

DASAPĀRAMITĀ: A BUDDHIST WAY FOR UNIVERSAL COMPASSION AND BENEFIT FOR GLOBAL WELL-BEING

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I. Introduction:

Buddhist teachings offer abundant guidelines for how people should communicate, or what standards and rules should guide people's conduct. Buddhism strongly upholds ethical concepts of tolerance, non-violence, respect for the individual, love of animals and nature, and a belief in the fundamental spiritual equality of all human beings. Among the Buddha's *Dhamma*, *Pāramī* or *Pāramitā* is a specific way of benefitting other beings. It can be seen that *Dasapāramitā* or ten *Pāramī* is the Buddhist way for universal compassion and global well-being.

The meaning of *Pāramī* can be translated as "perfection" or "perfect realization" in general. According to *Dhammapāla*, *Pāramī* are the virtues such as giving, morality, and so on, which are not destroyed by craving, conceit, and wrong views, and are composed by compassion and skillful means.¹

Pāramī also means "crossing over to the other shore" which is the shore of peace,

¹ Toshiichi Endo, *Buddha in Theravāda Buddhism*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 2002, p. 284

² Robert Cesar Childers, *Dictionary of the Pāli Language*, London: Trubner & CO., 57 and 59 Ludgate Hill, 1875, p.p. 334-335.

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non-fear, and liberation. You are on the shore of suffering, anger, and depression, and you want to cross over to the shore of well-being. It also offers valuable advice to improve yourself and reach the harmonic society. The practice of the *Pāramī* can be that of daily life. Moreover, at present times, practicing the *Pāramī* helps us reach the other shore – the shore of freedom, harmony, and good relationships.

II. Contents

1. Definition of "Pāramī" or "Pāramitā"

The term "*Pāramī*" or "*Pāramitā*" means completeness, perfection, highest state. Of these nouns the first is a feminine derivative of "*parama*", and the second is "*pāramī*" + *tā*; they both have the same meaning, but the term "*pāramitā*" is generally used at the end of a compound. Another derivative meaning of *Pāramī* or *Pāramitā* is as follows: "*Pāramī*" – *pāram*, beyond (i.e., *bodhi* or enlightenment) + √i (root), to go. Literally, it means that which enables one to go to the further shore. The *Pāli* term, "*Pāramitā*" is also used in the same sense.²

Different groups of scholars have various opinions of the term derivation. Some scholars such as Monier William³, Har Dayal⁴ and I.B Horner and Ven. H. Shaddhatissa favor the view that it is derived from "*pāram* + *ita*". The others were views

³ *Sanskrit English Dictionary*, (ed.) M. Monier Williams, Oxford, 1899, p. 619.

⁴ Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, London, 1932; Reprint, Motilal Banarsidass, 1978, p. 165

that the term is derived from “*parama*” which means “highest”, “the best”, “perfect”, etc.

Each of these *Pāramīs* is sub-divided into three levels, which are the ordinary level, the medium level, and the highest level. For example, in practicing the first perfection, *dāna*, giving only your external belongings, is a stage of the ordinary level (*dāna-pāramī*). Sacrificing your eyes for a blind person, or your leg for a lame person, this is the medium level of giving (*dāna-upa-pāramitā*). The highest stage of *dāna* is the giving of your life for the benefit of others (*dāna-pāramattha-pāramitā*). Like *dāna*, each of the other nine perfections can be practiced in the same three stages. Therefore, *Pāramī* is enumerated as being thirty instead of ten. To make the point clearer, Childers quoted Rev. Benjamin Clough (Sinhalese Dictionary) that: “*Dāna-pāramitā* expresses the duty in general terms, and signifies acts of charity, or making offerings, without any reference to the nature and value: signifies presenting gifts of an inferior kind, as gold, silver, robes, treasures etc.: expresses religious offerings or gifts of the highest order, as the gift of wife and children, the gift of one’s own body, flesh, bones, blood and sinews, as well as the soul or principle of life, when required.”⁵ And each of the thirty *pāramitās* is exercised by a *Bodhisattva* in the three degrees. Furthermore, the *Theravāda* teaching sums up that all the Buddhas must have fulfilled all thirty

⁵ Robert Cesar Childers, *Dictionary of the Pāli Language*, London: Trubner & CO., 57 and 59 Ludgate Hill, 1875, p.335.

⁶ Stede, William, Thomas William, Rhys Davids, Joseph Estlin Carpenter (eds.) *Sumaṅgala-vilāsīnī*

perfections, without any exceptions, during their *bodhisattva* careers.⁶

2. The historical background of *Pāramī*

The *Theravāda* teachings on *Pāramī* can be found in the later canonical books such as the *Jātaka*, *Apadāna*, *Buddhavaṃsa*, *Cariyāpiṭaka* and in post-canonical commentaries which were written to supplement the *Pāli* canon at a later time. The oldest parts of the canonical *Suttā-piṭaka* do not have any mentions of the *Pāramī* as a category.⁷ Among these texts mentioned above, the earliest reference to the term *Pāramī* in the *Pāli* tradition is in the *Buddhavaṃsa*. It is said that there was an ascetic named Sumedha who was practicing the path to Arahant-ship. He heard that a fully self-awakened one, a Buddha named Dipaṅkara, was teaching in a town nearby. He traveled there and found Dipaṅkara Buddha being venerated in a long procession attended by most of the residents. Sumedha was immediately touched with deep reverence upon seeing the noble-bearing and vast tranquility of the Buddha. He realized that to become an *arahant* would be of great benefit to humankind, but what was immensely greater was the benefit to the world of a Buddha. At that moment, in the presence of Dipaṅkara Buddha, he made a vow to become a Buddha in a future life. This marked his entry into the path of the *bodhisattva*, a being seeks for Buddha-hood.

Then, Sumedha reflected. “How can I make this vast journey?” he wondered “What

Buddhaghosa's commentary on the “Dīgha-nikāya”, London: Pali Text Society, 1971, p. 427

⁷ N.Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India*, Delhi: Motilal Barnasidass, 1978, p. 228.

aspects of mind and heart do I need to develop in order to become a Buddha?" As he reflected, he saw that there were ten wholesome qualities that he would need to bring to strength and maturity. The factors came into his mind one by one – generosity (*dāna*), virtue (*sīla*), renunciation (*nekkhamma*), wisdom (*pañña*), energy (*virīya*), patience (*khanti*), truthfulness (*sacca*), determination (*adiṭṭhana*), loving-kindness (*metta*), equanimity (*upekkha*). He called them the *paramīs*. Then he began the journey of innumerable lifetimes to develop the perfections of heart and mind that finally unfolded in his full enlightenment as Gotama Buddha under the *bodhi* tree in Northern India.⁸

The practice of *Pāramī* is considered a must for all *Bodhisattvas* and it forms almost the essence of the *Bodhisattva* career. This is why the *Pāramīs* are called *Buddhakāraṅga-dhamma* in the *Buddhavaṃsa*.⁹

In *Mahāyāna* texts, *Paramīs* are generally referred to as being six in number as follows: *Dāna*, *Sīla*, *Ksānti*, *Vīrya*, *Dhyāna*, and *Prajñā*. Of these, five are common to both traditions but *dhyāna* does not occur in the *pāli* list of *Pāramīs*. *Nekkhamma*, *sacca*, *adhiṭṭhāna*, *mettā*, and *upekkhā* are not mentioned in the usual enumerations of *Pāramī* found in the *Mahāyāna* texts.

E.J. Thomas explains that the first six in the list are earlier; this, he seems to think, is justified because the list ends with *prajñā-pāramī* which really is the culmination of the liberated process. Har Dayal too agrees with this view, and, furthermore, he says that the original number of six *Pāramīs* was increased to ten as a consequence of the invention of the decimal system of computation, when the development in the science of arithmetic took place; according to him in the 3rd or 4th century A.D.¹⁰ But T. Endo¹¹ does not accept these above connections. According to him, it is seen that *prajñā-pāramī* in the *Pāli* list is enumerated as the fourth and not at the sixth. Therefore, it cannot be considered as the culmination of the liberated process.

Commentator Dhammapāla, the author of the *Cariyāpiṭaka - aṭṭhakathās*, argues the list of six *Pāramīs* what he thinks are fundamental, and considers the others as redundant. This list of six *Pāramīs* which he approves of, is identical to the six *Pāramīs* accepted by the *Mahāyāna*. Explaining the reduction of ten *Pāramīs* into six, he says that *nekkhamma* and *sacca* are constituents of *sīla-pāramī*. Similarly, *mettā* is included in *jhāna-pāramī* and *upekkhā* in both *jhāna* and *pañña-pāramī*. Moreover, he says that *adhiṭṭhāna* is included in all *pāramīs*.¹²

Har Dayal, dealing with this question, says that it is possible that the doctrine of *Pāramī* gradually grew from the three

⁸ *Buddhavaṃsa*, ed. The Ven. Richard Morris, London, 1882.

⁹ *Buddhavaṃsa*, (ed.) N. A. Jayawickrama, London, 1974, p. 116.

¹⁰ Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, op.cit. p. 167

¹¹ T. Endo, *Buddha in Theravada Buddhism*, Dehiwala: Systematic Printers, 1997, p.269.

¹² Bhikkhuni Seonil, *Studies in the Daśabhūmika Sūtra*, <http://lib.unipune.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/1897>.

fundamental trainings *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, and *Paññā*. He additionally says that the increase in number in *Mahāyāna* may be due to the rivalry between *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna*.¹³

It is interesting to note that Vasubandhu in his *Mahāyāna-sutrā-lankāra* commentary explains that the six *Pāramīs* are related to the threefold training (*tri-sīkṣās*), namely, *adhiśīla*, *adhicitta*, and *adhiprajñā*. According to this explanation, the first three *Pāramīs* are connected to *adhiśīla*, the fifth to *adhicitta* and the sixth to *adhiprajñā*. The fourth, namely, *virīya* is considered as being common to all three *sīkṣās*. This should be compared to the categorization of *Pāramī* by the well-known *Pāli* commentator Rev. Dhammapāla, referred to above. According to him, the six basic *Pāramīs* are *dāna*, *sīla*, *khaṇṭi*, *virīya*, *jhāna*, and *paññā*.¹⁴ These are same as the six *Pāramīs* accepted in *Mahāyāna* as being fundamental. As expressed before, he considers that others are redundant as they are already included in the fundamental *Pāramīs*. What is obvious is that Dhammapāla has been quite aware of the *Mahāyāna* concept prevalent at the time.

Whether there is any significance in the order in which the *Pāramīs* are enumerated is another important issue. Though not explicitly stated, late *Pāli* canonical sources like the *Buddhavaṃsa* and *Cariyāpiṭaka* seem to accept that they are enumerated in a hierarchical order. This is especially clear from the *Mahāyāna* tradition too, wherein each *Pāramī* is assigned to a particular “*bhūmi*” and these *bhūmis* are arranged in a gradually-increasing order of

precedence. Perhaps, this *Mahāyāna* belief is at the root of the *Pāli* commentarial tradition which quite explicitly states that the sequence in which the *Pāramīs* are enumerated is indicative of their importance. Thus, Dhammapāla himself commenting on the order says that each perfection is strengthened by the one that follows and thus, *Dāna* supports *Sīla*, and *Sīla* supports *Khaṇṭi*, and so on.¹⁵

The number of *Pāramī* is different in various Buddhist traditions. It has been noted that the number is generally considered to be ten in *Pāli* literature of the *Theravāda* school. But in *Sanskrit* sources of the *Mahāyāna* school, it is fixed at six *pāramīs*. It doesn't matter if *pāramīs* is enumerated in six or ten because the fundamental basis is the same, and six is a summary which helps us to remember easily, and ten leads us to a deeper understanding.

It is no doubt that the *Pāramī* practicing leads to the Buddhahood or the liberation from suffering. The content of *Pāramī* shows that they are mainly related to morals, and some to psychological and intellectual development. Thus, the practices are all very much emphasized in Buddhism in general. Perhaps, in the sense of right here and right now, ten *Pāramīs* guide humans to build a global well-being.

3. Ten *Pāramīs* or Ten Noble Messages for Global Well-being

3.1. *Dāna-pāramī*: (Perfection of Giving)

As most of us know, *Dāna* or generosity or giving, is the first *pāramī* of

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ *Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā (Paramatthadīpanī)*, (ed.) N. A. Jayawickrama, London, 1974, p.278.

Buddha taught as the fundamental basis of happiness and freedom. Nowadays, the craving for power, influence, and wealth are the main causes for the tensions and wars that provide humans with so much suffering. Giving needs to be practiced and developed for universal peace because it cuts through our underlying tendency toward attachment, aversion, and confusion, and develops the free and happy heart. So, one can look for opportunities to give of one's time, energy, resources, love, and service to others. With its cultivation, true generosity, kindness, and joy grow in us, all bringing us closer to freedom. With each act of generosity, one's heart opens more, and as the heart opens, generosity becomes even more spontaneous and immediate. One becomes a natural channel for one's own happiness and for the happiness of all surrounding us. Support in the form of the outbreak of the coronavirus is affecting all countries, and without a rapid and effective global cooperation, the world may not exit this crisis safely at all. In the case of practicing *Dāna-pāramī*, it is the donation of essential medical equipment such as masks and ventilators to countries that lack economic resources and medical infrastructures.

Moreover, it is with the *Dāna-pāramī* that Buddha's teaching of universal harmony is put in practice. Mutual interdependence becomes mutual inter-support. It is a practice that is not only for Buddhists, but all human beings. The earth itself flourishes by what Emerson call the endless circulation of the

divine charity: "the wind sows the seed, the sun evaporates the sea, the wind blows vapor to the field.... the rain feeds the plants, and the plants feeds the animals. The very stars hold themselves on course through a mutual interchange of energy. And the flow of this energy is dependent on every living being."¹⁶ All things support each other. So they are givers and receivers as well. Following the donated and received progress, all living things live in peace and harmony for an endless circular movement.

3.2. *Sīla-pāramī* (Perfection of Morality):

The second *pāramī* is that of precepts or morality (*sīla*). It means to live an ethical life. By applying morality in a daily life, it can help to avoid social evils. Take an investigation of five Buddhist basic precepts. They are: to abstain from taking life, to abstain from taking what is not freely given, to abstain from the misuse of the senses, to abstain from speaking falsely, and to abstain from intoxicants that cloud the mind. The first one is about protecting the lives of human beings, animals, vegetables, and minerals. To protect other beings is to protect oneself. The second is to prevent the exploitation by humans of other living beings and of nature. It is also the practice of generosity. The third is to protect children and adults from sexual abuse, to preserve the happiness of individuals and families. Too many families have been broken by sexual misconduct. When one practices the Third precept, one protects oneself, families, and

¹⁶ Robert Aitken, *The Practice of Perfection: The Pāramitās from a Zen Buddhist Perspectives*. Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1994, p. 5.

society by the way of helping people feel safe. The fourth is to practice deep listening and loving speech. And the fifth is to practice mindful consumption.

According to the most venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, these basic precepts provide mindful trainings which help protect your body, mind, soul, friends, loved ones, and society in general; and when you adhere to this fivefold mindfulness training, you are practicing “deep listening” and “loving speech” which lead you to create a good and happy society.

The practice of the five precepts is a form of love, and a form of giving. It assures the good health and protection of your family and society. *Sīla-pāramī* is a great gift that you can make to society, family, and to those you love. The most precious gift we can offer our society is to practice the five precepts. If we live according to *Sīla-pāramī*, we will offer the precious gift of life.

3.3. *Nekkhamma-pāramī* (Perfection of Renunciation):

The third *Pāramī* is called *Nekkhamma* or renunciation. It implies both renunciation of the worldly life and pleasures by adopting an ascetic life and practicing the cultivation of *Jhāna* by which the temporary inhibitions of the hindrances towards progress is achieved. On the other hand, renunciation can be understood as sacrificing or renouncing your time, money, power, and sensual pleasures for the welfare of the nation in particular and of the world in general. As long as you do not renounce them, you will never minister the service to the nation.

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Sharing something with others rather than hogging it for yourself is a type of renunciation. And delayed gratification is a type of renunciation.

Nekkhamma (renunciation) also means not helplessly following your impulses, but instead understanding the bigger picture. It means being calm and reasonable enough to see that hurting others never ends up feeling good to anyone. Not saying hurtful things when you can just keep quiet is a form of renunciation.

Renunciation is the quality that allows us to step back, reframe the situation, and do what’s best for everyone involved, whether that’s keeping quiet or doing something that’s difficult for one to do. What you are renouncing to is a small and selfish aspect of yourself, to make space for your big-hearted, generous qualities to bloom.

3.4. *Paññā-pāramī* (Perfection of Wisdom):

The fourth *pāramī* is wisdom. It means a correct understanding of the real nature of the world, seeing things as they are in reality. Wisdom is a central concept to the Buddha’s teachings; in many ways it is the key point for all of His guidance. He encouraged His followers to cultivate wisdom through actions and observations in everyday life. For example, by understanding about the danger of the coronavirus that is spreading mainly through person-to-person contact, all people coordinated social distancing, which is absolutely essential to risk mitigation.

In addition, if you practice observing your actions of body, speech, and mind, and look for their effects on yourself and others, over time you can build up a sort of expertise. You will know, without thinking about it, that if you speak harshly to someone, they will react negatively. You will know that if you make a commitment you can't keep, grief will probably come as a result. You will know that if you think of the impact on others before each act and word, you are more likely to discover and choose beneficial actions. You can no longer act for the harm of any being including yourself because you are aware of the consequences of your actions. This awareness is the most powerful tool to establish global well-being.

3.5. *Vīriya-pāramī* (Perfection of Energy):

The fifth *pāramī* is the perfection of diligence, energy, or continuous practice. It does not mean only the physical strength as is ordinarily understood, but mental energy or strength of character, which undoubtedly is far superior to the former and is defined as the relentless effort to service for others both in thought and deed. As you know, during the outbreak of coronavirus the medical doctors have had to work tirelessly to save all the people they can from this dangerous virus. They persist to tackle it together because of the mental energy inside the doctor's heart.

In the depth of humans' consciousness we have all kinds of negative seeds such as anger, delusion, and fear, as well as positive seeds such as understanding, compassion, and forgiveness. You should

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learn to recognize every one of these seeds in yourself in order to practice diligence. If it is a negative seed, the seed of anger, fear, jealousy, or discrimination, you should refrain from allowing it to be watered in your daily life. Every time such a seed is watered, it will manifest in the upper level of your consciousness, and you will suffer and make your loved ones suffer at the same time. The practice is to refrain from watering the negative seeds in yourself.

You also recognize the negative seeds in the people who you love and try your best not to water them. If you do, they will be very unhappy, and you will be unhappy, too. This is the practice of "selective watering." If you want to be happy, avoid watering your own negative seeds and ask others not to water those seeds in you. Also, avoid watering the negative seeds in others. If the positive seeds in you grow stronger day and night, you will be happy and you will make your loved ones happy. Recognize the positive seeds in the person you love, water those seeds, and you will become much happier.

Whenever you have time, please water the seeds that need to be watered. It is a wonderful and very pleasant practice of *Vīriya-pāramī*, and it brings immediate results as happiness, peace and harmony. The seeds of anger, discrimination, despair, jealousy, and craving are all there. You do what you can to prevent them from coming up. You should tell the people you live with that if they truly love you, to not water these seeds in you. It is not good for your health or theirs.

3.6. *Khānti-pāramī* (Perfection of Patience):

Khānti-pāramī means patience, tolerance, forbearance, acceptance, or endurance. When faced with difficulties such as a family member is disabled or becomes mentally ill; a job is lost and you have to move to less desirable housing; someone close to you dies or moves far away; how do you respond? With the practice of *Khānti-pāramī*, you can see that you have not been singled out for punishment; these are normal events in a normal life. The rest of you will have to find inner peace within the maelstrom that is modern life. Take the case of the coronavirus pandemic, with practicing *Khānti-pāramī* you will stay at home and keep social distance to protect yourself and others against Covid-19.

According to Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, *Khānti-pāramī* means inclusiveness. When you practice inclusiveness, you don't have to suffer or forbear, even when you have to embrace suffering and injustice. The other person says or does something that makes you angry. They inflict on you some kind of injustice. But if your heart is large enough, you don't suffer. If your heart is small, someone's unjust word or act will make you suffer. But if your heart is large, if you have understanding and compassion, that word or deed will not have the power to make you suffer. You will be able to receive, embrace, and transform it in an instant. What counts here is your capacity. To transform your suffering, your heart has to be as big as the ocean.

Acceptance is a key feature of *Khānti*. By accepting things as they are and acknowledging that they may be something other than what you would like them to be, you can live more easily in the world. For many of human beings, the most difficult things to accept are behaviors of others that do not conform to how you think they should act, or more particularly, the way they would act. Can you understand and live peaceably with this fact? Be particularly alert to things that are annoying day after day; they represent an opportunity to change the quality of your life. You have to receive pain, embrace it, and transform it. The only way to do this is to make your heart big. You look deeply in order to understand and forgive. Moreover, inclusiveness teaches you to be compassionate, as deep looking leads to understanding, and understanding always leads to love and acceptance.

3.7. *Sacca-pāramī* (Perfection of Truthfulness):

Sacca-pāramī means truthfulness, honesty. A person who is willing to tell a deliberate lie has cut themselves loose from all ethical considerations. There are many specific ways in which people lie to each other, with confused or mixed intentions. They lie to avoid embarrassment, to exaggerate their accomplishments, and to disguise wrongdoings. Many of humans lie to their friends and family members to spare their feelings.

Sacca-pāramī is not about cosmic or absolute truth. It is about human beings telling the truth as they know it rather than

lying. Regarding professional situations, things work out best if their bosses, co-workers, and friends are truthful with them, and if they are willing to hear and consider their thoughts. The Ethical Analyst is convinced that lying, even about the smallest matters, needlessly damages personal relationships and public trust. In the case of a global pandemic, early warnings require governments to tell the world about novel infections as soon as they discover them. Leaders must be honestly inclined to notify the outside world about the Covid-19 outbreak. It helps to minimize the outbreak of coronavirus. So, we can clearly see that saying and hearing the truth, while sometimes uncomfortable, is always the best path. Honesty is a gift you can give to others. It is also a source of power and an engine of simplicity. Knowing that you will attempt to tell the truth, whatever the circumstances, leaves you with little to prepare for. You can simply be yourself. Truthfulness with yourself is a key requirement to being truthful with others.

3.8. *Adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī* (Perfection of Determination):

Adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī literally means determination, resolution, or fixedness of purpose. A person with a wavering mind or who sits on the fence cannot succeed in any undertaking. You must have an iron will, an unshakable determination to overcome any difficulties of hardship in order to achieve success. The person who does not have a determinative mind would easily give up their work before it is successful. Such a

person with a weak and unsteady mind would get disappointed easily and disheartened quickly. Even a word of criticism would be adequate to put an end to all their projects. Take the case of Vietnam during the corona pandemic, a British pilot who worked at Vietnam Airline was critically ill with Covid-19 in Vietnam. The patient had just 10% of his lung capacity left and had been on life support for more than 30 days with no close friends or family members beside him. With determination, Vietnamese doctors saved him from the coronavirus with a strong watchword that there be “not a single recorded death of Covid-19 in Vietnam”. They have focused all available resources and spent more than \$200,000 on saving the patient’s life.

There is a determination you can make about how to handle yourself or to change your point of view when you feel you are headed in the wrong direction. By practicing determination you willpower forces all obstructions out of your path, and it doesn’t matter what may come to you in the form of grief or disaster. You could easily be persuaded to do well, but not so could you be tempted to do anything contrary to your lofty principles. You will be as soft as a flower or as firm as a rock, as the occasion demands.

3.9. *Metta -pāramī* (Perfection of Loving-kindness):

Metta is the term that means loving-kindness, friendliness, goodwill, benevolence, fellowship, amity, concord, inoffensiveness, and non-violence. The *Pāli*

commentators define *metta* as the strong wish for the welfare and happiness of others.¹⁷

Essentially *metta* is an altruistic attitude of love and friendliness as distinguished from mere amiability based on self-interest. Through *metta* we refuse to be offensive and renounce bitterness, resentment, and animosity of every kind, developing instead a mind of friendliness, accommodativeness, and benevolence which seeks the well-being and happiness of others. True *metta* is devoid of self-interest. It evokes within a warm-hearted feeling of fellowship, sympathy, and love, which grows boundless with practice and overcomes all social, religious, racial, political, and economic barriers. *Metta* is indeed a universal, unselfish, and all-embracing love.

Since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, we can see a lot of actions which were led by *metta*. Take the case of Vietnam, thousands of Vietnamese citizens have been brought back home because the country organized the flights. People share food, daily necessities with the poor, and help each other in quarantine. Many rice ATMs – automatic machines which give rice to poor and homeless people for free, were created in some big cities such as Ho Chi Minh and Ha Noi. A Zero đồng supermarket was also established for the same goal.

One way to start practicing *metta* is to think of someone towards whom you feel a very easy form of goodwill; a respected teacher, a parent or other relative, even a pet.

¹⁷ Acharya Buddhakkhita, *Metta -The Philosophy and Practice of Universal Love*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995, p. 1.

3.10. *Upekkhā-pāramī* (Perfection of Equanimity):

The last of the ten perfections is *upekkhā*, usually translated as equanimity or evenness of mind, indicating a heart or mind that is not unsettled by worldly conditions. *Upekkhā* describes both a formal state of concentration and an underlying acceptance of whatever comes, based on understanding. The real meaning of this word is equanimity, not indifference in the sense of unconcern for others. As a spiritual virtue, *upekkhā* means equanimity in the face of the fluctuations of worldly fortune. It is evenness of mind, unshakeable freedom of mind, a state of inner equipoise that cannot be upset by gain and loss, honor and dishonor, praise and blame, pleasure and pain. One should not be disturbed by prosperity and adversity, gain and loss, honor and censure. One must have the quality of stability of mind. One should go to middle way by being always evenly balanced in both favor and fear without attachment.

Equanimity develops a perfect mental equilibrium. Currently, no medication is recommended to treat Covid-19, and no vaccine is available. So now there is only one option for the global coronavirus strategy, and that is the humans' reaction. Because of mental equilibrium, people can keep their mind in calm in front of good or bad conditions. It leads to the peace and harmony for the people who live around them.

Upekkhā also can be understood in the sense of being easy to forgive the mistakes of others.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, ten *pāramīs* are called ten Buddhist noble messages which were taught by the Gautam Buddha in the 6th century B.C but they can apply for modern times as a way to lead the global well-being. *Pāramīs* are not fixed rules, but inspirations. One honors them with one's actions, speech, and mind. The practice of ten *pāramīs* can be explained briefly as generosity is giving help and benefit to other living beings; morality is that one lives an ethical life; renunciation means renouncing worldly pleasures for the benefit of others; wisdom is achieving a right understanding of life and the world; energy is persistent effort and not being discouraged by failures; patience is patiently accepting life's ups and downs; truthfulness is honesty and truthfulness in all things; determination is unwavering determination to progress on the path; loving-kindness shows benevolence and compassion to all things; equanimity develops a perfect mental equilibrium.

In fact, ten *pāramīs* are the Buddhist teachings that are probably the most useful for bringing the path of awakening into everyday life. They are a list of qualities that you can develop in any situation – as you're working with your family at home, at the office, as you're driving, as you're meditating. As a religious leader or politician, when you fulfill these ten qualities, you can become a perfect leader. The Buddha preached a common ground on

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how to live together peacefully and harmoniously for all nations, which can further lead to the global well-being. And this is the Buddhist message “Speak for peace, seek after harmony, fill up your heart with ten perfections and act for global well-being”.

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