

## (Piya) Mitta Sutta 2

Dutiya (Piya) Mitta Sutta The Discourse on a (Loving) Friend 2 | A 7.36/4:32

Theme: Qualities of a true friend (a monastic)

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### Introduction

1.1 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT. There are two discourses of the same name—the (Piya) Mitta Sutta 1 and the (Piya) Sutta 2—that deal with the qualities of a “true-hearted friend” or “a friend with a good heart” (*suhadā mitta*). While the first discourse deals with a laymen friend, the second deals with a monastic friend. This sutta probably reflects a situation when the monastics were settled in large urban or suburban monasteries, and frequented by lay people, so that there were close bonds between the monastics and the laity (such as what we often see in the monasteries of south and south-east Asia).

What is prominently absent, or not explicitly mentioned, is the role of the spiritual friend as a meditation teacher. It is possible that this role is not highlighted because the (Piya) Mitta Sutta 2 reflects a time when there was less emphasis of meditation. When monastics did not give priority to meditation, it is unlikely that it would be popular with the laity (unless the latter are very familiar with the early teachings).

1.2 THE RENUNCIANT FRIEND. It is interesting that the **Cūḷa Niddesa**’s commentary on the first two lines of the Khagga,visāṇa Sutta (Sn 37ab), speaks of two kinds of friends, that is, the householder or layman friend (*agārika mitta*) and the renunciant friend (*anāgārika mitta* or *pabbajita mitta*).<sup>1</sup> The qualities of the renunciant friend as listed there are very close to those listed here in the (Piya) Mitta Sutta 2:

What is a renunciant friend? Here, a monk is

- (1) pleasant [loving];
- (2) agreeable;
- (3) respectful;
- (4) worthy of respect;
- (5) patient when admonished;
- (6) profound in conversation;
- (7) one who does not engage us in the impossible;<sup>2</sup>
- (8) one who urges us on to higher moral virtue;
- (9) one who inspires us to devote ourselves to cultivating<sup>3</sup>
  - the four focusses of mindfulness,
  - the four right strivings,
  - the four paths of spiritual accomplishments,
  - the five spiritual faculties,
  - the five spiritual powers,
  - the seven awakening-factors, and
  - the noble eightfold path.

*piyo ca hoti*  
*manāpo ca hoti*  
*garu ca*  
*bhāvanīyo ca*  
*vacana-k,khamo ca*  
*gambhīraṇ ca katham kattā*  
*aṭṭhāne ca na niyojēti*  
*adhisīle samādapēti*  
*(bhāvanā ’nuyoge samādapēti)*  
*catu satipaṭṭhāna*  
*catu samma-p, padhāna*  
*catu iddhi, pāda*  
*pañc ’indriya*  
*pañca bala*  
*satta bojjhaṅga*  
*aṭṭh ’aṅgika ariya, magga*  
 (Nc 2:227 f)<sup>4</sup>

Here again, in the Cūḷa Niddesa (an early commentarial work), there is no direct mention. Instead we have an indirect statement that the renunciant friend inspires his lay friends to practice the teachings of the “seven sets” listed above. Such a list suggests that they were studied as texts rather than practiced as meditation methods.

<sup>1</sup> On the two kinds of friends, see **Upaḍḍha S** (S 45.2/5:2 f) = SD 34.9 (2.1.2).

<sup>2</sup> These 7 qualities are listed in **Piya Mitta S 2** (A 36/4:32) = SD 64.4. See below.

<sup>3</sup> The following form the “7 sets” of teachings constituting the 37 limbs of awakening (*bodhi, pakkhiyā dhammā*): see **Bodhi, pakkhiyā Dhammā** = SD 10.1.

<sup>4</sup> See **Upaḍḍha S** (S 3.18) @ SD 34.9 Intro (2.1.2) (“Two levels of friendship”) & Spiritual friendship = SD 34.1(2.3.3).

1.3 RECIPROCAL DUTIES OF TEACHER AND PUPIL. **The Sigāl'ovāda Sutta** (D 16), in its section on the six directions, dealing with teachers and their pupils,<sup>5</sup> details what is briefly listed in the (Piya) Mitta Sutta 2, thus:

33 (6) In five ways, young householder, recluses and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners] as *the direction above* [zenith],<sup>6</sup> should be ministered to by the son of family, thus:

- (a) By physical acts of lovingkindness.
- (b) By words of lovingkindness.
- (c) By thoughts of lovingkindness.
- (d) By keeping the house open to them.
- (e) By providing them with material needs.

The recluses and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners], young householder, as the direction above, having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion in these six ways:<sup>7</sup>

- (f) They restrain him from evil.
- (g) They exhort him to do good.
- (h) They, with a good mind, show him compassion.
- (i) They let him hear what he has not heard before.
- (j) They clarify what he has heard.
- (k) They show him the way to heaven.

In these six ways, young householder, the recluses and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners], as the direction above, having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion.

Thus the direction above is covered by him and made safe and secure.

(D 31.33/3:191) = SD 4.1

Meditation may not be highlighted here, but it still a mentor-mentee teaching-learning kind of friendship. This situation surely reflects a time when the monastics were more settled in large communities in an urban or suburban residences, frequented by the laity. In fact, this is the kinds of Buddhist situation that is quite common today.

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<sup>5</sup> See D 31.15-26/3:185-188 & 31.31/3:190 = SD 4.1.

<sup>6</sup> "Zenith," ie the sky above, representing the potential for personal and spiritual development and liberation.

<sup>7</sup> Significantly, while all the other "directional" duties come in sets of 5 (*pañcahi*), the spiritual teacher's duties are 6 (*chahi*) in number. The spiritual teacher's duties are similar to those of the true-hearted friend "who gives good counsel" [S24] and the first two duties here are those of the parents to their child [S28fg]. In other words, the spiritual teacher is also wise parent and loving friend all rolled into one.

## The Discourse on a (Loving) Friend 2

A 7.36/4:32

1 Bhikshus, a monk who is accomplished in these seven qualities should be associated with, consorted with, venerate [respect], even if he were driven away.<sup>8</sup>

What are the seven?<sup>9</sup>

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|---|--|
| 2 (1) He is pleasant [loving].                            | <i>piyo ca hoti</i>                    |
| (2) He is agreeable.                                      | <i>manāpo ca</i>                       |
| (3) He is respectful.                                     | <i>garu ca</i>                         |
| (4) He is worthy of respect.                              | <i>bhāvanīyo ca</i>                    |
| (5) He admonishes, patient when admonished. <sup>10</sup> | <i>vattā ca vacana-k,khamo ca</i>      |
| (6) He is profound in conversation.                       | <i>gambhīrañ ca katham kattā hoti,</i> |
| (7) He does not engage us in the impossible.              | <i>no ca aṭṭhāne niyojēti.</i>         |

Bhikshus, a monk who is accomplished in these seven qualities should be associated with, consorted with, venerate [respect], even if he were driven away.

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|---|--|
| 3 <i>Piyo garu bhāvanīyo<br/>vattā ca vacana-k,khamo<br/>gambhīrañ ca katham kattā<br/>no c'aṭṭhāne niyojako.</i>   | Pleasant, respectful, worthy of respect,<br>an admonisher, patient when admonished,<br>profound in conversation, and<br>engages us not in the impossible.  |
| 4 <i>Yam hi etāni ṭhānāni<br/>saṁvijjantīdha puggale<br/>so mitto mitta,kāmena<br/>attha,kāmānukampato<br/>api nāsiyamānena<br/>bhajitabbo tathā,vidhōti.</i> | Whichever of these qualities<br>are found here in a person,<br>he is a friend out of love for a friend,<br>ever moved by the desire for good—<br>even if driven away,<br>one should associate with such a one. |

— evaṁ —

100919; 100920; 101104; 110417

<sup>8</sup> *Sattahi, bhikkhave, dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu mitto sevītabbo bhajitabbo payirupāsītabbo api panujjamānena'pi*: this phrase found only here. On *api panujjamānena*, see Vana, pattha S (M 17.26/1:108). On *payirupāsītabba* (opt of *payirupasati*), see Caṅki S (M 95.15+20/2:171+173). The stock, *sevītabbo bhajitabbo payirupāsītabbo*, usu prefaced with *puggalo*, however, is common: Sevītabba S (A 3.26/1:125 ×11), Jigucchitabba S (A 3.27-1:126 f, ×12), (Piya) Mitta S 2 (A 7.36/4:32, ×2); Pm 1:140; Pug 5 (×6), 35-37 (×17).

<sup>9</sup> This whole para qu at UA 222.

<sup>10</sup> Cf “one who admonishes, but is not patient when admonished” (*vattā no ca vacana-k,khammo*) (Assu) Tissa S (S 21.9/2:282) = SD 82.3.