

7

Dūta Sutta

The Discourse on the Messenger | **A 8.16** = Cv 7.4.6 @ V 2:201 f
 Also called **Dūteyya Sutta 2**¹ = The Discourse on One Who Would be a Messenger
 Theme: The qualities of a good messenger or counsellor
 Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2014

Dedicated to Jayson Goh & the Buddhist Fellowship Youths

1 Introduction

1.1 The Dūta Sutta (A 8.16) is also found in the Culla,vagga of **the Vinaya**,² where we are given its context. This is the Seventh Chapter (*satta,khandhaka*) (on schism, *saṅgha,bheda*), which records Devadatta's attempts to take over the Sangha and his eventual tragic death. The beginning sections of the Culla,-vagga (Cv 7.2-4) record how Devadatta, having successfully created a schism in the order and taking along with him some 500 monks with wrong views, retires to Gayā,sīsā.³

1.2 Sāriputta and Moggallāna express their concern over the schism, and the Buddha instructs them to win back the misguided monks. Seeing the two chief disciples of the Buddha approaching, many, including the jubilant Devadatta, think that the duo are defecting to join the schismatics, too. Devadatta is delighted and invites them to teach Dharma to his monks, while he himself, complaining of a backache, decides to stretch his back, but falls asleep "tired, forgetful and inattentive."

Sāriputta exhorts the monks with the wonders of his thought-reading and Moggallāna instructs using the wonders of his psychic powers. Following their teachings, all the 500 schismatic monks realize the Dharma-eye that "whatever is of the nature to arise, all that is of the nature to cease." By the time Kokālika realizes what has happened, and wakens Devadatta up by kicking him on the chest, the monks are well back in the Bamboo Grove with the Buddha. It is said that Devadatta, in his rage, throws up hot blood and, for nine months, lies grievously ill.⁴

2 Sutta significance

2.0 THE QUALITIES OF A MESSENGER. Culla,vagga 7.4.6 presents the teachings of **the Dūta Sutta** (A 8.16). After listing the 8 qualities of the messenger, the Buddha declares that Sāriputta (and implicitly Moggallāna, too) have these 8 qualities, since they have been able to rehabilitate the misguided schismatic monks. Let us briefly examine each of these 8 qualities of the messenger or counsellor:

(1) He is a listener.	<i>sotā</i>
(2) He is able to make others listen.	<i>sāvetā</i>
(3) He is a learner.	<i>uggahetā</i>
(4) He is a memorizer [has a good memory].	<i>dhāretā</i>
(5) He is a knower [has a good understanding].	<i>viññātā</i>
(6) He is an instructor [able to makes others understand].	<i>viññāpetā</i>

¹ Cf **Dūteyya S 1** (S 56.93/5:473). However, the sense here is a negative one, ie, that of an errand runner.

² Cv 7.4.6 = V 2:201 f.

³ Cv 7.2-4 = V 2:184-203.

⁴ Cv 7.2-4 = V 2:184-203; DhA 1:143; J 1:491. See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2004 ("The Buddha's bad karma") ch 7.9 (Schism).

- (7) He is skilled regarding what is beneficial and what is not.
 (8) He is not quarrelsome.

*kusalo sahitâhitassa
 no kalaha,kārako*

2.1 (1) HE IS A LISTENER (*sotā*)

2.1.1 Being a “listener” means that one who is a messenger or counsellor should be attentive. Both **the (Rāja) Nāga Sutta** (A 4.114) and **the (Nāga) Sota Sutta** (A 5.140) defines “listener” (*sota*) as follows:

And how, bhikshus, is the royal elephant a listener?

Here, bhikshus, whatever task the elephant trainer gives him, whether he has done it before or not, the royal elephant makes that his object, pays attention to it, fully directs his mind to it, with ready ear, listens to it.⁵

And how, bhikshus, is a monk a listener?

Here, bhikshus, when **the Dharma-Vinaya** declared by the Tathagata is being taught, **he makes that his object, pays attention to it, fully directs his mind to it, with ready ear, listens to it.**⁶
 (A 4.114,7/2:117), SD 46.8; (A 5.140,9/3:163), SD 46.9

2.1.2 The prose section of **the Kathā,vatthu Sutta** (A 3.67), after listing all the positive qualities of a good teacher, counsellor or discussant—and here we can add, a messenger—closes by saying that he is a keen listener: “one who lends an ear is attentive” (*ohita,soto sa,upaniso hoti*).⁷

2.2 (2) HE IS ABLE TO MAKE OTHERS LISTEN (*sāvetā*)

2.2.1 **The Sigal’ovāda Sutta** (D 31) calls a good counsellor “one who points out the good or the true purpose” (*atth’akkhāyī*), that is, “a true-hearted friend” (*mitta suhada*) who brings you “the good news” (*sāsana*) that you have great potential for true goodness and happiness.

The good counsellor [the one who shows benefits or the goal]⁸ should be known as *a true-hearted friend* for these 4 reasons:⁹

- (1) He restrains you from evil.
- (2) He exhorts you to do good.
- (3) He lets you hear what you have not heard before.
- (4) He shows you the way to heaven.

The good counsellor, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these 4 reasons.
 (D 31,24/3:187), SD 4.1

2.2.2 Point (3)—“He lets you hear what you have not heard before” (*assutam sāveti*)—is especially relevant here. This refers to a wonderful benefit of listening to the Dharma, that is, we are entrusted with vital secrets of life that benefit us profoundly if we listen to it with an open heart.

⁵ *Idha bhikkhave rañño nāgo yam enaṃ hatthi,damma,sārathī kāraṇaṃ kāreti yadi vā kata,pubbaṃ yadi va kata,pubbaṃ yadi vā akata,pubbaṃ vā, taṃ atthiṃ katvā manasi katvā sabba,cetasā samannāharitvā ohita,soto suṇāti.* (A 4.114.2/2:116), SD 46.8; (A 5.140.3/3:161 f), SD 46.9.

⁶ *Idha bhikkhave tathāgata-p,pavedite dhamma,vinaye desiyamāne aṭṭhiṃ katvā manasi katvā sabba,cetasā samannāharitvā ohita,soto suṇāti.* Cf Sn 345.

⁷ A 3.67.6/1:198 @ SD 46.11.

⁸ *Atth’akkhāyī mitto suhado*, lit “the shower of benefits/purpose who is a true-hearted friend.”

⁹ These duties are almost identical to those of the recluses and brahmins reciprocating the son of family [§33f-k].

2.2.3 The good counsellor is also a caring person (*anukampaka*), defined by **the Sigāl’ovāda Sutta** (D 31), as follows:

The caring¹⁰ should be known as *a true-hearted friend* for these 4 reasons:

- (1) He does not delight in your misfortunes.
- (2) He delights in your good fortunes.
- (3) He prevents others from speaking ill of you.
- (4) He commends others who speak well of you.

(D 31,25/3:187), SD 4.1

2.2.4 This set of qualities—of the caring one—are those that function as “follow-up” strategies for the client’s well-being. The spiritual counsellor makes sure that you *consistently* see yourself in a positive manner, and that others do so, too. Very often, people tend to project their negative qualities onto us, and if we are emotionally weak, then we may actually believe such negative talk, and begin to reify such negative qualities in ourselves. The caring counsellor, in other words, makes sure that we do not talk bad about ourselves or about others, but express ourselves in a wholesome manner.

2.3 (3) HE IS A LEARNER (*uggahetā*)

2.3.1 To be a good Buddhist is to be a keen learner (*sikkhā,kāma*), that is, having the desire to learn *to avoid evil, do good, and purify the mind* (Dh 183). **The Puṇṇikā Therī Apadāna** (ThīAp 38.3) describes how Puṇṇikā or Puṇṇā, the daughter of Anātha,piṇḍika’s household slave, lived as a nun under six previous Buddhas, as one desirous of learning, thus:

*Bahu-s,sutā dhamma,dharā
nipakā sarṁvut’indriyā |
uggahetā va dhammānaṁ
atth’attha,paripucchikā ||*

Deeply learned, a Dharma expert,
prudent, with sense-faculties restrained,
a learner of the teachings, too,
a questioner of what is the purpose of good [of what is
good for oneself]. (ThīAp 38.3 = Ap 2:611)

2.3.2 The Commentary to the Lomasak’aṅgiya Bhadd’eka,ratta Sutta (M 134) explains the verb form of **uggahetā** (“learner”), that is, *uggaṇhāhi*, as follows: “he learns (*uggaṇhāti*), having sat down, remaining silent and listening, he masters it through verbal recitation, he remembers it through vocalizing in other ways.”¹¹

2.3.3 The best known of the learning models of early Buddhism is evidently the one given in **the Caṅkī Sutta** (D 95), which lists the spiritual learning process in 12 stages, a list also found in **the Kīṭā,giri Sutta** (M 70), where it is called “the gradual training” (*anupubba,sikkhā*), thus:

- (1) Faith (*saddhā*) conduces one to visit (that is, to see) a teacher.
- (2) Approaching (*upasaṅkamana*) the teacher conduces to one’s respectfully attending to the teacher.

¹⁰ “Caring,” *anukampaka*, fr the verb *anukampati* = *anu* (after) + *kampati* (shake, tremble), lit “he shakes or trembles along after (someone)” (D:RD 3:171).

¹¹ *Tuṇhī,bhūto nisīditvā suṇanto uggāṇhāti nāma, vācāya sajjhāyaṁ karonto pariyāpuṇāti nāma, aññesaṁ vācento dhāreti nāma* (MA 5:8; cf SA 2:75).

- (3) Respectfully drawing near (*payirūpāsānā*) to the teacher conduces to lending the ear.¹²
- (4) Lending the ear [listening attentively] (*sotāvadhāna*) conduces to listening to the Dharma.¹³
- (5) Listening to the Dharma (*dhamma, savana*) conduces to remembering the Dharma.
- (6) Remembering the Dharma (*dhamma, dhāraṇā*) conduces to the examination of its meaning.
- (7) Investigating the meaning (*atth'upaparikkhā*) of the teachings helps us reflectively accept them (or to accept them after pondering on them).
- (8) Reflectively accepting the teachings (*dhamma, nijjhāna, khanti*)¹⁴ conduces to will-power [wholesome desire].
- (9) Will-power [wholesome desire] (*chanda*) conduces to effort.
- (10) Exertion (*ussāha*) conduces to scrutiny.
- (11) Weighing [balancing the practice] (*tulanā*) conduces to striving.
- (12) Striving on (*pahitatta*), he realizes through his own body the supreme truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom [arhatness].¹⁵

(M 70,23-24/1:480), SD 11.1) = (M 95,20/2:173), SD 21.15¹⁶

2.4 (4) HE IS A MEMORIZER [HAS A GOOD MEMORY] (*dhāretā*)

2.4.1 The Saṅgārava Sutta (S 46.55) explains the reason for memory loss (such as the inability to remember what we have been recited) as the result of the five mental hindrances (*pañca, nīvaraṇa*), that is, sense-desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and spiritual doubt.¹⁷ Sense-desire prevents us from seeing reality, just as we are unable to see our reflection in a bowl of water, mixed with various colourful dyes. Ill will blinds us just as we are unable to see any reflection on water furiously boiling over a strong fire. The mind of sloth and torpor is like a pot of water, overspread with moss, and the mind of restlessness and worry, like the water surface ruffled by strong winds. Doubt is like a pot of muddied water left in the dark: we are not even sure where it is.

2.4.2 The cultivation of **the 7 awakening-factors** (*bojjhanga*), that is, the stages into deep meditation, will remove these mental hindrances. First, we cultivate mindfulness (*sati*), and examine mental states as they arise (*dhamma, vicaya*), taking them to be impermanent. As we sustain our effort (*virīya*), zest (*pīti*) or joyful interest arises, which then leads to tranquillity (*passaddhi*), the settling of body and mind. All this has a calming effect bringing on mental concentration (*samādhi*), resulting in equanimity (*upekkhā*), resulting in a calm and clear mind.¹⁸

¹² Here “drawing near” refers to a spiritual closeness, not a physical or social closeness. Indeed, it is a task of the lay follower to keep a social distance from the renunciant so that his/her rule of celibacy and mindfulness are well kept. On indirect ways by which the monastic’s spiritual training can be endangered, see **Methuna S** (A 7.47/4:54-56), SD 21.9. “Drawing near” here includes providing the teacher with proper personal service.

¹³ This incl esp switching off our handphones and similar devices totally, and definitely not using them during such teaching or meditation sessions. We should also prepare ourselves by not conversing about unrelated topics, so that the mind is calm and clear to receive the Dharma. See §20(7) n.

¹⁴ The phrasing here shows or suggests how *dhamma, nijjhāna, khanti* should be resolved, ie with *dhammā* as pl.

¹⁵ Be Ee: *Pahitatto samāno kāyena c’eva paramaṃ saccaṃ sacchikaroti, paññāya ca naṃ aṭṭivijjha passati*. Here, **Caṅkī S** (M 95) has: “Striving (*padhāna*) conduces to the attaining of truth (*saccānupatti*).” M 95,21 (SD 21.15). Both passages mean the same. Comy on Caṅkī S says that *saccānubodha* means “awakening to the path” (*maggānubodha*), and *saccānupatti* means “realization of the fruit” (*phala, sacchikiriyā*) (MA 3:427). See §20 (12) n.

¹⁶ See also **Levels of learning**, SD 40.4.

¹⁷ S 46.55/5:121-126 (SD 3.12).

¹⁸ See **Bojjhaṅga Sīla S** (S 46.3/5:67-70), SD 10.15.

2.4.3 Meditation results in a calm and clear mind, which in turn improves our memory. The point is that a good counsellor remembers what the client has said, and is then able to put them all together for a proper and useful analysis. The client is then taught *how to examine his way of thinking and the reasons for it*, and *the conditionality* behind a particular problem. He is then taught to lay out various possible solutions or alternatives that can solve or improve the situation. Finally, the client is taught how to be *emotionally independent*, or at least self-reliant, through the Buddha Word.¹⁹

2.5 (5) HE IS A KNOWER [HAS A GOOD UNDERSTANDING] (*viññātā*)

2.5.1 Here, technically, “understanding” (*viññāta*) means “understanding through the mind” (*manasā viññātām*), that is, through thinking (MA 1:37). Or, *viññāta* refers to “a mind-object that is pleasant, painful, etc” (*sukha,dukkh’adi dhamm’ārammaṇam*).²⁰ In other words, our mental processes are here well directed to understanding the real situation or emotional state of a group or individual, so that we are in a good position to counsel or help them.

2.5.2 Skillful meditation results in a calm and clear mind, which in turn improves our memory so effectively that, if we choose to, we may cultivate various psychic powers, such as *mind-reading* and *the ability to recall past lives*, which are very useful in the counselling process. A Buddhist practitioner who consistently, compassionately and wisely counsels others will, if he directs his mind properly, *be able to read the client’s mind enough to benefit the client*. In fact, this is not exactly a “psychic” power, as it is a *trained* insight.

2.6 (6) HE IS AN INSTRUCTOR [ABLE TO MAKE OTHERS UNDERSTAND] (*viññāpetā*)

2.6.1 The (Dhamma,desaka) Udāyī Sutta (A 5.159) lists the qualities of a wholesome Dharma teacher (*dhamma,desaka*), thus:

(1) He teaches it in a progressive manner;	<i>ānupubbī,katham</i>
(2) He teaches showing benefits and reasons; ²¹	<i>pariyāya,dassāvī</i>
(3) He teaches out of compassion;	<i>anuddayatam</i>
(4) He teaches not out of desire for material gain;	<i>na āmis’antaro</i>
(5) He teaches neither harming himself nor others.	<i>attānam ca parañca anupahacca</i>
	(A 5.159/3:184), SD 46.1

2.6.2 A good Dharma teacher or counsellor is skilled in making others understand the Dharma, or, on a more practical level, knows how a person’s mind works, so that he is able to teach the client to sort out his problems and live a happy life. He is the proverbial teacher who teaches the client how to grow rice so that he is never hungry. The special skills of such a teacher or counsellor are known as the analytic insights (*paṭisambhidā*), of which there are four:

- (1) analytic insight in meanings or consequences (*attha,paṭisambhidā*), that is, understanding the nature of reality, causality and wisdom;

¹⁹ On emotional independence, see *Atammayatā*, SD 19.13(7) esp (7.6).

²⁰ DA 3:914; MA 1:37; AA 3:31; ItA 2:187; NmA 2:260; NcA 66.

²¹ Comy: “Showing the benefit for this and that, the reason for this or that” (*Pariyāya,dassāvīti tassa tassa atthassa tam tam karaṇam dassento*, AA 3:293). *Pariyāya* is taken as meaning “benefits and reasons.”

- (2) analytic insight regarding ideas or causes (*dhamma.paṭisambhidā*), that is, understanding the origin or arising of such causality and wisdom;
- (3) analytic insight of language (*nirutti.paṭisambhidā*), that is, skill in defining such aforementioned truths;
- (4) analytic insight in ready wit or creative insight (*paṭibhāṇa.paṭisambhidā*), that is, skill in presenting these aforementioned truths for the realization of others. (A 4.173/2:160; Pm 1:119; Vbh 294)

In simple terms, **(1)** the first analytic insight (*paṭisambhidā*) is a proper understanding of reality, **(2)** is the understanding how they arise and fall away, **(3)** is the skill of defining such truths in conventional language, and **(4)** the skill in expressing these truths clearly and effectively. In **Paṭisambhidā Sutta** (A 4.173), Sāriputta says that he won the 4 analytic insights in only six months after his ordination. As a set, these insights are found in the wisest of the arhats, meaning that not all arhats have them, but they are all spiritually liberated in the same manner. These four analytic insights are discussed in detail in **the Vibhaṅga**.²²

2.7 (7) HE IS SKILLED REGARDING WHAT IS BENEFICIAL AND WHAT IS NOT (*kusala sahitāsahitassa*)

2.7.1 The Sutta's commentary explains *sahitāhita* as meaning "he is skilled in pointing out, 'This is beneficial; this is not beneficial.' When explaining the teaching, he is skilled in showing what brings one to the goal and what does not: having discerned it, he points out what is beneficial."²³

2.7.2 The **Sigāl'ovāda Sutta** (D 31) calls such a person "a helper constant in joy and in sorrow" (*upakāra samāna,sukha,dukkha*), and defines him in this way:

(1) The helper (*upakāra*), young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these 4 reasons:²⁴

- (a) He guards you when you are heedless.²⁵
- (b) He guards your property when you are heedless.
- (c) He is a refuge to you when you are in fear [or danger].
- (d) When you have tasks to complete, he provides you with double the supply you need.²⁶

The helper, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these 4 reasons.

²² The analytic insights (*paṭisambhidā*), In simple terms, the first *paṭisambhidā* is a proper understanding of reality, (2) is the understanding how they arise, (3) is the skill of defining such truths in conventional language, and (4) the skill in expressing these truths clearly and effectively. In **Paṭisambhidā S** (A 4.173), Sāriputta says that he won the 4 analytic insights in only 6 months after his ordination. As a set, these insights are fully developed in the wisest of the arhats, making them excellent Dharma teachers. This also means that not all arhats have them, but they are all spiritually liberated in the same manner. See **(Samyojana) Koṭṭhita S** (S 35.232), SD 28.4 (4). The 4 analytic insights are discussed in detail at **Vbh 15/293-305**. Reading: Bhikkhu Kusalaguna (Le Xuan Do), "The Catupaṭisambhidā in Theravāda Buddhism," 2005: <http://www.buddhanet.net/budsas/ebud/catu/catu00.htm>. See also BDict: Paṭisambhidā.

²³ *Idaṃ sahitāṃ idaṃ asahitaṃ ti sahitāsahitassa kusalo, upagatānupagatesu cheko sāsanāṃ āroceto sahitāṃ sallakkhetvā āroceti* (AA 4:105).

²⁴ The first three qualities below are given as part of those reciprocal qualities that your "friends and companions" should show you [§31fgh].

²⁵ Comy: "When he sees that you have fallen in the middle of town or at the city gate or on the road after having taken some drinks, he sits down by you until you wake, lest your clothes be stolen." (DA 3:949)

²⁶ *Uppannassa kicca,karaṇīyesu tad diguṇaṇi bhogaṇi anuppādeti*.

(2) The one constant in joy and in sorrow [a friend through thick and thin] (*samāna,sukha,-dukha*) should be known as a true-hearted friend for these 4 reasons:

- (a) He tells you his secrets.
- (b) He keeps your secrets.
- (c) He does not abandon you in your troubles.²⁷
- (d) He would even give up his life for you.

The one who is constant in joy and sorrow, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons. (D 31,22-23/3:187), SD 4.1

2.8 (8) HE IS NOT QUARRELSOME (*no kalaha,kāraḷo*)

2.8.1 Disadvantages of being quarrelsome. The *Bhaṇḍana,kāraḷa Sutta* (A 5.212) warns that a quarrelsome monastic will face some dire consequences, thus:

Bhikkhus, a monk who is a source of strife, a source of quarrels, a source of disputes, a source of legal [ecclesiastical] cases for the sangha, can expect to have 5 kinds of disadvantages.²⁸ What are the five?

- (1) He does not attain what has not yet been attained [that which should be attained].²⁹
- (2) He falls away from what he has attained.
- (3) He widely gains a bad reputation.
- (4) He dies confused.
- (5) With the break-up of the body after death, he is reborn in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell. (A 5.212/3:252), SD 46.13

2.8.2 Spiritual friendship. The *Meghiya Sutta* (A 9.3 = U 4.1) recounts how Meghiya insists on going on a meditation retreat although the conditions are not right. The Buddha does not quarrel with him but allows him after his third request. After Meghiya finds that he could not meditate due to the arising of past evil karma, he returns to the Buddha, who admonishes him on the five qualities that bring about the full maturing in the liberation of mind,³⁰ that is, *spiritual friendship, moral virtue, Dharma-centred talk, zealous exertion and insight in impermanence*.³¹

The Commentaries often describe a **spiritual friend** (*kalyāṇa,mitta*) as “a slayer of evil, a provider of good” (*aghassa ghātā hitassa vidhātā*).³² In the Udāna Commentary, Dhammapāla gives **the 8 “characteristics of a spiritual friend”** (*kalyāṇa,mitta.lakkhaṇa*) (UA 222). This list is here collated with two other canonical lists in connection with the qualities of the noble disciple (*ariya,sāvaka*) and the true individual (*sappurisa*):

²⁷ This is also the reciprocal quality that our “friends and companions” should show us: see **Sigāl’ovāda S** (D 31,-31(i)/3:190), SD 4.1.

²⁸ *Yo so bhikkhave bhikkhu bhaṇḍana,kāraḷo kalahakāraḷo vivāda,kāraḷo bhassa,kāraḷo saṅghe adhikaraṇa,-kāraḷo, tassa pañca ādinavā pāṭikaṅkhā*. Cf V 1:329, 2:1.

²⁹ *Anadhigataṃ nādhigacchati*.

³⁰ *Ceto,vimuttiyā pañca paripakāya,dhammā*, or more briefly, “the conditions conducing to full maturity” (*pañca dhamma paripakāya*) (UA 219).

³¹ A 9.3/4:354-358 ≈ U 4.1/34-37 @ SD 34.2.

³² UA 221; ItA 1:65; ThīA 177. The epithet is used of the Buddha in connection with refuge-going: DA 229 = MA 1:130 = SA 1:171; AA 2:20 = KhpA 18 = UA 287.

	The 8 characteristics of Spiritual friendship (<i>kalyāṇa.mitta,lakkhaṇa</i>) (UA 222): accomplishment in:	Noble growth (<i>ariya vaḍḍhi</i>) (Vaḍḍhi Suttas 1-2, A 5.63-64/3:80): a noble disciple (<i>ariya,sāvaka</i>) grows in:	Sublime qualities (<i>saddhamma</i>) (Cūḷa,puṇṇama Sutta, M 3:23): the qualities of a true individual (<i>sappurisa</i>) :
1	<u>faith</u> (<i>saddhā,sampanno</i>)	faith	faith
2	moral virtue (<i>sīla,sampanno</i>)	moral virtue	moral shame; moral fear
3	learning (<i>suta,sampanno</i>)	learning	learning
4	charity (<i>cāga,sampanno</i>)	charity	(gives gifts as a true individual)
5	<u>effort</u> (<i>vīriya,sampanno</i>)	—	effort
6	<u>mindfulness</u> (<i>sati,sampanno</i>)	—	mindfulness
7	<u>samadhi</u> (<i>samādhi,sampanno</i>)	—	—
8	<u>wisdom</u> (<i>paññā,sampanno</i>)	wisdom	wisdom

Fig 2.8 Qualities of a spiritual friend, a noble disciple and a true individual

2.8.3 From **Fig 8**, we can see that the spiritual friend, the noble disciple and the true individual all share some common qualities. Both the noble disciple and the true individual do not have *samadhi* (that is, they do not experience dhyana), but they have many other wholesome qualities.³³

The true individual here, however, has some ability to meditate, but he may or may not be able to attain dhyana; if he does, i would perhaps be on a simple level.³⁴ The noble disciple and the true individual are here called “true-hearted friends” (*suhada mitta*).³⁵ The spiritual friend, in the full sense of the term, is replete with all the eight characteristics.³⁶

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Dūta Sutta

The Discourse on the Messenger

A 8.16

Originating in Sāvattihī.

- 1 Bhikshus, a monk accomplished in these 8 **[196]** qualities of one worthy of being a messenger.
What are the eight?
- 2 Here, bhikshus,

³³ From omission of samadhi (referring to dhyana), both these categories probably refer to the streamwinner, and perhaps the once-returner, too.

³⁴ See (**Sekha**) **Uddesa S** (A 3.85/1:231 f), SD 3.3 & **Sa,upadisesa S** (A 9.12/4:378-382), SD 3.3(3). See also **The layman and dhyana**, SD 8.5 esp (9).

³⁵ See D 31,21-25/3:187 f @ SD 4.1.

³⁶ See further **Spiritual friendship**, SD 8.1.

(1) a monk is a listener	<i>sotā</i> ; ³⁷
(2) he makes others listen	<i>sāvetā</i> ;
(3) he is a learner	<i>uggahetā</i> ;
(4) he is a memorizer [has a good memory]	<i>dhāretā</i> ;
(5) he is a knower [has a good understanding]	<i>viññātā</i> ;
(6) he is an instructor [able to make others understand]	<i>viññāpetā</i> ;
(7) he is skilled regarding what is beneficial and what is not	<i>kusalā sahitāsahitassa</i>
(8) he is not quarrelsome	<i>no kalaha, kārako.</i>

Bhikshus, a monk accomplished in these 8 qualities of one worthy of being a messenger.

3 Bhikshus, Sāriputta is accomplished in these 8 qualities of one worthy of a messenger. What are the eight?

4 Here, bhikshus,

- (1) Sāriputta is a listener;
- (2) he is able to make others listen;
- (3) he is a learner;
- (4) he is a memorizer;
- (5) he is a knower;
- (6) he is an instructor;
- (7) he is skilled regarding what is beneficial and what is not;
- (8) he is not quarrelsome.

Bhikshus, Sāriputta is accomplished in these 8 qualities of one worthy of a messenger.

5 <i>Yo ve na vyādhati patvā parisaṃ ugga, vādināṃ na ca hāpeti vacanaṃ na ca chādeti sāsanāṃ</i>	Who is untroubled before an assembly of sharp disputants; and is not lost for words; nor hides the message;
6 <i>Asandiḍḍhañ ca bhaṇati pucchito na ca kuppati sa ve tādisako bhikkhu duteyyaṃ gantum arahatī ti </i>	who speaks without doubt; and is unshaken when questioned— such a monk as he, indeed, is worthy of going on a mission (as a messenger).

— evaṃ —

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³⁷ “Listener” (*sotā*), and below, “makes others listen” (*sāvetā*), “knower” (*viññātā*) and “makes others understand” (*viññāpetā*), are denied by Pakudha Kaccāyana (**Sāmañña, phala S**, D 2,25/1:55 @ SD 8.10); but cf **Sandaka S** (M 76,16/1:517 f) & SD 35.7(2.2).