5) polite

These are the five characteristics of the speech of the great sages.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Practising the Dhamma does not necessarily mean that the path of life becomes smooth. What does become smooth is our journey along that path.

Imagine a rutted mountain road full of potholes. Now imagine the difference between travelling along that road in an old truck with no suspension and in an air-conditioned S.U.V. It is the vehicle that matters; and the most important vehicle we have is our mind

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha taught:

“
Conquer anger with loving-kindness;
Conquer the wicked by goodness;
Conquer the stingy by generosity;”
Conquer the liar by speaking the truth

If we seek victory at any cost, then
we lose our principles. If we lose our
principles, we lose ourselves.

Ajahn Jayasāro

food for the heart

Being heedless means neglecting the things that truly nourish our life, and giving time to things that drain our energy, and make us feel agitated or depressed.

The Buddha said:

"Heedfulness is the way to the Deathless;
Heedlessness is the way to death.
Realising this distinction, the wise
rejoice in heedfulness, the path of the
noble ones."

Awake and aware in the present moment — this is our home base. Whether we are in our house, at work or even travelling abroad far from our loved ones and friends, if we can access this bright clear awareness we feel instantly at home.

The good things in a garden grow well when the gardener works hard to keep the garden free from weeds. Our heart is like a garden. Virtuous qualities will grow well and blossom when we work hard to keep it free from the weeds of defilement.

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha said that those who abandon foolish actions and devote themselves to the path of wisdom and compassion, illumine the world like the full moon emerging from a cloud.

Showing others through our life the human capacity to make real and positive changes is a wonderful gift that everyone of us can offer to the world.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Every good action has a good result, immediately. A kind action immediately increases the power of kindness in our heart, and immediately reduces the power of unkindness. It is one small step to liberation.

Usually however, a good action will only have a good effect on our life in the world, if those around us value goodness. In some places, for instance, kindness is seen as weakness. But internally, every single act of goodness, no matter how small, helps to purify our heart.

It is not enough to make sure that our views and opinions are reasonable and well-founded. We must also learn how to hold them well. If we grasp onto our views too tightly it feels as if they become a part of us. Then, if anyone criticizes our view it seems like a personal attack, and that is painful. So, with mindfulness, try to see a view as a view, an opinion as an opinion. No more, no less.

Meditation is like rubbing two sticks together to make fire. You need a lot of patience to be successful, and you need consistency and continuity. Perhaps you start with great enthusiasm, but that won't last. If, when you start to feel tired or bored or discouraged, please understand that you can't just stop for a while, for a few days or weeks, and then just carry on. The two sticks will be cold and you will have to start again. So even if you only do a little every day, never mind. What is important is that you don't stop.

Neither believe in your worries, nor fight with them. On the path of wisdom you must learn to step back from the content of your worries, "If that happens, then....", and look at the process.

Worry is an event that occurs in the mind. Seeing it clearly as a phenomena that has a beginning and an end, seeing how it arises and passes away within the mind, leads to peace.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Teach your mind as you would teach a child: with great patience, intelligence and love. If a child acts badly or foolishly the good parent doesn't get angry, doesn't panic or become discouraged. The parent's only concern is the welfare of the child. Sometimes the parent must be very firm, even though the child becomes upset, and sometimes more gentle. The more mindful parents are, the better their parenting skills become. Teach your mind as you would teach a child.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Observe the joy of learning and cultivate it. Encourage those around you - teach them when you can - to observe the joy of learning and to cultivate it. This joy of learning, of growing and of flourishing as a human being, will gradually wash away our joy in things that harm our bodies and damage our hearts.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Listen to the news every day. Listen many times. Not the news on a screen or in a newspaper but the news of your body and mind. This is the most important news. What is happening right now? Observe how your actions and speech affect your mind. Observe how your mental states condition your actions and speech. This is how we investigate the law of kamma in every day life.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Nothing and nobody has the power to make us angry. There is always a part of us that wants to be angry, that enjoys it. Anger arises when our unrealistic expectations of situations and people are frustrated. We want everyone to respect us and feel angry when we are disrespected. We want the world to be a fair and kind place to live in, and feel angry to see its unfairness and cruelty.

The more clearly we understand all the causes and conditions that lead to things happening the way they do, and to people acting the way they do, the less we will rage that things are not as we want them to be, or not how we think they should be. From this calm place we can move forward, abandoning what should be abandoned, developing what should be developed.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Letting go of things does not mean that we stop putting effort into our lives. Letting go does not lead us to neglect our responsibilities.

What we let go of is not the thing itself, but our unwise relationship to it. In particular, we let go of our habit of allowing the sense of 'me' and 'mine' to infect our world.

One dead fly ~~is~~ can spoil a big pot of delicious soup. Grasping onto a single thought of 'me' and 'mine' can spoil even the most beneficial situation.

Ajahn Jayasāro

The Buddha taught that heedlessness (pamāda) is the path to death, and heedfulness (appamāda) is the path to the deathless.

Heedfulness is such an important virtue that it is the teaching emphasised by the Buddha in the last words he spoke before he left the world.

Heedfulness means keeping oneself awake to the truths of our body and mind, and of the world around us. It means not allowing oneself to forget that youth, health and life itself are unreliable and uncertain. It means not taking anything or anyone for granted.

In family life, heedfulness means finding the time to take care of the quality of our most important relationships: being mindful of how we act towards those we live with, how we speak to them, and how we hold them in our thoughts.

Ajahn Jayasāro

Thoughts of anger and revenge are always poisonous. The more we try to justify them as being natural and appropriate, or as being honourable or patriotic or sanctioned by our religion, the more intense the poison becomes. Nothing is more dangerous than a foolish angry person unshakably convinced that he is right.

There is no lasting victory to be achieved through acts of vengeance. Everybody loses - both immediately and in the future, in this life and future lives.

Forgiveness doesn't mean that angry vengeful thoughts disappear overnight. It means that we don't act upon them. By not feeding them, we allow them to fade away. We do this because we see that the suffering that occurs when we become poisoned by hatred far exceeds any pleasure that may be derived from hurting someone who has treated us badly.

Ajahn Jayasāro

If you scratch an itch it feels good, and you feel better for a while. But after some time the itch comes back, usually stronger than before. The more you scratch, the more you itch.

Satisfying our cravings is like scratching an itch. The Buddha encouraged us to inquire: Which is better: the pleasure and temporary relief that comes from scratching an itch, or the happiness of having no itch to scratch?

Ajahn Jayasāro

In the Samyutta Nikāya the Buddha says:

“Unimaginable, bhikkhus, is a beginning to the round of rebirths. For beings obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving, migrating and going the round of births, a starting point is not to be found. It is not easy, bhikkhus, to find a being who has not formerly been one's mother... been one's father... one's brother... sister... son... daughter during this long long time.

- S.N. 15. 14-19

And if this is true, how can we not forgive those that hurt us?

Ajahn Jayasāro

Often there is no alternative to being busy. We have so many responsibilities to fulfil and time is limited. Nevertheless, we should try to simplify our life wherever it is possible to do so. Beware of allowing busyness to become an addiction, so that you are always having to rush onto the next thing. And beware of using busyness as an excuse for not attending to the more difficult matters of the heart. You have to spend time with your heart if you want to learn how to heal it.

Ajahn Jayasāro

One who looks for sweetness in a sack of chillies will be disappointed. One who looks for a dropped key in a place that is easy to search, rather than where it was lost, will not find it.

Impermanent pleasures can never provide the lasting happiness that our heart desires. Only by learning how to look closely at our body and mind will we find the key to liberation

Ajahn Jayasāro

One of the most powerful superstitions in the human mind is the belief that as long as there is growth, increase, gain in our life, we are safe. In other words, as long as we are accumulating wealth, status, experiences we will not die. It is not just greed that drives people to compulsively add to what they have already. It is the fear of death. The Buddha taught us to understand gain and loss, to understand their relationship, to see gain as simply gain and loss as simply loss. Most importantly, he taught us to look within at the very root of our fear of death

Ajahn Jayasāro

During meditation, when the mind is firm, clear and alert in the present moment, it as if the world and the person we believe ourselves to be, disappears for a while. At that time we have no sense of name, gender or status. We do not experience ourselves as a son or daughter, as a sibling, a spouse or a parent. We don't look on ourselves as good or bad, intelligent or stupid. We have entered another dimension of life, one characterised by a feeling of well-being that seems completely normal and natural. It is as if we have come home.

Opening our eyes and returning to the world of relationships and responsibilities, the memory of that other more profound dimension of life gives us a new perspective. We are conscious of a realm of peace within us, untouched by all the ups and downs of daily life. We fully participate in our world but don't take it quite so seriously as before.

Ajahn Jayasāro











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