

Our body, our teacher

[Previously published as fb 201126 piya]

This body is our true personal teacher.

We have to clear its waste from the 9 openings many times a day. We have to wash it, wipe it, clean it again and again. This reminds us to keep our body, that is our physical actions, pure and good (the precepts).

Conscious body

Ours is a conscious body. We have a mind: how we respond to the outside world through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling and thinking. The world is what it is, neither good nor bad. How we sense it is our karma.

When we sense it, react to it, with greed, hate, delusion, we create a suffering world for ourself. When we sense it, respond to it, with charity, joy and wisdom, we create a heaven for ourself. This is how we create our own world.

We are decaying

As we mature, our body changes. We grow taller, bigger, stronger; we are actually decaying. In fact, from the day we are born, we start to decay: as a child, we grow up; as an adult we mature; as a senior we grow old. These words all mean the same: we are decaying.

Notice that our hair drops off; most of the dirt on the floor is the fallen pieces of our hair, skin, nails; when our own spit leaves our mouth, we are disgusted with it; we would not keep our urine or dung.

Being human

This body may be human, but our MIND is not always human. When we lust, we are exploitative asura demons; when we hate, we are violent hellbeings; when we are deluded or superstitious, we are addictive pretas; when we fear, we are gullible animals.

Our first task is to rise to the human state, humanity, by being morally good, by keeping the precepts.

We abstain from killing because all living beings love their life.

We abstain from stealing: to steal is to take away what others have worked for, the source of their happiness.

We abstain from sexual misconduct: we must respect both our own body and the bodies of others; this is freedom.

We abstain from lying because truth makes us human, and makes a good and progressive society. We abstain from intoxicants to keep our mind unclouded so that it is a mirror of truth and wisdom.

Our mind, our happiness

When our body is well disciplined, we live healthily, happily, harmoniously, and fearlessly. Such a body supports a healthy MIND, so that it is often calm and clear. Then, we are able to see things as

they really are: what we know then becomes WISDOM. This helps us live truly knowing, happily productive and joyfully benefitting self and others.

Since we are always changing, we need to keep on learning. People change; their views and understanding change. We have to be happily curious about them. This is the meaning of being truly "friendly."

Decay and disease

When we fall sick, it's like our body is hit by an arrow. When our mind suffers, too, it's like our mind is hit by a second arrow. We can and must avoid this second arrow: our body may be sick, let not our mind be sick. Pain is natural; suffering is optional.

It is the nature of the body to change, to fall sick, to decay, to die. To live means to accept all this, to see change, sickness and death with lovingkindness.

THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS:

This is the teaching of the Sall'atthena Sutta (S 36.6), esp sections 7-10 (SD 5.5):

<http://www.themindingcentre.org/dharmafarer/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/5.5-Sallatthena-S-36.6-piya.pdf>.

"Pain is natural, suffering is optional"; see THE FOLLOWING:

SD 48.9 (6.2.5): <http://www.themindingcentre.org/dharmafarer/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/48.9-Pabbajita-Abhinha-S-a10.48-piya.pdf>

SD 51.14 (3.2.3): <http://www.themindingcentre.org/dharmafarer/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/51.14-Pancaka-Padhana-S-a5.53-piya.pdf>

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