

## **Easy Way, No Way**

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When we complain Buddhism is hard, some populist Guru will “simplify” it for us, or make it “easy” for us. But is “Buddhism made easy” the same as the Dhamma taught by the Buddha? If it is, why does the Buddha not make it easy for us from the start.

Why do we need a Populist Guru to simplify things for us? Who really benefits from such a “Buddhism Made Easy”? Those who complain that Buddhism is hard may read the Easy Buddhism. And then say OK, that’s nice, and go on to look for more easy things. We are just cheating ourselves, back to sucking lollipops.

When we follow Easy Buddhism, we are following the Easy Guru. In other words, it is about the Easy Guru, not Buddha Dhamma. It’s like running a computer programme. Why so many repetitions, we complain: let just insert ET CETERA here and there. The programme will never run!

As hard as ABC

If the ABC is difficult, or we cannot remember it, should we simplify it? Throw out some of the letters? We don’t: we work to remember the alphabet again and again, or we teach it in an interesting way. When we do not even know the ABC how can we really know words or sentences? How can we read? How do we think well?

The suttas preserve the ABCs of awakening. When we do not know the suttas, and go for the Suttas Made Easy, we only follow what the Easy Guru says. It only benefits him, and you have thrown away your chance to learn the suttas to be wiser, to reach the path.

Blonde apes

A few centuries ago, most of Western Europe were unschooled and ignorant peasants. Now everyone of them knows how to read, work successfully, live happily and purposefully. How did the peasants grow to become an engaging modern society whom we often look up to? We may dye our Asia heads blonde, but it’s what inside that needs real beautifying.

Western society went through a lot of positive changes. Basically, they rejected the Church and built up their education system. It’s not just that their education was good, but the teachers encouraged their students to learn the good that needs to be learnt. Some of the greatest minds even educate themselves. In fact, most of them never stop learning, and it’s never too late to learn.

Walk like toddlers

As the education system improves, the better and the best teach others how to learn what needs learning. Even when it is difficult, especially when it is difficult, they keep on learning. It gets easier with persistence.

When we were toddlers, we learned to walk; even when we fell and cried, we got up again and again. We toddled and waddled on; now we can walk. We may get some help from adults, but we learn to walk mostly ourselves. There was no giving up or even an easy way. The noble path, self-effort, is the way.

*The walk is the way.*

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