

# Buddhism and the World

# 4

“He who is virtuous lives happily both in this world and in the next.”

-The Buddha



## Activity 1

### Act Out

Venerable Sumedha who is from a Buddhist Vihara in the U.S.A. is at the **United States Citizenship and Immigration Services**. There he meets Mr. Jayaweera.

Venerable Sumedha: Hello, Mr. Jayaweera. What are you looking for?  
You seem to be lost.

Mr. Jayaweera : Well, yes. I'm looking for the visa extension section.  
It's supposed to be on the **first floor**, but I couldn't find it.

Venerable Sumedha: This is the **second floor**. You have to go down.

Mr. Jayaweera : To the **ground floor**? Of course! I still keep forgetting  
that some British and American terms are different.

Venerable Sumedha: I know and sometimes, it can even put you off,  
especially if you are in a hurry to get something done.

Mr. Jayaweera : How can there be so many differences between British and American English? After all, a majority of the people in these two countries speak English.

Venerable Sumedha: That's true. **Nevertheless** there are many differences between the two Englishes they speak. In fact there are differences in vocabulary, spelling and even in grammar.

Mr. Jayaweera : **However**, the most noticeable differences are in vocabulary, aren't they?

Venerable Sumedha: I think so.

Mr. Jayaweera : For example, in American English *pavement* is *sidewalk*. *Hand luggage* is *baggage*. I'm still trying to get the hang of it.

Venerable Sumedha: I can understand. Come, I'll take you to the visa counter. Shall we take the stairs or would you rather wait for the lift, or the elevator as the Americans call it?

Mr. Jayaweera : Let's take the stairs.

Venerable Sumedha: By the way, are you coming to the Dhamma sermon this Sunday evening, Mr. Jayaweera?

Mr. Jayaweera : Yes. I'll be there.

### Activity 2 - Reading

**Read the conversation and complete the paragraph.**

Recently, Venerable Sumedha went to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. There he ..... another Sri Lankan, Mr. Jayaweera. Mr. Jayaweera was trying to find the ..... Venerable Sumedha reminded him that the *first floor* in American English refers to the ..... in British English. Together, they briefly discussed the ..... between British and ..... English. Then Venerable Sumedha offered to accompany Mr. Jayaweera to the visa counter.

1. Find and write the American English terms for these words from the conversation.

- I. the ground floor
- II. pavement
- III. lift
- IV. luggage

2. Underline the meanings of the idiomatic phrases given in bold.


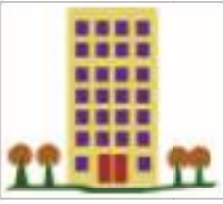


- I. It can sometimes **put you off**. ( make you happy when doing something, discourage you from doing something)
- II. I'm still trying to **get the hang of it**. (learn how to hang something, learn how to do/ use something)

### Activity 3 - Grammar

Select and write the American English terms for the given British terms.

line, apartment, candy, drapes, soccer

|        |   |       |
|--------|---|-------|
| sweets |  | ..... |
|--------|---|-------|

|                 |   |              |
|-----------------|---|--------------|
| <p>queue</p>    |    | <p>.....</p> |
| <p>flat</p>     |    | <p>.....</p> |
| <p>football</p> |   | <p>.....</p> |
| <p>curtains</p> |  | <p>.....</p> |

### Activity 4

Select and write the words from the list that have different spellings to British English.

| British English | American English |
|-----------------|------------------|
| -our            | -or              |
| colour          | .....            |
| neighbour       | .....            |
| harbour         | .....            |
| favourite       | .....            |
| -re             | -er              |
| theatre         | .....            |
| centre          | .....            |
| metre           | .....            |
| -ae / oe        | -e               |
| encyclopaedia   | .....            |
| paediatric      | .....            |
| -ise            | -ize             |
| organise        | .....            |
| analyse         | .....            |

favorite  
 neighbor  
 analyze  
 organize  
 harbor  
 color  
 encyclopedia  
 theater  
 center  
 pediatric

### Learning Point

Pronunciation differences between British and American English

In British English when the letter *r* comes after a vowel within the syllable, the *r* is not pronounced. But in American English the letter *r* is slightly pronounced.

### Activity 5 - Pronunciation

Read these words aloud with your teacher.

| Word   | British English pronunciation | American English pronunciation |
|--------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Farm   | /fɑ:m/                        | /fɑ:rm/                        |
| Birth  | /bɜ:θ/                        | /bɜ:rθ/                        |
| Turn   | /'tɜ:n/                       | /'tɜ:rn/                       |
| Learn  | /lɜ:n/                        | /lɜ:rn/                        |
| Car    | /kɑ:(r)/                      | kɑ:r/                          |
| Clever | /klevə(r)/                    | /'klevər                       |
| Other  | /'ʌðə(r)/                     | 'ʌðər//                        |

However, in British English the letter *r* is pronounced slightly in words that end with an *r* or an *re* when these words come before a vowel.

Far away ----- /fɑ:rəweɪ/

More ice----- /mɔ:r aɪs/

### Activity 6 - Reading and Pronunciation

Read these phrases and underline them if the letters *r/re* in them are pronounced. Then read the phrases aloud.

after all

after that

car trouble

here are

better off

far too much

for instance

four eggs

four hats

more or less

far and wide

as a matter of fact

here and there

a number of

better not

## Learning Point

### Idiomatic Expressions

An expression which functions as a single unit whose meaning cannot be guessed from those of the individual words which form the particular expression.

#### Examples:

- He's ***on the fence*** about going on the pilgrimage - undecided
- Don't believe him. He is just ***pulling your leg*** - fool or trick
- I tried to make out the instructions but it's all ***Greek to me*** - difficult to understand
- You have to be patient. Success cannot be achieved ***in the twinkling of an eye***. - instantly, immediately
- Ruwan and Vimal are always arguing. They don't ***see eye to eye*** in anything. - agree

### Activity 7 - Reading

Match the expressions with their meanings.

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. once in a blue moon             | A. very expensive                               |
| 2. piece of cake                   | B. can't judge some things mainly on appearance |
| 3. cost an arm and a leg           | C. work that is very easy                       |
| 4. can't judge a book by its cover | D. happens very rarely                          |
| 5. throw something down the drain  | E. to quit                                      |
| 6. throw in the towel              | F. to waste something                           |

### Activity 8

Complete the sentences using the idioms used in Activity 7

1. A: Have you already finished the test?  
B: Of course. It was a .....
2. A: My business is running at a loss. I'm thinking about closing it down.  
B: Be patient and try a little harder.  
Don't ..... yet.
3. A: Did Mr. Suraweera buy that huge house?  
B: Yes, he did. It ..... him ....., though.
4. A: Have you heard from Abaya recently?  
B: Not at all. He writes ..... since he moved to Polonnaruwa.

### Activity 9 - Reading

This is the sermon delivered by Venerable Sumedha mentioned in the conversation above. Read it aloud.

Good evening and may the Triple Gem bless you! Today, I would like to talk about an important Buddhist teaching. It is about a quality that is much needed in the present world. The topic of my sermon today is *metta*. *Metta* in *Pali* means benevolence or loving-kindness.

The Buddha said,

*Na hi verena verāni-sammantidha kudacanaṇṇ  
averena ca sammanti-esa dhammo sanantano*

This verse from the *Dhammapada* means “Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. It is appeased only by non-hatred. This is an eternal law.”

Why is loving-kindness important in the world today? That's because the lack of it has caused much suffering and destruction in society. Every day, we see and hear about many cruel or unkind deeds such as assaults, murder, bombing etc. These crimes are committed due to anger or hatred, because people don't practise loving-kindness as much as they should.



Anger is no stranger to human beings. We get angry when we feel we have been wronged. We feel as if a great injustice has been done to us and we think we need to retaliate. **However**, according to Buddhism, there is no just or righteous anger. Anger is bad. Anger is a human weakness. There may be times when we find that it's difficult to control our anger. **Nevertheless**, we must try to get rid of it. And the way to control anger is to practise loving-kindness.

How can we develop loving-kindness? Is this an easy task? No. It's so easy to get angry, isn't it? If so, how can we prevent it? Think for a moment. Are we perfect? No, we are not. We make mistakes. Then so do others. **But** do we try to be understanding of the other's mistakes and shortcomings? No, **on the contrary**, we get angry and seek revenge. Stop! Think! Others make mistakes too. No one is perfect. So try not to get angry. Try to forgive and forget.

So, do we like suffering? No. We like to be happy. So do others. Everybody likes to be happy. So abstain from harming others in anger. Don't do anything to others that you don't like to be done to you. Practise loving-kindness. As the Buddha said "Think with loving thoughts, speak with loving words and act with loving kindness". *Metta Bhavana* or developing loving kindness to all living things is the way to get rid of anger. Try to practise *Metta Bhavana* at least a few minutes a day. We can practise it like this:

May I be happy, healthy and free from worries! May I live long!

May my family, like myself, be happy, healthy and free from worries! May they live long!

May my relatives, friends and enemies, like myself, be happy, healthy and free from worries! May they live long!

May all human beings, like myself, be happy, healthy and free from worries! May they live long!

May all living beings, like myself, be happy, healthy and free from worries! May they live long!

This is the way to practise loving-kindness. How does practising loving-kindness help us? The Buddha said if a person practises *Metta Bhavana*, he is free from fear. He sleeps happily and wakes up happily. He would also die happily and be born into a happy abode. A great peace will come upon you.

Today, we talked about the value of loving –kindness. You have attentively listened to this Dhamma that is beautiful in the beginning, middle and the end. But listening alone is not enough. Take this message and apply it to your life. May the Triple Gem bless you.

Source: English Dhamma Sermon-most ven.Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Thero

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uirHkgN-pao>

### Activity 10 - Speaking

#### Group Work

Imagine you were invited to give a sermon to introduce Buddhism. Prepare a sermon titled “What is Buddhism?” and deliver it to the class. You may make use of the given facts.

You may base your sermon on the sutra,

Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ,  
Kusalassa upasampadā,  
Sacitta pariyodapanāṃ,  
Etaṃ Buddhānusānaṃ.

Avoid all evil,  
Cultivate the good and the true,  
Purify your mind,  
This is the teaching of all the Buddhas

Include information that would answer questions like: What is evil/bad? What causes evil, how to refrain from evil?

What is good? How to do good? How to purify our mind?

### Activity 11 – Writing

Write a short article to a Buddhist newspaper/magazine based on the above sutta using the given facts.

### Activity 12 - Reading

(a) Read the title and look at the pictures.

- I. Who do you think is the narrator of this story?
- II. To whom was it told?
- III. Who do you think are the characters of the story?

IV. What do you think has happened to the goat?

V. Do you think this story teaches a moral?

Now, read the story and check your answers. How many have you guessed correctly?

## Matakabhatta Jataka



Once the monks asked the Buddha if there was any good in offering animals as sacrifices to the dead. The Buddha replied that no good ever comes from taking the life of any living being and narrated this story.

Once upon a time in the city of Baranasi, there was a Brahmin. One day, he decided to make a sacrifice to the dead. Therefore, he brought a **goat** and asked his students to bathe it and decorate it with a garland. The students took it down to the river and began to bathe it. **However**, while they were bathing it, the goat began to laugh. Then, in a little while, it began to cry. The students were amazed by this behaviour and asked the goat the reason for it. **But** the goat told them that it would answer the question only if they took it to the Brahmin. Therefore the students took the goat to their teacher and told him the story.

The Brahmin was also puzzled by the goat's strange behaviour. He asked the goat the reason for it.

"In one of my past lives," the goat said, "I was a **human**". "I was **also** a Brahmin like **you**. I too once killed a goat and sacrificed it to the dead. But I didn't get any blessing for it. **On the contrary**, I had my head cut off four hundred and ninety nine times. I laughed when I realized that this was my last birth as an animal to be sacrificed. **However**, I felt sad when I realized that you too would suffer the same fate for killing me. That's why I cried."

“Then I will not kill you,” said the Brahmin. “**Moreover**, I will protect you.”

“That may be so,” said the goat. “**But** I cannot escape death. I have to pay for my sins.”

**Nevertheless**, the Brahmin was determined to protect the goat. He freed it and asked his students to keep an eye on it. The goat began to graze near a rock. At that moment lightning struck the rock. A sharp piece of rock broke off from the rock and cut off the goat’s neck. The Brahmin and his students were horrified by this incident.

A tree deity was observing the incident from his tree. He appeared before the men and explained the terrible consequences of killing. Then he urged them not to do so but to engage in meritorious deeds.

The Buddha concluded the Jataka story saying “In that past life, I was the tree deity.”

**(b) Answer these questions.**

- I. Why did the Buddha narrate this Jataka story?
- II. What did the Brahmin plan to do when he brought a goat?
- III. What did the goat do when the Brahmin’s students were bathing it?
- IV. What is the lesson taught in this story?
- V. Which of these proverbs best describes the lesson taught in this story?
  - As you sow, so shall you reap.
  - Better be safe than sorry.
- VI. Find and write words from the text that begin with or consist of these consonant blends.

br    pr    cr    gr

## Learning Point

### Cohesive Devices



Cohesive devices are used to show how ideas are related to each other in a text. They are used to link ideas (different relationships) in a logical order. Cohesive devices can be used within a sentence or to link ideas in separate sentences or paragraphs.

**Some cohesive devices used for contrast are:**

but

however

nonetheless

nevertheless

on the contrary

e.g:

- The patient is recovering well. **However**, he needs to stay in hospital for a few more days.
- Climbing the mountain was hard. **Nevertheless**, we didn't give up.
- "Did our singing disturb you?"  
"Not at all. **On the contrary**, I enjoyed it."
- The weather was cold. **Nonetheless**, they went hiking.
- The office was open, **but** there was nobody at the reception desk.

**\*Please note that sometimes cohesive devices can be used interchangeably.**

- The patient is recovering well. **However**, he needs to stay in hospital for a few more days.
- The patient is recovering well, **but** he needs to stay in hospital for a few days.

### Activity 13 - Grammar

Connect the sentences using **but**, **however**, **on the contrary** or **nevertheless**.

- I. I dropped the glass. .... it didn't break.
- II. The little boy tried to lift the suitcase ..... it was too heavy for him.
- III. "Was the exam difficult?" "No. .... it was quite easy."
- IV. The train journey was a little tiring. .... we enjoyed it.

### Activity 14 - Listening

Sri Samadhi Vihara conducts many Buddhist activities for the betterment of the society. In this listening text, two monks from the temple, Venerable Nanda and Venerable Rahula are discussing the possible changes to the plans in the temple activities. Listen to it and select the correct answer.

