

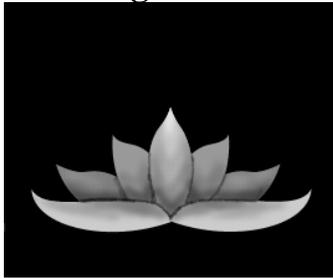
Dharma Friends

**Dedicated to Sharing the Dharma, Healing Each Other,
All Sentient Beings, and Ourselves**

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The Dhammapada The teachings of the Buddha



Verse 26: The Brahmin or The Holy Man

Source: From *The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom*, translated from the Pali by Acharya Buddharakkhita, with an Introduction by Bhikkhu Bodhi (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1985). Transcribed from the print edition in 1996 by a volunteer under the auspices of the DharmaNet Transcription Project, with the kind permission of the BPS. Copyright © 1985 Buddhist Publication Society. Access to Insight edition © 1996. For free distribution. This work may be republished, reformatted, reprinted, and redistributed in any medium. It is the author's wish, however, that any such republication and redistribution be made available to the public on a free and unrestricted basis and that translations and other derivative works be clearly marked as such.

383. Exert yourself, O holy man! Cut off the stream (of craving), and discard sense desires. Knowing the destruction of all the conditioned things, become, O holy man, the knower of the Uncreated (Nibbana)!

384. When a holy man has reached the summit of two paths (meditative concentration and insight), he knows the truth and all his fetters fall away.

385. He for whom there is neither this shore nor the other shore, nor yet both, he who is free of cares and is unfettered — him do I call a holy man.

386. He who is meditative, stainless and settled, whose work is done and who is free from cankers, having reached the highest goal — him do I call a holy man.

387. The sun shines by day, the moon shines by night. The warrior shines in armor, the holy man shines in meditation. But the Buddha shines resplendent all day and all night.

388. Because he has discarded evil, he is called a holy man. Because he is serene in conduct, he is called a recluse. And because he has renounced his impurities, he is called a renunciate.

389. One should not strike a holy man, nor should a holy man, when struck, give way to anger. Shame on him who strikes a holy man, and more shame on him who gives way to anger.

390. Nothing is better for a holy man than when he holds his mind back from what is endearing. To the extent the intent to harm wears away, to that extent does suffering subside.

391. He who does no evil in deed, word and thought, who is restrained in these three ways — him do I call a holy man.

392. Just as a brahman priest reveres his sacrificial fire, even so should one devoutly revere the person from whom one has learned the Dhamma taught by the Buddha.

- 393.** Not by matted hair, nor by lineage, nor by birth does one become a holy man. But he in whom truth and righteousness exist — he is pure, he is a holy man.
- 394.** What is the use of your matted hair, O witless man? What of your garment of antelope's hide? Within you is the tangle (of passion); only outwardly do you cleanse yourself.
- 395.** The person who wears a robe made of rags, who is lean, with veins showing all over the body, and who meditates alone in the forest — him do I call a holy man.
- 396.** I do not call him a holy man because of his lineage or high-born mother. If he is full of impeding attachments, he is just a supercilious man. But who is free from impediments and clinging — him do I call a holy man.
- 397.** He who, having cut off all fetters, trembles no more, who has overcome all attachments and is emancipated — him do I call a holy man.
- 398.** He who has cut off the thong (of hatred), the band (of craving), and the rope (of false views), together with the appurtenances (latent evil tendencies), he who has removed the crossbar (of ignorance) and is enlightened — him do I call a holy man.
- 399.** He who without resentment endures abuse, beating and punishment; whose power, real might, is patience — him do I call a holy man.
- 400.** He who is free from anger, is devout, virtuous, without craving, self-subdued and bears his final body — him do I call a holy man.
- 401.** Like water on a lotus leaf, or a mustard seed on the point of a needle, he who does not cling to sensual pleasures — him do I call a holy man.
- 402.** He who in this very life realizes for himself the end of suffering, who has laid aside the burden and become emancipated — him do I call a holy man.
- 403.** He who has profound knowledge, who is wise, skilled in discerning the right or wrong path, and has reached the highest goal — him do I call a holy man.
- 404.** He who holds aloof from householders and ascetics alike, and wanders about with no fixed abode and but few wants — him do I call a holy man.
- 405.** He who has renounced violence towards all living beings, weak or strong, who neither kills nor causes others to kill — him do I call a holy man.
- 406.** He who is friendly amidst the hostile, peaceful amidst the violent, and unattached amidst the attached — him do I call a holy man.
- 407.** He whose lust and hatred, pride and hypocrisy have fallen off like a mustard seed from the point of a needle — him do I call a holy man.
- 408.** He who utters gentle, instructive and truthful words, who imprecates none — him do I call a holy man.
- 409.** He who in this world takes nothing that is not given to him, be it long or short, small or big, good or bad — him do I call a holy man.
- 410.** He who wants nothing of either this world or the next, who is desire-free and emancipated — him do I call a holy man.
- 411.** He who has no attachment, who through perfect knowledge is free from doubts and has plunged into the Deathless — him do I call a holy man.

412. He who in this world has transcended the ties of both merit and demerit, who is sorrowless, stainless and pure — him do I call a holy man.

413. He, who, like the moon, is spotless and pure, serene and clear, who has destroyed the delight in existence — him do I call a holy man.

414. He who, having traversed this miry, perilous and delusive round of existence, has crossed over and reached the other shore; who is meditative, calm, free from doubt, and, clinging to nothing, has attained to Nibbana — him do I call a holy man.

415. He who, having abandoned sensual pleasures, has renounced the household life and become a homeless one; has destroyed both sensual desire and continued existence — him do I call a holy man.

416. He who, having abandoned craving, has renounced the household life and become a homeless one, has destroyed both craving and continued existence — him do I call a holy man.

417. He who, casting off human bonds and transcending heavenly ties, is wholly delivered of all bondages — him do I call a holy man.

418. He who, having cast off likes and dislikes, has become tranquil, is rid of the substrata of existence and like a hero has conquered all the worlds — him do I call a holy man.

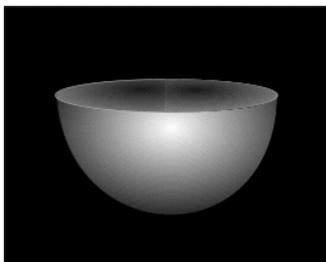
419. He who in every way knows the death and rebirth of all beings, and is totally detached, blessed and enlightened — him do I call a holy man.

420. He whose track no gods, no angels, no humans trace, the arahant who has destroyed all cankers — him do I call a holy man.

421. He who clings to nothing of the past, present and future, who has no attachment and holds on to nothing — him do I call a holy man.

422. He, the Noble, the Excellent, the Heroic, the Great Sage, the Conqueror, the Passionless, the Pure, the Enlightened one — him do I call a holy man.

423. He who knows his former births, who sees heaven and hell, who has reached the end of births and attained to the perfection of insight, the sage who has reached the summit of spiritual excellence — him do I call a holy man.



Some thoughts about this *Dhammapada* Verse: The Brahmin or the Holy Man

Well, we have made it around another cycle to the last [Dhammapada](#) verse. We have read through the teachings together again for the 8th[?] time in our eleven years as [Dharma Friends](#) and, in a sense, we have taken this course of spiritual growth once again. If we look for an eventual graduation, then those of you that are now truly The Brahmin, the Buddha, or the Holy Man as we arrive here at the last verse are the graduates. Except that, if you have taken your bodhisattva vows (to stick around and take rebirth until all beings are free from suffering) then even those of you who have achieved enlightenment, our graduates, have chosen to not get your diploma and leave the stage until every other being everywhere gets their diploma first. So, you might sit and say some Omm's and Ahhh's while the rest of us are lining up. We have a bit more work to do. So, enlightened ones and advanced students, off you go to help those folks like me who are still suffering. Those of us who haven't passed all our exams just yet, will start again next month from page 1. To fully awaken to our enlightened nature is a pretty challenging course and, as we have said before, it has nothing to do with how much we know intellectually. We can read and reread these verses but unless we are doing deep and focused meditations, developing stability, balance, and equanimity,

and opening our heart to great compassion, we will just keep accumulating knowledge but not wisdom. That is the hard part. So, as we read in this **Dhammapada** verse of the Brahmin, the holy man of the time and of the spiritual traditions of Shakyamuni Buddha in 500 AD, we can see how he or she does truly live the sacred wisdom of an enlightened being. They can teach us how to do the same even in today's world.

Sometimes we can see things more clearly when we know the extremes of who we are.

Here is an interesting exercise that we can do this month to heighten awareness of our own journey to becoming a Holy Man or Holy Woman. We hear a lot about God and the Devil in Christianity as a way to understand more deeply how to avoid temptations by evil. How can we know the most deluded expression of our self as opposed to the most enlightened? Maybe it would be helpful to look at those selves that are the most confused about reality and that have lost sight of true enlightened self. Those who are given a psychiatric diagnosis of one of the personality disorders, especially those who are most severely disturbed by issues of rage, control and power, the sociopathic disorder give us a view of the obscuring delusions that we all have to some degree. The sociopath is the most severe manifestation on the psychiatric diagnostic continuum of personality disorders, sometimes also called character disorders. It may be that these people have the most horrific inner obstacles. Many of those in prisons have been given a diagnosis of an antisocial personality disorder, a sociopath, and many treatment professionals write them off as pretty impossible to treat, to heal, or to return to society. In fact, there is some literature that says that to treat sociopaths with techniques that encourage insight into their psychodynamics actually makes them better manipulators so, in effect, treatment makes them worse. If you were watching **The Sopranos** last year on television, you saw Tony Soprano's therapist crumble in distress when she was told by her supervisor that she was probably making him a better criminal rather than helping him heal. But, I will say, maybe not. I believe healing can happen but admit that these are terrific wounds to heal.

Why should we explore personality disorders in depth?

At our essence, all of us are pure and sacred, un-obscured by inner obstacles of confusion. We all have the same task – whether humongous or slight. We must recognize how we obscure our perception of our true nature. We all rest somewhere on a continuum of a deluded view of self and the true perception of sacred reality. If we are not enlightened, and even if we do not have a personality disorder, we all have personality *traits* that contribute to our deluded self. Some of us reading this **Dharma Friends** live as deluded selves diagnosed as the most severely disturbed personality disorders and we also may even have readers that have lifted all ego perception to reveal the pure view of *All That Is*.

But, we are either deluded or we are not. When we view reality through the perception of ego, an I, that is delusion. When we experience pure view and rest in sacred reality, there is no delusion. When we experience deluded view through our ego's thoughts and beliefs, we are ordinary beings --- and sometimes ordinary beings with extremely wrong views dictated by the lens of our personality disorder. When we rest in our view of All That Is, we are Buddhas or enlightened wisdom beings. But for all of us, the work is to lift the delusion.

Ordinary and diagnostically healthy people that have not achieved enlightenment have a view of reality and self that is generally kind and positive. The diagnosed personality disordered individual is more confused and deluded by their learned inner view of self and reality. They believe in and act this view out to the detriment of themselves and others. Some of you are living every day with those with personality disorders, whether you are behind bars or in the free world. Some of you have been diagnosed as disordered personalities and wonder if you are truly hopeless. And some of you truly practice the wish to benefit all beings and, to do so, want to look clearly and honestly at all that we are, our best and worst potential, in order to be of benefit to all.

Helpful Images to Guide Us on Our Path

We can think of two images that give us analogies of where we are going on this path. The first is to imagine a bowl of crystal clear water into which we put some handfuls of dirt. Quite quickly, we have a bowl of mud. But, if we leave the muddy water alone and let it rest in stillness, the water will gradually separate from the dirt. The dirt will settle to the bottom and the water will become more and more purified and return to its original state of purity. If our original state is clarity and purity but this purity is obscured by the many distorting, muddying views caused by our life situations, can we also return to our original state? Can we rest in stillness, allowing the impediments to the perception of innate purity to fall away?

The realized being in our **Dhammapada** verse, The Holy Man, has found such profound stillness and purity that very way. All obscurations have fallen away and their view is to know the sacredness of *All That Is*. What about the sociopath? They too have purity and sacredness as their essential nature but they see only through the distorted views of ego-self. Their reality is perceived and interpreted only through confusion and all is tainted by their desperate, self-serving survival needs. Their task is harder but the only healing is through allowing those obscurations to fall away.

The second image is the traditional Buddhist metaphor of the lotus. The lotus is often used as the symbol of The Buddha because the plant sinks its roots deep into the muddy bottom of the lake, sprouts a stalk that grows in muddy water, and then, when the silky white flower blooms, it appears as a pure white blossom, unstained by the mud that surrounds it. Most plants that grow in muddy water are tainted by the mud – like those of us who grow in difficult life circumstances.

So we have this parallel too. We have Buddhas or enlightened beings, who have achieved the highest expression of purity and goodness that human beings can attain despite challenging life circumstances. And then, there are the rest of us who are, to various degrees, crippled and disturbed by our traumas. Can we believe that there is that inner true self unstained by the mud, even though we are

unable to access it? Can we find it underneath all those muddy layers? Can we all apply our teachings of our own sacred traditions and arrive at a realization of pure view, --even those who have lived the 'worst case scenario' of a sociopath? Of course, I have the bias that these teachings do work. Unlike the psychotherapeutic community, I do believe as I share in my workshops and lectures, that all can find healing. I may be thought of as naïve by experts in the system who treat incarcerated individuals, but what I teach is what I truly know through my meditative experience. I do know that within every being is pure and sacred nature, although most do not realize or live from this experience of their true self. Even the most violent and cruel are, at their essence, a Buddha, or a sacred and holy being. All beings have the capacity to know their inner pure essence and *All That Is*, and to live as sacred self.

The Holy Man and The Predator

The interesting exercise of juxtaposing our Holy Man next to our hypothetical person diagnosed as a personality disorder is to see more clearly how we all obscure our experience of pure self with layers and layers of distorted views. When we have lost touch with our true nature and our true capacity, what manifests for us all, to a greater or lesser degree, is the confusion and pain resulting from our beliefs. All of us fall somewhere on this continuum of living our distorted perceptions, but we can surmise that the one who ends up being a bully or a cruel predator is tragically separated from the experience of sacred self and even a human self. So this exercise is not to say how one is a good guy, the Holy Man, or the bad guy, the sociopathic personality disordered individual. They are one in the same. Even the Holy Man has the potential to separate from or forget his pure self and to succumb to confusion and delusion. And the predatory killer can become aware of his pure nature. Remember the story of Anguilmala? We have learned much about how we, as spiritual searchers, can lift the fog that surrounds and obscures our pure view through meditation and right thinking. Meditation prepares us for the capacity to enter those subtle and sacred states that allow us to view transcendent reality. With ever growing stability, this knowing of the sacred becomes our ever-present view of *All That Is*. Each and every one of us can do this process, but we all know that it is a very, very difficult path. It takes great dedication and very possibly, the rest of our lives.



First, let's get a renewed sense of our Holy Man and the qualities he or she embodies. Read our [Dhammapada](#) verse again and see the qualities that he or she lives.

In contrast, let's look at the characteristics of one so lost in confusion that they end up getting that most damning sociopathic personality disorder diagnosis. They were very likely not born as a sociopath. Many circumstances can set the stage for such a lost life.

Drawing by Jack Waldrup

A quick review from a psychological point of view.

Every child is born with the potential to develop in many different directions given their heredity, biochemistry, the psychological and emotional capacity of their parents or caregivers, their health, their environment, and the totally unpredictable events that happen in their life. With this interactive and very complex potential, a child also develops ways of thinking about themselves, their loved ones, and their world. Their capacity to handle life events is affected by how they perceive themselves, what arises, their support, and the skills they have to adapt and cope. Altogether, these factors contribute to the ego function they develop. Now, some children have the great handicap of a head injury, an illness or other brain dysfunction, biochemistry that goes awry manifesting as depression, a psychotic process such as schizophrenia, or other challenges like bi-polar disorder. Some children have trouble with their thinking and the processing of life tasks because of neurological disorders like attention deficit disorder, dyslexia, or seizure disorders. Life events impact upon all of us but there is an underlying and handicapping instability for those with these disorders that cannot be changed by altering one's thoughts or understanding. Medication can help with healing and adding stability to some of these illnesses.

The AXIS II disorders are part of the psychiatric system of diagnosis that identifies the personality disorders. Those who had trouble bonding and emotionally connecting to others from early childhood on and who have had problems developing a strong and healthy sense of ego self are often diagnosed as having personality disorders. One may express symptoms anywhere along a continuum from mild, to moderate, and for some, a severe inability to love and trust oneself, others, or to perceive a loving and safe world. They are categorized in groups of symptomatic expression such as the addictive disorders, hysteric or narcissistic disorders, or more severely, aggressive personality disorders, paranoid personality, or sociopathic personalities. The diagnosis describes patterns of behavior and thinking that are pretty telling about how these folks live out their underlying beliefs about themselves and life. Laying the groundwork for such illnesses is often a combination of psychological and emotional stressors such as the parenting received, great trauma and/or abuse, a seriously challenging life situation, being acculturated in a violent social group or family, or, we can be a bit more nebulous and say it is one's karmic condition. It could be that genetics plays a part too, but for most, some of the premorbid conditions laid the groundwork and other events later become the trigger, or one event was so overwhelming that the personality pattern was set early on. The personality traits become overdeveloped to the disadvantage of the individual's capacity to cope in healthier ways. Usually, it is a combination of many of these factors and, very probably, there were signals or symptoms of an emotionally disturbed personality that appeared in a very young child. Sadly, for most, they could have been helped before the situation became much harder to reverse but far too many children fall through the cracks. The most severe personality disturbances are the predatory and violent individuals who not only kill beings but do so with a motivation to victimize others for power and control. Can these people truly have a Buddha within? I believe they do, but that may not mean they can ever be trusted to live in society because their propensity to hurt others is so great.

Because these diagnoses affect so many and many who have them do not understand the nature of their disorder, let's read from a diagnostic text, The Merck Manual

“Personality disorders are pervasive, inflexible, and stable patterns of behavior that cause significant distress or functional impairment. Ten distinct personality disorders have been identified and grouped into 3 clusters. All are believed to be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Diagnosis is clinical. Treatment is with psychotherapy and sometimes drug therapy.

Personality traits are patterns of thinking, perceiving, reacting, and relating that are relatively stable over time and in various situations. Personality traits are usually evident from late adolescence or early adulthood, and although many traits persist throughout much of life, some fade with aging and some can be modified. Personality disorders exist when these traits become so rigid and maladaptive that they impair functioning. Mental coping mechanisms (defenses) that are used unconsciously at times by everyone tend to be immature and maladaptive in people with personality disorders.

People with personality disorders are often frustrating and even infuriating to people around them (including physicians). Most are distressed about their lives and have impaired work or social relationships. Personality disorders often coexist with mood, anxiety, substance abuse, and eating disorders. People with severe personality disorders are at high risk of hypochondriasis and violent or self-destructive behaviors. They may have inconsistent, detached, overemotional, abusive, or irresponsible styles of parenting, leading to physical and mental problems in their children. About 13% of the general population is affected. Antisocial personality disorder occurs in about 2%, with men outnumbering women 6:1. Borderline personality disorder occurs in about 1%, with women outnumbering men 3:1.

Classification

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR) recognizes 10 distinct personality disorders and divides them into 3 clusters:

- A: Odd/eccentric
- B: Dramatic/erratic
- C: Anxious/fearful

Cluster A: Patients tend to be detached and distrustful.

Paranoid personality involves coldness and distancing in relationships, with a need for control and a tendency toward jealousy if attachments are formed. Affected people are often secretive and untrusting. They tend to be suspicious of changes and frequently find hostile and malevolent motives behind other people's acts. Often, these hostile motives represent projections and hostilities onto others. Their reactions sometimes surprise or scare others. They then use the resulting anger of or rejection by others (ie, projective identification) to justify their original feelings. Paranoid people tend to feel a sense of righteous indignation and often take legal action against others. These people may be highly efficient and conscientious, although they usually need to work in relative isolation. This disorder must be differentiated from paranoid schizophrenia.

Schizoid personality is characterized by introversion, social withdrawal, isolation, and emotional coldness and distancing. Affected people are often absorbed in their own thoughts and feelings and fear closeness and intimacy with other people. They are reticent, are given to daydreaming, and prefer theoretical speculation to practical action.

Schizotypal personality, like schizoid personality, involves social withdrawal and emotional coldness but also includes oddities of thinking, perception, and communication, such as magical thinking, clairvoyance, ideas of reference, or paranoid ideation. These oddities suggest schizophrenia but are never severe enough to meet its criteria. People with schizotypal personality are believed to have a muted expression of the genes that cause schizophrenia.

Cluster B: Patients tend to be emotionally unstable, impulsive, and intense.

Borderline personality is marked by unstable self-image, mood, behavior, and relationships. Affected people tend to believe they were deprived of adequate care during childhood and consequently feel empty, angry, and entitled to nurturance. As a result, they relentlessly seek care and are sensitive to its perceived absence. Their relationships tend to be intense and dramatic. When feeling cared for, they appear like lonely waifs who seek help for depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, and past mistreatments. When they fear the loss of the caring person, they frequently express inappropriate and intense anger. These mood shifts are typically accompanied by extreme changes in their view of the world, themselves, and other people—e.g., from bad to good, from hated to loved. When they feel abandoned, they dissociate or become desperately impulsive. Their concept of reality is sometimes so poor that they have brief episodes of psychotic thinking, such as paranoid delusions and hallucinations. They often become self-destructive and may cut themselves (self-mutilate) or attempt suicide. They initially tend to evoke intense, nurturing responses in caretakers, but after repeated crises, vague unfounded complaints, and failures to comply with therapeutic recommendations, they are viewed as help-rejecting complainers. Borderline personality tends to become milder or to stabilize with aging.

Antisocial personality is marked by the callous disregard for the rights and feelings of other people. Affected people exploit others for materialistic gain or personal gratification. They become frustrated easily and tolerate frustration poorly. Characteristically, they act out their conflicts impulsively and irresponsibly, sometimes with hostility and violence. They usually do not anticipate the consequences of their behaviors and typically do not feel remorse or guilt afterward. Many of them have a well-developed capacity for glibly rationalizing their behavior or blaming it on others. Dishonesty and deceit permeate their relationships. Punishment rarely modifies their behavior or improves their judgment. Antisocial personality often leads to alcoholism, drug addiction, promiscuity, failure to fulfill responsibilities, frequent relocation, and difficulty abiding by laws. Life expectancy is decreased, but the disorder tends to diminish or stabilize with aging.

Narcissistic personality involves grandiosity. Affected people have an exaggerated sense of superiority and expect to be treated with deference. Their relationships are characterized by a need to be admired, and they are extremely sensitive to criticism, failure, or defeat. When confronted with a failure to fulfill their high opinion of themselves, they can become enraged or seriously depressed and suicidal. They often believe other people envy them. They may exploit others because they think their superiority justifies it.

Histrionic personality involves conspicuous attention seeking. Affected people are also overly conscious of appearance and are dramatic. Their expression of emotions often seems exaggerated, childish, and superficial. Still, they frequently evoke sympathetic or erotic attention from other people. Relationships are often easily established and overly sexualized but tend to be superficial and transient. Behind their seductive behaviors and their tendency to exaggerate somatic problems (i.e., hypochondriasis) often lie more basic wishes for dependency and protection.

Cluster C: Patients tend to be nervous and passive or rigid and preoccupied.

Dependent personality is characterized by the surrender of responsibility to other people. Affected people may submit to others to gain and maintain support. For example, they often allow the needs of people they depend on to supersede their own. They lack self-confidence and feel intensely inadequate about taking care of themselves. They believe that others are more capable, and they are reluctant to express their views for fear that their aggressiveness will offend the people they need. Dependency in other personality disorders may be hidden by obvious behavioral problems; eg, histrionic or borderline behaviors mask underlying dependency.

Avoidant personality is marked by hypersensitivity to rejection and fear of starting relationships or anything new because of the risk of failure or disappointment. Because affected people have a strong conscious desire for affection and acceptance, they are openly distressed by their isolation and inability to relate comfortably to other people. They respond to even small hints of rejection by withdrawing.

Obsessive-compulsive personality is characterized by conscientiousness, orderliness, and reliability, but inflexibility often makes affected people unable to adapt to change. They take responsibilities seriously, but because they hate mistakes and incompleteness, they can become entangled with details and forget their purpose. As a result, they have difficulty making decisions and completing tasks. Such problems make responsibilities a source of anxiety, and they rarely enjoy much satisfaction from their achievements. Most obsessive-compulsive traits are adaptive, and as long as they are not too marked, people who have them often achieve much, especially in the sciences and other academic fields in which order, perfectionism, and perseverance are desirable. However, they can feel uncomfortable with feelings, interpersonal relationships, and situations in which they lack control, they must rely on other people, or events are unpredictable.

Other personality types: Several other personality types have been described but are not classified as disorders in the DSM-IV-TR.

Passive-aggressive (negativistic) personality typically produces the appearance of ineptness or passivity, but these behaviors are covertly designed to avoid responsibility or to control or punish other people. Passive-aggressive behavior is often evidenced by procrastination, inefficiency, or unrealistic protests of disability. Frequently, affected people agree to do tasks they do not want to do and then subtly undermine completion of the tasks. Such behavior usually serves to deny or conceal hostility or disagreements.

Cyclothymic personality alternates between high-spirited buoyancy and gloomy pessimism; each mood lasts weeks or longer. Characteristically, the rhythmic mood changes are regular and occur without justifiable external cause. When these features do not interfere with social adaptation, cyclothymia is considered a temperament and is present in many gifted and creative people.

Depressive personality is characterized by chronic moroseness, worry, and self-consciousness. Affected people have a pessimistic outlook, which impairs their initiative and disheartens other people. Self-satisfaction seems undeserved and sinful. They unconsciously believe their suffering is a badge of merit needed to earn the love or admiration of others.

Diagnosis

Specific personality disorders are diagnosed based on DSM-IV-TR criteria. The general criteria in DSM-IV-TR emphasize the need to consider whether other mental or physical disorders (e.g., depression, substance abuse, hyperthyroidism) can account for the patient's patterns of behavior.

Patients' emotional reactions and their perspectives on what causes their problems and how other people treat them can provide information about their disorder. Diagnosis is based on observing repetitive patterns of behavior or perceptions that cause distress and impair social functioning. Because the patient often lacks insight into these patterns, physicians may initially seek information from and evaluation by others who interact with the patient. Often, physicians suspect a personality disorder based on their own discomfort, typically if they begin to feel angry or defensive.

Treatment

Although treatment differs according to the type of personality disorder, some general principles apply:

- Family members and friends can act in ways that either reinforce or diminish the patient's problematic behavior or thoughts; thus, their involvement is helpful and often essential.
- An early effort should be made to get patients to see that the problem is really based on who they are.
- Treating a personality disorder takes a long time; repetitious confrontation in prolonged psychotherapy or by peer encounters is usually required to make patients aware of their defenses, beliefs, and maladaptive behavior patterns.

Because personality disorders are particularly difficult to treat, therapists need experience, enthusiasm, and an understanding of the patient's expected areas of emotional sensitivity and usual ways of coping. Kindness and guidance alone do not change personality disorders.

Treatment may involve a combination of psychotherapy and drug therapy. However, symptoms typically are not very responsive to drugs.

Relief of anxiety or depression is the first goal, and drug therapy can be helpful. Reducing environmental stress can also quickly relieve such symptoms

Maladaptive behaviors, such as recklessness, social isolation, lack of assertiveness, or temper outbursts, can be changed in months. Group therapy and behavior modification, sometimes within day hospital or residential settings, are effective. Participation in self-help groups or family therapy can also help change socially undesirable behaviors. Behavioral change is most important for patients with borderline, antisocial, or avoidant personality disorder. Dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) is effective for borderline personality disorder. DBT, which involves weekly individual psychotherapy and group therapy as well as telephone contact with therapists between scheduled sessions, seeks to help patients understand their behaviors and teach them problem solving and adaptive behaviors. Psychodynamic therapy is effective for patients with borderline and avoidant personality disorders. Such therapies help patients with personality disorders reorganize feeling states in themselves and think about the effect their behaviors have on other people.

Interpersonal problems, such as dependency, distrust, arrogance, and manipulateness, usually take > 1 yr to change. The cornerstone for effecting interpersonal changes is individual psychotherapy that helps patients understand the sources of their interpersonal problems. A therapist must repeatedly point out the undesirable consequences of the patient's thought and behavior patterns and must sometimes set limits on the patient's behavior. Such therapy is essential for patients with histrionic, dependent, or passive-aggressive personality disorder. For some patients with personality disorders that involve how attitudes, expectations, and beliefs are mentally organized (e.g., narcissistic or obsessive-compulsive types), psychoanalysis is recommended, usually for ≥ 3 yr.

(Last full review/revision September 2007 by John G. Gunderson, MD. Content last modified September 2007)”

Is there a path from Predator to Holy Man?

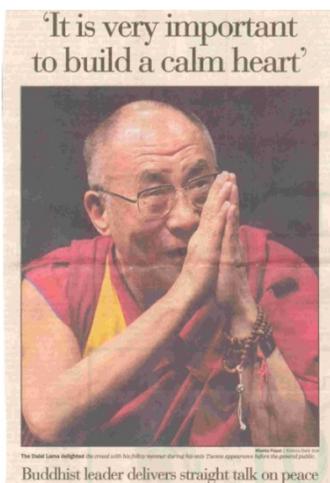
The holy man perceives a pure and sacred reality – the true nature of *All That Is*. Most of us can't realize how different their view of reality is from ours. They know that all beings who do not perceive pure reality are deluded by obscurations to their true self. So for the holy man, they see that all of us suffer because of our deluded view. For them, All Beings suffering from delusion are in the same predicament.

All of us who are not yet enlightened, manifest distorted ways of thinking that developed from our life circumstances that enabled us to cope with stress. These self-protective views are based on our own experiences and each of our decisions about people and reality differs. Some of us who had healthy relationships and environments see one world and those who developed personality disorders saw a different world. Most do not realize how differently those with personality disorders perceive reality than others. The predator sees a dangerous world which makes being a predator mandatory for survival. For all of us, our behaviors and choices are based on the view of our self and the world that we see.

For the psychiatric diagnostician, there are those who are so deluded in their view of reality that psychotherapeutic intervention is needed to heal them. Those who are diagnosed as a personality disorder all have a rigid inner system of defense because of a very perverse view of reality that obscures a “normal” perception of ordinary reality. The therapist wants to help such diagnosed individuals find a view of reality and a way of thinking about self and others that will enable them to function in society. Remember that personality disorders run a continuum from milder impairment to extreme, and the expression of behaviors is different in each disorder. When one is so deranged that their need for violent power and control over others is of such overarching importance in their lives, and they are so distorted in their self/other view, we may diagnose them as sociopathic. They have wounds so great that it is unlikely that they can be healed or trusted to live in society again. I believe that the prisons, schools, and society must take more steps to deal with these predators responsibly, realistically and humanely. It does not mean that one with such a diagnosis should not work towards awakening pure consciousness and that meditation will not benefit them. They can learn to live lives of benefit for others in a controlled environment. But it is actually unlikely that a true sociopath would even have the motivation to practice such teachings or to desire to benefit others for any goal other than manipulation. Their essence is purity but it will take a great deal of practice to lift their obscurations to see anything other than a view reflecting their inner rage.

The Work is the SAME for All of Us

Our meditative goal is to transcend all delusion and to awaken to a transcendent view. The Holy Man sat in meditation to achieve his enlightened state of awareness. When thoughts arose, instead of acting on those thoughts as reality, he rested in equanimity. He rested in stability and clarity until he could experience the true, empty nature of thought and he allowed all thought to fall away. He gained insight into the sacred nature of *All That Is*. As he saw the sacred pure nature of all beings, his heart opened in compassion. He knew truly that all is perfection. Suffering is caused not from without but only from one's own deluded views and our self-created reality. What ever the delusion may be, we must all lift those delusions to see pure reality. A personality disorder diagnosis describes ones' obstacles to perception in the same way that all of us should examine our obstacles as the delusions of our thinking. If we see our self in the Merck Manual descriptions, it might be a helpful way to examine the world we create with our confused thoughts. With meditation and insight, even these severe obscurations can fall away. If you are a bully or a predator, please go to work on yourself because you too can find healing.





*For all of us ---
Remember the bowl of pure water.
Your pure essence is inseparable from and the same as the pure essence of the Holy Man.
We all need to allow the water to settle so that true self is revealed.*



A MEDITATION

Our meditation for this month.

*The stages of sitting meditation that can be applied to many traditions –
find the one tradition that is right for you and meditate.*

- Ego cannot perceive that all is sacred because ego's view is very limited. It is only focused on its perception of self and what is good for self.
- So, first, we must develop the motivation to grow beyond ego. We must find a meditation method that is right for us and allows us to tame our dancing, dashing, jumpy ego-mind.
- Next we must develop stability, balance and equanimity through lots of hours dedicated to sitting meditation.
- Little by little, we will develop the capacity to recognize the empty nature of all that arises. This is the development of insight. In this process of developing insight, our attachment to all that might catch our attention, stir our thoughts, or lure our grasping nature to feed ego-reality's drama of the world is merely observed. All that obscures our pure view begins to become less compelling. When delusion arises, we recognize it as thought or impure perception and allow it to dissolve back into vastness.
- As we gain equanimity and as we are less in the grip of our self-created view of conventional reality, our heart opens naturally with more compassion and love for all beings.
- Eventually, we realize that all that arises is sacred and pure and is of benefit to all beings everywhere. We know that all arisings are true compassionate offerings to benefit beings. Gradually, our view of reality becomes more subtle and sacred and we perceive *All That Is* very differently.
- As our capacity to rest in sacred view grows, we can hold this view as we get up from our meditation cushion. We can learn to live it all ways and all the time in our every day life. We live always in the sacred.

Our MEDITATIVE TASK:

If we are one who has had a beautiful life and many blessings, but we have attachment to ego views that obscure true and sacred reality, we have to lift those delusions to perceive our awakened mind.

If we are one who has had a traumatic life and we developed a view of life, self, and others that is very skewed by feelings that we are hated and we hate others, we have attachments to this ego view that obscures true and sacred reality. We have to lift those delusions to perceive our awakened mind.

The task is the same. We must first find the motivation to take the journey and to sit on that cushion. That may be harder for those with great trauma and greatly distorted views. Or it may just make it all the more compelling for them. An obscuration is *just* an obscuration. We all need to lift them to reveal our true nature.

Start with your commitment to sit in meditation every day to develop stability of mind. Focus on your breath. Just breathe in and breathe out. When you lose awareness of your breath, just notice, and then go back to being mindful of your breath.

That is all you need to do. For a few years. The next step will evolve automatically.

From Your Letters



*Mind cannot see itself-
Subject and object cannot be dual;
Therefore, to see the mind
You must look and probe with the eye of wisdom.*

*When probed and examined analytically
With such analytic investigation
The mind is like the wick of a lamp
Illumined only through its own radiance.*

-Milarepa, "Drinking the Mountain Stream: Songs of Tibet's Beloved Saint"

Bullied teen gets national attention

By Joey Bunch
[The Denver Post](#)



Adrian Ulm, center, rehearses for a performance of "High School Musical" at his school, West Middle School in the Cherry Creek district. (Joey Bunch | The Denver Post)



Adrian's face was bloodied after he was beaten up in November. His collarbone also was broken. (Special to the Post)

Feb 19:

- [Cherry Creek teen may face bully in court](#) - A eighth-grader in the Cherry Creek school district is taking his story of verbal and physical abuse by school bullies national, his father said today. Adrian Ulm endured two years of taunts — mocking his German citizenship, his love of theater and even his father's appearance — before a fight in November left him with a broken collarbone and numerous head injuries.
- ABC's "Good Morning America" has asked to tape Adrian's performance in West Middle School's production of "High School Musical" on Thursday night at the Greenwood Village campus. The morning show's producers also will interview Adrian for a segment, but the date it will air has not yet been set, Heinz Ulm said.
- Bullied, Beaten -- Washington Times newspaper this week as well, he said.
- In addition, Heinz Ulm is starting a nonprofit organization called [Fightbullying.org](#) with \$1,600 in donations that have come in since a Denver Post article on Tuesday. The website will be up this week, Heinz Ulm said.
- Ulm's attacker won't face criminal charges because Adrian voluntarily took part in the November fight, the Ulms were told. But a 2-year-old amendment to Colorado's hate-crime laws could make Adrian's assailant the first youth in Colorado to be sued for punitive damages for a bias-motivated attack because it was based on Adrian's nationality.
- The other 14-year-old repeatedly called Adrian a Nazi because he is German. The bully was expelled and has not applied for reinstatement, according to Cherry Creek Schools.

From anna: Bullies and predators abound. They don't change their behaviors when they are ignored and left untreated. They can often be spotted when they are as young as 6 or 8 years old, and usually are recognized by teen years. Early intervention and treatment are imperative. Before their lives are wasted because their inner distorted view compels them to act on their predatory instincts, and before a toll of victims lies behind them, we must recognize these behaviors early on and treat them! It helps to identify what has so skewed their perception of reality, whether physical or emotional, and to give them a chance to find healing. If they are adults, we must protect ourselves from them at all costs, while remembering that their true nature is purity as well. To respond to and honor their inner Buddha, while setting clear limits on their behavior, (that may mean keeping them incarcerated or closely supervised until they are not a danger to others) gives them a mirror to see and remember who they truly are. It is up to them to then take the next step. Do not make yourself vulnerable to a bully or predator out of "idiot compassion" but practice developing your own inner compassion so that you may enable yourself to see them truly. This gives the predator the greatest healing opportunity they can possibly have. Then it is up to them.

From contact comes feeling. From feeling comes reaction. This is what keeps us in the cycle of birth and death. Our reactions to our feelings are our passport to rebirth. -Ayya Khema, "Being Nobody, Going Nowhere"

From A.T.: Dear Kristopher and **Dharma Friends**, I presume you follow the Vajrayana (Tibetan) tradition of Buddhism – the fast track to enlightenment – and don't mind reading pathfinders from the other two traditions? Myself, I mainly study Theravada and usually read whatever Buddhist literature becomes available to me, paying close attention to what is aligned with the **Dhammapada**. I've studied some Tibetan pathfinders. I find Lama Yeshe's death and rebirth interesting.

Moving on to what you wrote to me in one of the cards (paraphrasing): attachment to nothing (**Dharma Friends**) is part of our journey. The raft simile comes to mind. Once enlightened, even the Dharma is abandoned. All is Maya (illusion) and what is truly worthy of our attention is that which produces no karma. What we take when our body dies. No one told us it would be easy, right? For now, last I heard, **Dharma Friends** breathes. With loving kindness, I share Zen masters advice to us: "If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him." But not until you meet him! Knowing the truth/way, you needn't an instructor, nor books. There is nothing lacking in you and you yourself are no different from the Buddha. When Buddha Gotama became enlightened under the bodhi tree, he exclaimed in amazement, that all beings are inherently enlightened, we just don't know it. Only our own confusion veils our natural wisdom and goodness. Second, in "**The Buddha's Ancient Path**", by Piyadassi Thera, he advises several methods to cope with attachments. I like one in particular (paraphrased): No different than sense-objects perceived by the six senses (mind being the sixth) is attachments dealt with. Taste, touch, smell, seeing, hearing (one or more) combined with mind can create attachments. We will always sense (taste) when we eat, hear hated words (sound), and so on. What we do with the experienced sensation is either karmic energy or not. Equanimity is the solution to not creating karmic energy. For example: call to mind everything is illusion (Maya). A beautiful movie staring at you (Bo Lozoff says), which you are watching from the audience seats, with the knowledge it's make believe; usually works for me. I think I am writing this letter for me too, to maintain equanimity over any possible end to **Dharma Friends**. It just occurred to me, you have been receiving the newsletter for eight years. Surely you know the way. Don't be shy, share when you want. Keep in mind; I'm young in Buddhism, little over four years. Metta to you, Anna and the Compassion Works For All Board. Yours in the Dharma,

Response from Kristopher (who helps with Dharma Friends and answers most of your letters for us): I'm mostly into mindfulness these days although there's no telling what practice I'll show up at down at the Buddhist Center (*in Little Rock*). I know people in all of the practices and feel welcomed at all. I'm leading a Monday night silent meditation practice at this time, and due to my work schedule and having no transportation, hardly ever get to any other practices. Last week was an exception and I was able to attend a Wednesday night Vajrayana – Sakya - Tibetan practice and a Thursday night Rinzaï Zen practice. Like most of you all, I read anything Buddhist that I could get my hands on while I was doing my time. I especially liked Thich Nhat Hanh's books, but the ones that proved to be most valuable to me were the ones that blended Buddhism with the 12-steps. "**Cool Water**", by William Alexander, was the first one that I was able to get my hands on and the one that really got me interested in Buddhism. "**The Zen of Recovery**", by Mel Ash, was also a great book for me. Ayya Khema's books were very helpful as well. Since I've been out, Anna's books ("**Dharma Friends**" and "**Just As the Breeze Blows Through Moonlight**") and Geri Larkin's books have helped me a lot.

Yes, the first copy of **Dharma Friends** that I received was in January of '99, and so I've been part of the Sangha for about nine years. Even with all of those books that I read in prison, and the daily practice that I developed, it didn't make the transition from prison to the free-world easy. The things that helped me the most were the relationships that I developed with the people at the Buddhist Center. The 12-step community and the relationships developed there were important too, but didn't seem to develop as quickly as the ones at the Center. But ya know what? A whole lot of those folks at the Center are in recovery in one form or another too. I wouldn't go as far as to say that one is more important than the other, but for me, it's very important that I have both.

It was important for me to become involved with **Dharma Friends** when I finally got settled as it gave me a way to help you guys even though my life on parole was taxing, to say the least. The Sangha helped me feel like I wasn't alone the 2 ½ years I was behind the walls and it continued helping me once I was out. The least I could do was volunteer my services to keep it going and take some of the pressure off of Anna as, by that time, it had grown bigger than she could handle by herself. Now it's so big that we have to use a mailing service and I spend about 15 hours a week working, either writing to you all, transcribing letters, packaging books, making copies, researching and downloading per your requests, and various other things for Anna. I'm very happy to be able to still be a part of this Sangha. Be abundantly blessed,

Faith is the basis of the path, the mother of virtue; it nourishes all roots of goodness. -Wu-chien

Subscription information: I have gladly been offering this newsletter free of charge to those in prisons. I am so happy to have a vehicle for those who have little dharma support to feel united with others who identify with their life situation. It is truly important to remember that we are all mirrors of each other. We are all one with each other. And we can recognize that samsara is suffering for us all whether behind the bars of a prison or behind the bars of our own ego structure. For anyone who is not in prison and who would like to subscribe to **Dharma Friends**, here is what to do. The fee is \$30 for one year. Mail a check or money order made out to **Compassion Works for All**: and send to **Compassion Works for All, Dharma Friends subscriptions, PO Box 7708, Little Rock, AR. 72217-7708**. This amount covers the subscription for you and a partial subscription for a prisoner. I also want to acknowledge the enormous generosity of many of those in prisons who have sent stamps and letters of support and appreciation. Far more important than anything material are the letters and notes that say that you are benefiting from being part of this sangha of **Dharma Friends**. I think that many feel less alone on their journey because we are connected beyond all time and space to each other. **Also: We are encouraging those who are not in prison and who have the ability to receive their issues by Email to let us know.** Of course, we can send these issues for no printing and no mailing costs, while generating more interest and support in the newsletter. Most of you in prison cannot do this, of course, but if you are a chaplain reading this who has email and can print copies off for your library, that would be helpful. Or – if you have family or friends who might like to receive **Dharma Friends** as well, they can send a

donation of \$30 or more to us and receive **Dharma Friends** by email plus get a tax deduction receipt because we are not mailing a paper newsletter. It is important for us to keep those in prisons connected to society, and most especially to their families and friends. We greatly value the opportunity to bring a loving community of support to those who are connected to people in prison as they are often made to feel uncomfortable by society. If those you love receive **Dharma Friends** too, think of the common growth that you would share and the bond that could develop. So, you might suggest **Dharma Friends** as something your friends and family might like to donate to and receive via email.

And a bonus comes with the email subscriptions – extra pages!! These pages will focus on issues and problems that those in the ‘free world’ might be more likely to experience, and we will explore life in ways that also draws from the connection to our ***Dharma Friends*** community.

Know that we are continuing non-stop efforts to secure funding so that we can all benefit from the loving and supportive ***Dharma Friends*** community you have all created. Thank you for all that you give to all of us.

PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOUR ADDRESS CHANGES.

SOME NEW OPTIONS: I shared in past issues of **Dharma Friends** that we are trying to be mindful of \$\$\$ in order to keep publishing our newsletter, as we scramble to get additional funding.

Here are some ways that you can help us.

- Keep us apprised of your address changes. Most of you have been very good at this and we hardly have any returned issues.
- If you are receiving **Dharma Friends** but do not read it or know someone else who does not read their issues, either donate them to your library, or write and tell us to take you off the **Dharma Friends** list. Now, some have written and said that others need them more than they do so take their name off. Don't be too generous!! **WE WANT YOU TO KEEP GETTING DHARMA FRIENDS IF IT IS HELPFUL TO YOU!**
- If you have family or friends, tell them that you receive support from **Dharma Friends** and we would be very grateful for any donations that they might make. I know that most of you have very little money but we are enormously appreciative when some of you have made donations as well, and for the stamps many of you have sent.
- If you know of anyone who funds philanthropic programs that are rehabilitative or supportive of those in prisons, send a copy of **Dharma Friends** to them and ask if they would consider reading a funding proposal from us. If so, connect us to them!

Fulfillment of desire is an illusion; desire leads to more desire, not satisfaction. -Kathleen McDonald, "How to Meditate"

Compassion Works for All/ Dharma Friends

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The creatures that inhabit this earth--be they human beings or animals--are here to contribute, each in its own particular way, to the beauty and prosperity of the world. -His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Dharma Friends

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Additional Pages for EMAIL VERSION of *Dharma Friends*

Considering the harm others do to you
As created by your former deeds, do not anger.
Act such that further suffering will not be created
And your own faults will disappear.

-Nagarjuna, "Precious Garland"

Do not cause harm.



Following this principle purifies and brings healing to all of our personality obscurations, disorders and ego obstacles better than any other. Why? Because it allows us to examine our belief systems in self, our motivations, and all we *think* about our world.

To hold the motivation to Not Cause Harm means to first recognize the experience and the pain of another. A study of children who were already bullies in elementary school indicated that they did not have the capacity to ‘role take’ or to imagine how it was to be that other person they were hurting. Some people never gain that insight to see and feel as another might. To take that all important step into the shoes of another makes a transcendent and psychological leap to perceive a bigger reality than just that of our own ego’s view.

Most of our words and actions arise as habit in self-protective response to environmental events with the motivation that ego will get what it wants and will be protected from what it doesn’t want. For most, it is not a habit to think: What does this other person want? What does this other person feel? It is a big step for many to add that one extra consideration in the processing of their experience. When we do that one small thing, our own attachments to self are loosened a tiny bit. We can no longer be comfortable with quite so much self-serving anger, greed, need, or self-righteous justification. The boundaries between self and others are softened and we might even give up something we want in order to give the other what they need. Another good exercise in non-attachment.

This all comes into the category of “*What We Learned in Kindergarten*” but --- it sure doesn’t mean that most of us got very good at it.

We have all heard the analogy of ego view being like a flashlight beam illuminating the dark night. In the pitch black, we can only see what is lit by our one little flashlight’s capacity. It barely lets us know a small slice of reality let alone, the big picture. Some folks have a little pen light beam and some might have a search light, but it still is not the entirety of *All That IS*.

Our light is what it is given our learned capacity to illuminate reality. It is good to ponder:

- Do we keep our view small out of fear?
- Did we only learn a limited view?
- Did trauma dictate where we would shine our light and what we would ignore?

No wonder we feel on shaky ground!

**How do we expand our ego view?
Practice kindness and do no harm.**

**Our growth comes from allowing ourselves to know the world
through the light of others as well as our own.**

Through these practices of compassion, we learn to join together with others. In our analogy, we then all shine our lights on our one path. To be able to step into the self-view and world-view of others, to step into their shoes, allows us to expand our own view. When we can open our heart and imagine what it is to be another, we grow.

Let us expand our analogy to that of compassionately joining a whole group of folks with pen lights. We are certainly better off than trying to find the way alone. We still lack the big picture but we have a fuller experience and a bigger view.

Those who join a group that all have big lanterns may even have the illusion that they know pretty much all the surrounding territory --- but there is still much to be revealed.

We must keep practicing compassionate kindness until we make the
transcendent leap to knowing *All That Is*.

Here is an image for that leap: *The SUN comes up*. Awakened mind is all revealing.

"All concepts setting boundaries to what we term the self are arbitrary. In the systems view, we consist of and are sustained by interweaving currents of matter, energy, and information that flow through us interconnecting us with our environment and other beings. Yet, we are accustomed to identifying ourselves only with that small arc of the flow-through that is lit, like the narrow beam of a flashlight, by our individual subjective awareness. But we don't *have* to so limit our self-perceptions... It is as plausible to align our identity with the larger pattern, interexistent with all beings, as to break off one segment of the process and build our borders there."

-- Joanna Macy



DHARMA FRIENDS – PLEASE HELP ME TO FIND MY WAY! :

A Question: What are ways to deal with anger at ourselves when we make stupid decisions and do stupid things? It is easier to deal with my anger towards others than my self.

A few thoughts from anna –

Hmm. Interesting. Not that you, dear questioner, are a personality disorder, but let's start by relating your question back to our *Dhammapada* discussion this month. Here is that old pop-psychology adage taught to psychotherapists to differentiate between someone who is depressive vs. someone who is narcissistic. The depressive takes all the consequences on themselves and the narcissist blithely allows others to experience them. As we said in our commentary, even though we may not fall into the more severe categorization of a personality disorder, we all have personality *traits* that result from our early life decisions about our self, others, and the view of the world that we learned. These manifest in the habitual reactions we develop to life events.

So, we could list here all the helpful little tricks to more effectively help you to let go of self-judging and anger towards. We could analyze how you lean in the direction of taking on more than your share of responsibility and self-blame when things go awry, rather than find someone else to blame or to carry the anger for you. We could see how your propensity to 'depression' and self-blame might go back to a critical parent in order to gain more understanding of your early dynamics. We could re-frame your world view to see how you are asking for negative events as self-fulfilling prophecy and then give you lots of positive affirmations to say that invite great things to happen instead. We could help you do the psychotherapy of letting go of self-defeating personality traits. All of this has some validity and could possibly be good to do.

But – I also know that you are an excellent spiritual practitioner!! You have great meditative tools that will serve you better on your path at this time in your life than by digging into your psychological bag of tools. Your highest goal is served by cutting to the chase and remembering what you want to remember to do as a meditator ALL WAYS!

When something – ANYTHING AT ALL – POSTIVE OR NEGATIVE – arises to distract you from remembering that all is purity, sacred reality, perfection, and truth, -- your ONLY step is to remember to LET IT GO.

If it is a little tough to let go just by *remembering* – meditate until you can. If it returns, meditate until you let it go again. This may or may not mean to run to your cushion every few minutes. If it is a big deal, do that. Sit on your cushion until you find equanimity and balance. Every time the angry thought arises, let it go and rest in equanimity. For as long as you can.

Off the cushion, maybe as you drive the car or cook the dinner, the angry-self-punishing-wanting-to-beat-your-head-against-the-wall impulse arises and you stop, you notice, you breathe, you say AHHH, and you watch it fall away. If ego reaches out after it to create a big head banging drama, you watch, you say AHHH, you breathe, and you watch it fall away.

This is all you do – but you do it again and again and again **as** your meditation. It will purify the personality habits. It will develop a new habit – letting go - instead of grasping at and reinforcing the old habit.

Remembering to do this practice will strengthen the meditative habit of watching an arising, then watching it dissolve away, as the **most important meditative skill** and your best tool in dealing with every arising that catches ego's attention.

So be glad for the opportunity to notice your grasping anger. It gives you an opportunity to notice letting go and dissolving all that arises back into *All That Is*.

In the beginning mindfulness takes away worries and fears about past and future and keeps us anchored in the present. In the end it points to the right view of the self. -Ayya Khema, "Be an Island"

Report on our Hair on Fire!! Fundraiser held March 9 in Little Rock at Caracalla Spa

"You and I and everything in the universe exist as a part of the endless flow of God's love. Realizing this, we recognize that all creation is bound together by the same benevolence. To harmonize with life is to come into accord with that part of God which flows through all things. To foster and protect all life is both our mission and our prayer. " -- Ueshiba Sensai

"To attain inner peace you must actually give your life, not just your possessions. When you at last give your life - bringing into alignment your beliefs and the way you live then, and only then, can you begin to find inner peace." Peace Pilgrim



Wisdom from the Elder of the Hopi Nation

as we cross the threshold into a cycle of our journey of awakening.

"You have been telling the people that this is the Eleventh Hour.

Now you must go back and tell the people that this is the Hour.

And there are things to be considered:

Where are you living?

What are you doing?

What are your relationships?

Are you in right relation?

Where is your water?

Know your garden.

It is time to speak your Truth.

Create your community.

Be good to each other.

And do not look outside yourself for the leader.

This could be a good time!

There is a river flowing now very fast.

It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid.

They will try to hold on to the shore.

They will feel they are being torn apart, and they will suffer greatly.

Know the river has its destination.

The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water.

See who is in there with you and celebrate.

At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally.

Least of all, ourselves.

For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey comes to a halt. The time of the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves!

Banish the word struggle from your attitude and your vocabulary.

All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we've been waiting for."

--The Elders, Oraibi, Arizona Hopi Nation

So many different sacred traditions with similar messages and exhortations!

Our **Hair on Fire!!! Fundraiser** helped to plant the seeds of this same template in the consciousness of our community. At least, that was our goal.

As you well know, the **Compassion Works for All/Dharma Friends** motto is *No One Abandoned; No One Forgotten; No One Discarded*. We want to help to alleviate the suffering of those who are abandoned in society, and that manifest in life situations of overwhelming adversity and insolvable social issues. We want to reach those forgotten in the criminal justice system and other institutions that render people invisible and forgettable – out of sight out of mind. And we want it to be clear that as ordinary human beings, we certainly do not believe that any person has the clarity and divine wisdom to determine matters of life and death for any living creatures.

As we advertised for this event, I loved seeing our posters all around town reminding everyone that the suffering of all beings is so great that we must reach out to help them as though **our hair is on fire**. And we all know that that this includes all beings everywhere, not just some that are more deserving of help than others. Everyone that attended the event is living and opening to just such lives of service and compassion. I know most of them and there was not a more wonderful place in town to be on Sunday afternoon. Upstairs, we had food, music, tables of offerings, and beautiful people. Downstairs, there was a room full of healing practitioners and representatives of many different advocacy and service groups that all-together composed our ONE COMMUNITY GREAT HALL OF OFFERINGS. This was a great chance for people to network with each other, but at the same time and in a more subtle, energetic way, we were building a net in which to hold all suffering beings. We wanted to put out the message that no one is alone in their suffering. And just as each individual offered their own unique services and gifts, each is a knot in the net that holds us all. We all are those who suffer and we all are those who help suffering beings as we are compelled to benefit others each in our own way. To tie all those knots together, as we did at **Hair on Fire Fundraiser**, provides the integrity to the one net so that there are no great black holes for beings to fall through.

We had about 200+ people come through the doors to party with us. All that came made offerings - either the \$5 admission fee or generous donations, and by each person's presence. Together, we were all making a statement that **No One is to be Abandoned, No One is to be Forgotten, and No One is to be Discarded.**

Ecumenical Buddhist Society volunteers together with our **Compassion Works for All** folks, worked long and hard hours preparing for the event, arranging for food, setting up, keeping things running, and cleaning up afterwards. (We had only one fatality – a Caracalla Spa table disappeared! How can a 6' table just walk away! Does anyone know where it went??)

Here are some heartfelt thank you's for the incredible efforts and generous donations from –
Ella Carol Hunt who so generously allowed us to use her space at **Caracalla Spa!**

Scott McGehee's **Boulevard Bread Company** who donated all the food and wine!

Brent Peterson and Capi Peck's TRIO's Restaurant donated Cookies!

Roberto Ramirez, Monte Montague, and Ron Jones of the fabulous band **RockUsaurus** along with Kathy Downs and Jim Westbrook of North Arkansas' **Jazzper** provided hours and hours of music!

Jim Rule was our auctioneer and coaxed generous donations from his happy and appreciative audience! He also helped with set up and take down and by giving support to a somewhat exhausted organizer that he lives with.

Jade Pfeifer made us a beautiful banner for our One Community Room that shared our mission – Helping All Beings As Though Our Hair IS On Fire!!

Charlotte Besche, president of Ecumenical Buddhist Society and all of her EBS board members and volunteers provided a team of so many folks that I never could have imagined we would need – but everyone was working non-stop the entire time!

Compassion Works for All was utilizing everyone who stepped forward to say they wanted to help – and most especially our stalwart board members, Sandy Pope, Kelly Quinn, and Robynn Zinser.

Again, we could not have done it without each and every person. Here are some special thank you's to all of you:

Kristopher Davis for setting up the One Community Room, making the food and auction tables beautiful with flowers, and helping in every way; Charlotte Besche for the fun door prizes and all around help in every way; Karen Wisdom for help with food, ticket-taking, name tags, and all around help in every way; Manal Ivey for arranging for food donations, organizing the food, delivering food and keeping up with the tables; Cara Smith, Wei Wang, Minghua Wang, and Sophie, for tireless efforts of feeding people and the many ways that they helped with the Saturday night and Sunday set up and the take down of the hall; Rich Wiebe who was tethered to the wine table throughout the afternoon and also helped with food, set up and take down; Steve Evans, wife Valerie and son, Wyn, for all their help with set up, stringing lights, and all around everything; Debby Coates and Renie Rule saved me during the move in of all the exhibitors by helping to get people to their right spots with their signs and table covers; Ellis Widner with help from Phil Pruitt who ran our EBS Bookstore and minded the little Prison Art table for me while I ran around; Allison Elwood helped us take things down; Jim Edmunds for helping with set up, Linda Bessette – as she always has in every way- is doing all the number crunching and bank deposits to keep us fiscally responsible; Sandy Pope, Kelly Quinn, and Robynn Zinser – the **Compassion Works for All** board members- were the visionaries, planners, and implementers – plus my proof readers and advertising specialists that made everything happen; that same CWFA gang along with Lucy Sauer, Marita Pilcher and Theresa Willems took over all that was needed to run the ever-growing and most successful live and silent auctions; Robynn also helped with food and set up and dismantling while her husband Jim Pfeifer helped with food, set up and clean up; Dan Donahue was another set up and clean up volunteer along with all-around worker; George Crook did tireless front door duty greeting all those who came while taking their money and somehow also helping with set up, food, and clean up; **Caracalla**'s staff, especially Meredith, helped us have a beautiful and functional space, and helped us to move in, move out, and pick up lost pieces! Thank you all!

Plus – I want to express appreciations for all the donations made for our auction items and all the folks who came to participate in or One Community Great Hall of Offerings!

AUCTION DONATIOS:

TRIO's Restaurant donated 2 \$50 dinner certificates; Ellis Widner donated a beautiful Thai Buddha statue; The Weekend Theater donated 2 tickets to any production; Sandy Pope donated a Tibetan Buddhist *Lion Faced Dakini* thangka painted by Kumar Lama; Robynn Zinser donated a \$100 gift basket from Dianne's; Charlotte Besche donated a Funky Furry Table Lamp, Face and Body Crèmes, and assorted candles; Steve Evans donated his photography – a framed 8x10" photo of NYC/Central Park Strawberry Fields "Imagine" Peace Sign; Valerie Evans donated her photo of the hands of a Buddha Statue Holding a Flower; Tom Neale, landscape designer for River Valley Horticultural Products, donated his services for a consultation and a color design-to-scale for the client - a \$500 value; Rick Rojem of Oklahoma Death Row donated a handmade afghan throw; Kathy Downs donated two beautiful large photos and many note cards made from her beautiful photography; Frances Flower Shop donated a fabulous large, dried flower and silk arrangement and 2 live flower arrangements; Jim Rule of Rule's Antiques and Fine Books donated an antique leather and brass saddle strap from Tibet; Robynn Zinser also put together and donated a gift basket of blessed chocolates from Deer Park Buddhist Center, Madison, Wisconsin; her daughter, Jade Pfeifer, promised a buyer a lemon pound cake or bag of cookies baked by her; a Georgia O'Keefe print found its way into the mix; 3 fabulous coffee table books, two Buddha statues and some art work were donated by the EBS bookstore; a handmade bamboo lamp made by Ruth Weinstein was donated by her; Caran Curry donated 4 individual yoga classes; Rebecca Kilmer offered a certificate for a massage therapy session; Robynn Zinser offered a massage session with Rose Alisandre; Suzanne Day offered a Shamanic Healing Session with her; Wanda Vorsas gave a Reflexology Session with her; Jim Rule – donated a Hellerwork body therapy treatment; Trisha Goodson of Angel Hands Therapy gave a one hour massage therapy session; River Valley Horticultural Products donated a \$25 gift certificate; and I threw in a subtle energy MO (Tibetan divination system) reading and a meditation HOUSE BLESSING.

Actually, there was even more but some things were added at the last minute and I think I forgot some of them! **And of course, I thank all the purchasers – some of whom gained great merit from their spouses!**

Here are the EXHIBITORS IN OUR ONE COMMUNITY GREAT HALL OF OFFERINGS

The Ecumenical Buddhist Society Meditation Practice Groups; The Ecumenical Buddhist Society Bookstore; Compassion Works for All; Compassion Works for All PRISON ART; The Mindfulness Center; Healing Farms Awareness Network; The Beacon; Free the West Memphis 3; Arkansas & Eastern Oklahoma Planned Parenthood; MidSouth Substance Abuse Programs; House of Prayer; Rule's Antiques & Fine Books; Jim Rule – Hellerwork Body therapy; Jim Westbrook-sculpture; The Sacred Antiquities Bazaar; Frances Flowers; Rose Alisandre-Restoration Therapeutics; Suzanne Day- Shamanic Healing; WAND- Women's Action for New Directions; Wanda Vorsas- Reflexology; Natural Awakenings Magazine; Arkansas C.U.R.E.; Arkansas Campaign for a Moratorium on the Death Penalty; Marie Dunkel – Rolfing; Qiao Li Lei – Shie Ji Chinese Herbs & Acupuncture; Barefoot Studios; Ar. Basket-A-Month CSA; the Tucker Maximum Security Unit Chapel Project; the UAMS Psychiatry Research Institute Building Project; Arkansas Earth Institute; and Reverend Sharlette Pumphrey with Integrated Energy Therapy.

WOW! I think we lived this message:

Because we all share this planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. That is not just a dream, but a necessity. We are dependent on each other in so many ways that we can no longer live in isolated communities and ignore what is happening outside those communities.

-His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful, very fun, and very successful event!!



By Ralph Mlaska

And don't forget:

Mindfulness Center retreat at Wattle Hollow with Sandra Pope and Joy Fox: *Mindful Living* - a weekend retreat Friday night, March 28 through Sunday noon, March 30, at Wattle Hollow Retreat Center in Fayetteville AR. Join us to learn and practice relaxation techniques, meditation, and gentle yoga. Lodging and meals included. Sliding scale \$150-200. Register at www.wattlehollow.com

Anam Thupten Rinpoche retreat in Little Rock for EBS
Bodhichitta Retreat in Little Rock on April 19-20th.

The moment we realize who we are, we begin to live a life of joy and freedom. Many of us have been holding onto a mistaken version of ourselves. Once the false self is deconstructed, what emerges from that is our true nature beyond all conditions. The path leading us there is called prajnaparamita, which means transcendent wisdom. This is the heart of Buddha's teaching. Anam Thubten is going to introduce this timeless wisdom in a most direct and experiential manner. He invites everyone to go through a powerful inner transformation during this retreat.

Friday night public talk: **Spiritual discourse by Anam Thubten:** Buddhist teacher, Anam Thubten is going to give heart to heart dialogue, and invite everyone to join in an exploration into the realm of truth which is always there for us. In this meeting, he will challenge every core belief which has chained us to our misery for far too long. Freedom is knocking on our door.

Karen Wisdom is recruiting volunteers to help with the retreat. Your help is so so, appreciated.
Karen is at kmwisdom@ualr.edu

We have **BOOKS FOR SALE:**

Remember – both of anna's books, **Just As the Breeze Blows Through Moonlight**, and **Dharma Friends**, \$15 each, and the **Healthy Living** pamphlet are all on our **Compassion Works for All** web site – www.dharmafriendsprisonoutreachproject.com .

You may forward any of those documents or any past Dharma Friends newsletters, or this newsletter, on to anyone who you believe would benefit from them.

If someone has sent this *Dharma Friends* issue to you as a gift and you would like to join us each month, please email anna@aristotle.net for more information about Compassion Works for All, our *Dharma Friends* newsletter, and our prison outreach program. You may receive *Dharma Friends* by email for a \$30 tax-deductible donation. If you would prefer a hard copy, the subscription fee is also \$30, but unfortunately it is not tax deductible because you receive a paper publication for your donation.

