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(Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta

The (Eights) Discourse on the Sufficiently Capable | A 8.62

Theme: The qualities of a Dharma worker

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2014

1 Sutta summary and highlight

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY. The (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta¹ is a short and straightforward text of great significance on the nature of Buddhist training and the purpose of the Dharma. The Sutta teaching deals with 8 kinds of individuals in terms of the “sufficient capability” (*alaṃ*)—glossed by its Commentary as “whose practice is beneficial (or good)” (*hita, paṭipatti*, AA 4:140).

The 8 types of individuals are each presented as having up to 6 qualities that make them “sufficiently capable” of self-help and other-help [§§1+5], self-help only [§3+5+7], or other-help only [§4+6+8]. They form 3 categories of individuals, respectively coded as SO, S, and O. There are 2 types of SO, that is, SO1 and SO2; 3 types of S, that is, S1, S2 and S3; and 3 types of O, that is, O1, O2 and O3.

A typology of these 8 types of individuals are tabulated in **Table 4** and detailed below [4]. On account of this typology of individuals and the qualities and teachings (*dhamma*) related to them, the Commentary says that this Sutta is both based of personal disposition (*puggal’ajjhāsayā*) and something that embellishes the Dharma (*dhamma, vilāsa*) (AA 1:140).²

1.2 MEANINGS OF ALAṂ. The word *alaṃ* has a number of meanings and usages. As an emphatic, it is also spelt as *hālaṃ*. As an indicative verb, *alaṃ* [Skt *alam* and *aram*],³ it means “enough” in its different shades, that is, “no more, no, halt, stop, done with, no use for (with the instrumental).” Here, in the (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta, *alaṃ* means “fit (for) (as dative or genitive, or as an infinitive), adequate, competent, able to, sufficient, worthy.”⁴

Following the Commentary, we understand *alaṃ* here to mean that since we have benefited from our practice, “we are able, it is sufficient, or proper, to benefit others” in terms of the Dharma in theory and practice (*attano ca pasesañ ca hita, paṭipattiyāṃ samattho pariyatto anucchaviko*, AA 4:140) [4.1.2]. However, we can also take the usage of *alaṃ* here more broadly to apply to a wide range of conduct of those in Dharma training, both monastic and lay [4.0.2].

1.3 THE 4 ANALYTIC SKILLS (A PRACTICAL DESCRIPTION)⁵

1.3.0 The (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta (A 8.62) elaborates on the 4 analytic skills (*paṭisambhidā*) in terms of proficiency in self-training and other-training, that is, the qualities of the practitioner and a Dharma teacher. Technically, **the 4 analytic skills** (*paṭisambhidā*) or wise discrimination (*paṭisambhidā*) are as follows:

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| (1) the analytic skill in <u>effects</u> , that is, | denotative meaning, | <i>attha, paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (2) the analytic skill in <u>causes</u> , that is, | connotative meaning, | <i>dhamma, paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (3) the analytic skill in <u>language</u> , that is, | verbal expression, | <i>nirutti, paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (4) the analytic skill in <u>ready wit</u> , that is, | analytic insight. | <i>paṭibhāna, paṭisambhidā</i> |
- (A 2:160; Pm 1:119; Vbh 294; MA 1:119)⁶

In the simple terms, these 4 are the analytic skills in purpose, in teachings, in language, and in ready wit. These are the definitions of the 4 analytic skills we will use in our study of the (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta, that is,

¹ The Sutta title has been discussed below [4.0].

² See SD 36.1 (1.10): Two kinds of parables.

³ Cf P *aram*: CPD sv.

⁴ For details, see CPD 1:435b: *alaṃ*.

⁵ For a technical description of the 4 analytic skills, see SD 43.3 (4).

⁶ See Kvu:SR (*Points of Controversy*) 1915: 377-382; Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963: 311 f. For a technical description of the 4 analytic skills, see SD 28.4 (4).

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| (1) the analytic skill in <u>purpose</u> , | <i>attha,paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (2) the analytic skill in <u>teachings</u> , | <i>dhamma,paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (3) the analytic skill in <u>language</u> , | <i>nirutti,paṭisambhidā</i> |
| (4) the analytic skill in <u>ready wit</u> . | <i>paṭibhāna,paṭisambhidā</i> |

1.3.1 Attha,paṭisambhidā. In practical terms, this is the analytic skill in the purpose (*attha,paṭisambhidā*) of the Buddha Dharma, which is a spiritually practical understanding of the teachings. The meaning and purpose of the Buddha’s teaching is succinctly stated by the Buddha, thus: “**I declare only suffering and the ending of suffering**” (*dukkhañ c’eva paññāpemi dukkhassa ca nirodhan’ti*, S 22.86).⁷ The 4 noble truths [SD 40a.2 (2)] have been crystallized into two synecdoches (short-forms) here: “suffering” and “the ending of suffering.”

“Suffering” here refers to *both the first and the second noble truths*, that is, suffering and its arising. This is the **truth** or *meaning* aspect of the Dharma, which answers the question: What is the meaning of life? [SD 40a.1 (11.1.2)] “Ending of suffering” refers to *both the third and fourth noble truths*, that is, the ending of suffering and the path leading to the ending of suffering. This is the **value** or *purpose* aspect of the Dharma, which answers the question: What is the **purpose** of life?⁸

Put more positively, we can say that the purpose of life according Buddhism is to understand why we are not happy, or even better still, we can be happy, but why are we not? Our purpose, then, is to discover what is hindering us from the happiness that we can have. If we look deeper, we can say that we need to overcome ignorance, which prevents us from knowing the liberating truth, and craving, which keeps us going in circle running after what we see as desirable.

One with the analytic skill of purpose (*attha*) understands that our true goal in life spiritual liberation, that is, the freedom from suffering. Having understood and accepted this goal (*attha*), we walk the path of awakening by disciplining our body and speech as a preparation for cultivating a calm and clear mind, and working towards liberating wisdom.⁹

1.3.2 Dhamma,paṭisambhidā. Basically, this is the analytic skill in the meaning of life, which comes from our understanding of the Buddha Dharma. If we ask, “What is the meaning of life?” the best answer is that it comprises conditions (*paccaya*). The best known model found in the Buddha’s teaching is that of dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*).¹⁰

One who has the analytic skill in causes (*dhamma,paṭisambhidā*) understands how the meaning of life is found in the first 2 noble truths, that is, the true nature of suffering (the nature of the 5 aggregates).¹¹ and the arising of suffering (that is, the conditioned arising of craving through ignorance).¹²

One with this analytic skill understands that all our sufferings and problems do not have a single cause. They are definitely not the result of any external agency, but due to our own lack of insight wisdom. What we are, including all the unsatisfactoriness we encounter or imagine, arise, not from any single cause, but arise from various interdependent conditions. When we understand the nature of such a conditionality, we are on the way to liberating ourselves from suffering.

1.3.3 Nirutti,paṭisambhidā. In practical terms, this is the analytic skill in language, that is, a mastery of language or languages, and their subtleties. Or even more simply, this is a mastery of the word of the teaching, but on a more philological, technical or worldly level. This understanding helps us analyse the meaning of words, passages, figures, stories and myths in the scripture. This is like we are able to give a running commentary of what we read or hear of a sutta.

⁷ The fuller quote is “As before, Anurādha, so too now, I declare only suffering and the end of suffering” (*pubbe cāham Anurādha etarahi ca dukkhañ c’eva paññāpemi dukkhassa ca nirodhan’ti*) (**Anurādha S**, S 22.86/3:119), SD 21.13; also M 22,38/1:140 @ SD 3.13.

⁸ On the meaning and purpose of life according to early Buddhism, see SD 40a.1 (11.2).

⁹ This is traditionally known as the 3 trainings: see **Sīla samādhi paññā**, SD 21.6.

¹⁰ On *paṭicca,samuppāda*, see **Dependent arising**, SD 5.16.

¹¹ On the 5 aggregates, see SD 17.

¹² On the first 2 noble truths, see **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11) + SD 1.1 (6).

In modern terms, this analytic skill is the basis for an early Buddhist hermeneutics, that is, the skill and art of exegesis or interpretation of the suttas and its commentaries. This is a Dharma-centred or text-centred skill that brings out the meaning of a passage, and is especially useful to someone who already has some working knowledge of the early Buddhist canon. This helps an experienced or skilled teacher to have a better understanding of the suttas so that it is more fruitful as a support for his practice and awakening.¹³

1.3.4 Patibhāna, patisambhidā. Basically, this is the analytic skill of wit, that is, a skill of presenting the Dharma and sutta teachings, especially to “instruct, inspire, rouse and gladden others” [2.6]. This includes a deep understanding of the 2 types of teaching, the explicit (*nī’attha*) and the implicit (*neyy’attha*), so that, when teaching we are able to present the Dharma as it is, and to properly interpret poems, figures, stories and myths to tease out the Dharma.

In fact, this analytic skill practically includes all the 6 qualities [2] mentioned in the (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta, this is, (1) we are quick in comprehending Dharma, (2) we remember what we have heard, (3) we investigate the meaning of what we have heard, (4) we master the letter and the spirit of the Dharma, and keep up a proper practice, (5) we have a good voice, with an ability to clarify meanings, and (6) we instruct, inspire, rouse and gladden others [2.6].

Strictly speaking, we may say that qualities (1)-(4) would be included in the analytic skill of language, and only qualities (5) and (6) are found in this fourth analytic skill. Either way, all these qualities are at least implicit in both these two analytic skills. The only difference is that the third analytic skill is mostly text-based, while the fourth is person-based.¹⁴

1.4 RELATED SUTTAS AND TEACHINGS

1.4.1 Related suttas. There is another sutta in the Aṭṭhaka Nipāta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya, also called Alaṃ Sutta, containing identical teachings. While the Sutta here (A 8.62) is taught by the Buddha, the second is taught by Sāriputta. Hence, we shall refer to it as **the (Sāriputta) Alaṃ Sutta** (A 8.78).¹⁵ For other related suttas, see following section [1.4.2].

1.4.2 Related teachings. There are number of related teachings we should know that will help us understand the sutta teaching of the 8 kinds of capable individuals and the 6 qualities here. Among such helpful teachings are the following:¹⁶

• 4 analytic skills [1.3]	(Saṃyojana) Koṭṭhita Sutta	S 35.232	SD 28.4 (4)
• 4 kinds of learners [3]	Ugghaṭitaññū Sutta	A 4.143	SD 3.13(3.3)
• 4 kinds of progress	Vitthāra Paṭipadā Sutta	A 4.162	SD 18.3
• 4 kinds of Dharma speakers	(Catukka) Dhamma, kathika Sutta	A 4.139	
		= Pug 4.7	SD 46.10
• 5 principles of teaching Dharma	(Dhamma, desaka) Udayī Sutta	A 5.159	SD 46.1
• 5 principles of living the Dharma	Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 1	A 5.73	SD 44.4
• 5 conditions for Dharma growth	Saddhamma Sammosa Sutta 2	A 5.156	SD 77.4
• 8 qualities of a messenger	Dūta Sutta	A 8.16	SD 46.7
• 8 helpful qualities of a streamwinner	(Upāsaka) Mahānāma Sutta	A 8.25	SD 6.3
• 10 reasons the Buddha teaches or not	(Vitthara) Puṇṇiya Sutta	A 10.83	SD 73.16

2 The 6 qualities of a capable Dharma speaker

2.0 OVERVIEW. If we have all these **6 qualities** [2.6], that we not only know the Dharma, but we are also capable of making the Dharma known, and bring about some level of understanding, even awakening, in ourselves and in others. The first 2 qualities—(1) being quick in comprehending Dharma, and (2) remembering what we have heard—are Dharma-centred skills. The middle 2 qualities—(3) investigating

¹³ See **Language and discourse**, SD 26.11.

¹⁴ For a technical description of the 4 analytic skills, see SD 43.3 (4).

¹⁵ A 8.78/4:328-331.

¹⁶ Further see SD 46.1 (3.2).

the meaning of what we have heard, and (4) mastering the letter and the spirit of the Dharma, and keeping up a proper practice—are self-centred or person-centred skills. And the last 2 qualities—(5) having a good voice, with an ability to clarify meanings, and (6) instructing, inspiring, rousing and gladdening others—are other-centred or people-centred skills [2.6].

2.1 QUICK IN COMPREHENDING THE WHOLESOME STATES

2.1.1 “Quick in comprehending” (*khippa,nisanti*) means that we are able to understand the Dharma as soon as we hear it, especially when it is taught by a wise and experienced teacher. This is the quality of the intuitive learner (*ugghaṭitaññū*) [3], a sort of genius or one who fully understands from only a brief instruction. Even when reading a sutta or Buddhist writings, he is quick in understanding them.

To “**comprehend**” a teaching is to know its meaning, what it says about us, especially our minds, and about life in general, and its purpose, that is what is the Buddha’s intention behind the teaching, which is the same as asking, “What is the Dharma about?” One easy way to answer this is: to know the mind, to tame the mind, to free the mind.¹⁷

2.1.2 The phrase “in wholesome states” (*kusalesu dhammesu*) has at least two important senses.

2.1.2.1 The first is that we are able to gauge the authenticity of a teaching or text, that is, whether they are Dharma-centred (rooted in right view) or they are not (rooted in wrong view). This is the ability to see and practise the Dharma in its own terms (*dhammānudhamma paṭipatti*). This vital ability prevents any misinterpreting of the Dharma or misrepresenting of the Buddha, or the watering down of the Buddha Dharma.

The need to ensure that a text or teaching is Dharma-centred is vital for proper practice. Broadly speaking, we can say that a text or teaching is helpful if and when it inspires and energizes us to take up reflection and meditation that bring about joy and clarity in us. A good and true teaching, in short, is one that empties us of views and fills us with joy, so that we truly understand the meaning and purpose of renunciation (*nekkhamma*).¹⁸ This is known as the joy of renunciation.¹⁹

2.1.2.2 Or, we are able to properly interpret, or re-interpret, an unclear or dubious teaching or text in a manner that would facilitate a better understanding. This also includes our ability to see truth and beauty in any teaching or text, even those outside of Buddhism, as presenting or clarifying the Dharma, even bringing out its subtleties.

This skill includes a positive sense of polemics, or perhaps “counter-polemics,” that is, the ability and effort in effectively responding to negative criticisms or misrepresentations of the Dharma, whether from outsiders or from insiders, so as to straighten them out. This is done in an inspiring and joyful way so that we simply see no benefit or merit in those criticisms and wrong views.

2.1.2.3 Here, we are also able to present the truth and beauty of any kind of good **literature** so as to clarify certain aspects of the Dharma and to inspire others with its beauty. Such an approach is based on the notion that **aesthetics**, the theory of beauty, as one of presenting good and joy as inspiring us towards personal liberation, and also as the fruit of a truly purposeful life.

2.1.2.4 If we are trained and experienced in worldly learning, especially **the sciences and psychology**, we are able to use such understanding to clarify the Dharma and present it in various interesting and useful ways so as to better the lives of ever more people. A broader effect of such an effort is not only contributing new ideas and perspectives to the sciences and psychology, but also of humanizing them.²⁰

2.1.2.5 The true purpose of life, then, is not only to grow as an individual, in a spiritual sense, but also to naturally live joyfully. In other words, the truth should liberate us; beauty should bring us joy. Both these qualities—truth and beauty—can be personally realized and enjoyed through mental cultivation or meditation.²¹ Then, we are able to see the Dharma in everything, and be fully at joyful peace.

¹⁷ See **Samatha and vipassana**, SD 41.1 (7.3).

¹⁸ See **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.3 (14): Meditation is progressive renunciation.

¹⁹ On the joy of renunciation (*nekkhamma,sukha*), see **Araṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 139,9.3), SD 7.8. On 6 kinds of joys of the household & 6 kinds of joy of renunciation, see **Salāyatana Vibhaṅga S** (M 137,9-15/3:217-219).

²⁰ See eg **Buddhism as a method of self-healing**, SD 43.1.

²¹ See **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.1 esp (9) & **Dhyana**, SD 8.4 (7).

2.2 REMEMBERING TEACHINGS THAT WE HAVE HEARD

2.2.1 Listening. The early Buddhist term *bahu,suta* or *bahu-s,suta* refers to one who “has heard much,” that is, one who is learned in the Dharma.²² This also implies that we should remember what we have heard [§2(2)]. The traditional way of remembering teachings, which refers to suttas or sutta passages, or formulas of teachings (like the Dharma sets given in the Aṅguttara Nikāya), is to recite them regularly.”Non-recitation is a stain (*mala*) for mantras, (Dh 241), where a mantra refers to a formula or passage that brings us wisdom (as a “formula” in modern mathematics and science).

2.2.2 The 7 sets

2.2.2.1 It is easier to remember a teaching when our attention is joyfully focused on the teaching when it is being given. When listening to the Dharma, rejoice in the teacher, especially when he presents a sutta or teaching, or explaining it. It helps to briefly reflect how difficult it is hear the Dharma, and that wisdom is rooted in right attention.

2.2.2.2 Once we have learned a teachings, it helps to note the keywords in a line or a passage: recall the keyword, recall the whole line or passage. We reinforce our memory of such teachings by mentioned them to a relative or a friend, or writing in down mindfully in some systematic way.

2.2.2.3 The early suttas often employ numbers when presenting teachings. These numbers actually form sets of teachings. The most important are called **the “7 sets,”** comprising the following teachings:

What are the teachings that have been shown to you by me through direct knowledge, that you should learn well, associate with, cultivate, and develop, [120] so that the holy life will last long, so that it will stand long, for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans?

They are as follows:²³

the 4 focuses of mindfulness,	<i>catu satipaṭṭhānā</i> ²⁴
the 4 right efforts,	<i>samma-p, padhānā</i> ²⁵
the 4 paths to spiritual power,	<i>iddhi, pādā</i> ²⁶
the 5 spiritual faculties,	<i>pañc 'indriyāni</i> ²⁷
the 5 spiritual powers,	<i>pañca, balāni</i> ²⁸
the 7 limbs of awakening,	<i>satta bojjaṅgā</i> ²⁹
the noble eightfold path.	<i>ariya aṭṭh 'aṅgika magga</i> ³⁰

...you should learn them well, associate with them, cultivate them, develop them, so that the holy life will last long,...for the good, welfare and happiness of gods and humans.³¹

All these teachings total up as the 37 limbs of awakening (*bodhi, pakkhiya dhamma*), those factors conducive to awakening, or at least to personal development or mental cultivation.³² Each of these sets lead into all the rest. We need only to choose the set we like, master it, and with on the basis of that understanding we will in time understand the rest. This is the benefit of an investigative mind and reflective life.

²² See SD 49a.4 (6.1.2).

²³ On this *māṭikā* (matrix) of the seven sets, see SD 9 (10bc).

²⁴ See D 1:56, 339, 2:83, 290-315, 3:101; S 3:96, 153; A 2:218, 3:12.

²⁵ See V 1:22; D 2:120; M 3:296, 2:96; A 2:74, 15 f.

²⁶ See D 2:213, 221; M 1:103 = 2:11; A 1:39, 297, 2:256, 3:82; Vbh 213.

²⁷ See M 1:295; S 3:46, 225, 4:168; A 2:151. See foll n.

²⁸ See D 2:120, 239; M 2:12, 3:296; S 3:96, 153, 4:366; A 3:10, 12; Vbh 342.

²⁹ See D 2:79, 83, 120, 302, 3:101, 128, 251, 282; M 1:11, 2:12; S 1:54, 5:83; A 1:14, 4:23; Vbh 277.

³⁰ See D 1:256 f, 165, 312; M 1:61, 118, 3:251; It 18; Sn 1130; Vbh 235.

³¹ On the central importance of these 7 sets, see SD 9 (10c). See also see SD 10.1: Bodhi, pakkhiya, dhamma.

³² See SD 10.1.

2.2.3 Literature

2.2.3.1 Although the early Buddhist texts were orally transmitted, within a few centuries after the Buddha's passing, they were written down in India and Sri Lanka. The Tipiṭaka had been compiled by Asoka's time (c. 271-231 BCE) and written down by 0 BCE. Once written down, the Buddhist texts become "literature" (that which is written).³³

Most of the Pali Tipiṭaka undisputedly comprises the earliest authentic records of the Buddha's teachings. Even more vital than age is the effectiveness of such teachings. The contents and styles of the suttas, for example, are clearly cohesive that it can only be the work, or based on the teachings, of one person, that is the Buddha, a spiritual genius who is awakened and whose teachings can awaken us. In this connection, the Buddha declares in **the Gotamaka Cetiya Sutta** (A 3.123):

As such, bhikshus,
 because I teach the Dharma based on direct knowledge, not without direct knowledge;
 because I teach the Dharma with proper cause and reasoning, not without proper cause and reasoning;
 because I teach the Dharma with wonders, not without wonders, my advice should be followed, my teaching should be practised.
 4 And this, bhikshus, is enough for you to be content, enough for you to be gratified, enough for you to be joyful, (reflecting) thus—
 Fully self-awakened is the Blessed One.
 Well-taught is the Dharma [the true teaching].
 Well-conducted is the sangha [the holy community of saints]. (A 3.123/1:276), SD 11.10³⁴

The early Buddhist texts are literature or literary records of the Buddha's direct experience of true reality. These teachings are based on a deep and full understanding of conditionality (all that exist or happen do so through many causes and effects), which are taught by the Buddha with careful reasoning. Such teachings are not only convincing to those of us who are *willing* and *able* to see the truth, but also liberating us from ignorance and craving. This is the wonder of the Dharma.

2.2.3.2 In other words, what is traditionally "heard," transmitted directly from teacher to pupil, with its vital tutelage (*nissaya*) [2.2.3.3], now becomes more easily available and accessible to anyone who can read. However, there is a significant difference between knowing how to read words, and reading the spirit (in between the lines). With the easy availability of books and digital media, Buddhist information is easily available to those who seek it.

And those who have access to such Buddhist information are unlikely to be none the wiser, especially when we take such information simply as plaything for the curious or conceited mind that only desires to replicate itself. Buddhist information simply becomes the tools for enriching our own personal philosophies and quirks. Indeed, such a state of affairs only makes it even harder for us to awaken from the delusions and dreams that we have conjured up in the name of religion and private realities.

2.2.3.3 *NISSAYA*. To counter such religious free-lancing and self-serving, the Buddha has introduced the rule of tutelage (*nissaya*) for novices and new monks. Novices (renunciants below full 20 years who keep to only the 10 precepts) and novice monks (those below 5 rains or monastic years) have to undergo a period of training or "dependence" on his teacher. This is a vital spiritual transition or grooming period, during which the renunciant trains to give up his layman thinking and habits, letting go of the old self, as it were, and become a true renunciant, a vital member of the broader sangha.

After 5 rains, if the renunciant has sufficiently matured spiritually, he is free to work more independently as far as the monastic life permits. However, if he still indisciplined or lacking spiritual maturity in

³³ On the early Buddhist texts as literature, see SD 30.8 (4).

³⁴ Further see Sujato & Brahmali, "The authenticity of the early Buddhist texts," 2014: Free download from <http://dhammadownload.com/files/pdf/authenticity.pdf>.

any way, he would have to remain under tutelage for a longer period, even for the rest of his life.³⁵ In short, this is a sort of monastic quality control, especially to prevent the arising of “hollow persons” (*mogha, purisa*).³⁶ The spiritual relationship between such a student under tutelage and his teacher or mentor is known as **spiritual friendship** (*kalyāṇa, mittatā*).³⁷

2.3 INVESTIGATING THE MEANING OF TEACHINGS THAT WE HAVE HEARD

2.3.1 After we have learned and remembered the Dharma, we should investigate its meaning. This means that we ensure that we understand the meanings of all words, phrases and sentences correctly, how they relate to one another, and to other teachings in the suttas. Indeed, we would discover that the suttas are often related to one another, in part or as a whole. Seeing this interconnection is a very helpful way of more fully understanding the teaching.

2.3.2 The next stage of investigating the meanings of the teachings to apply them to our own lives. This is best done by personal reflection, that is, relating these teachings to our own being and experiences of others and the world. Sometimes, it seems as if a certain teaching is unrelated to the reality “out there,” or even to contradict the “real world.”

For example, the teaching of renunciation or “letting go” may seem difficult, even impossible, to be applied to our modern society. However, as we examine ourselves deeper, we will discover that, in reality, this is exactly what is going on, whether we like it or not. When we learn to let go of some negative perception, especially when we are visited by a deep feeling of joy, we find what it really means to “let go.”

Even our lives themselves are an experience of renunciation. As we mature, we learn to let go of past fears and loves. We begin to understand how we perceive things, and learn to see our experiences as part of a bigger picture of living. We discover that we let go of even the most precious views that we had held. We simply evolve by letting go of old wrong views, realizing new and better ones, and so on.

Furthermore, in our meditation, we begin to see that it is also a sense of progressive letting go of the body (and speech), so that we focus better on the mind. Then we let go of thoughts, so that our mind become even more peaceful. Then when we let go of the peace, profound bliss fills up our mind.³⁸

2.4 HAVING MASTERED THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE DHARMA

2.4.1 Two levels of teaching. In the *Neyy’attha Nī’t’attha Sutta* (A 2.3.5+6), the Buddha reminds us not to misrepresent him by misconstruing his teachings, that is, not properly distinguishing between those teachings that are implicit (*neyy’attha*) and those that are explicit (*nī’t’attha*). “Implicit teachings” are those teachings “whose meanings *need* to be teased out” (*neyy’attha*); “explicit teachings” are those “whose meanings *have* been drawn out (*nī’t’attha*).³⁹

In simple terms, implicit teachings help to point to the meaning and purpose of the Dharma, that is, the Buddha’s awakening and direct experience of true reality, but in an indirect way. In that sense, the implicit teachings employ stories, humour,⁴⁰ literary forms (especially figures and poems),⁴¹ mythology⁴² and “intentional” language.⁴³ Such teachings appeal to our senses and imagination, so that this is a good place to introduce the Dharma to beginners, or those lacking wisdom or thick with defilements.

In other words, the implicit teachings make use of words, terms and names, such as “being,” “person,” “king,” “god,” “Vessantara,” and even “buddha.” These are simply sign-posts or sugar-coated ways to guide our minds towards the nature to true reality.

³⁵ On tutelage (*nissaya*), see Mv 1.53+73 = V 1:79 f, 91. See *Anāgara Bhaya S* (A 5.79/3:105-108), SD 1.10-(3.3); cf S 2:266 f. See also SD 12.3 (3.2.3). Further see Reflection, “The laity and monastics,” R45, *Simple Joys* 2008: 14.1.

³⁶ On the hollow person (*mogha, purisa*), see *Alagaddūpama S* (M 22,6/1:132), SD 3.13 n: “hollow man.”

³⁷ See Spiritual friendship, SD 8.1.

³⁸ On meditation as renunciation, see *Bhāvanā*, SD 15.3 (14): Meditation is progressive renunciation.

³⁹ A 2.3.5+6/1:60 @ SD 2.6b; see also SD 40a.4 (4.3).

⁴⁰ On The Buddha’s humour, SD 50.1.

⁴¹ On poems, see eg *Subhā Therī, gāthā*, SD 20.7.

⁴² On mythology, see *Myth in Buddhism*, SD 36.1.

⁴³ On intentional language, see SD 10.6 (5).

Explicit teachings, on the other hand, are those that make use of teaching models and special words, such as impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, non-self, the truths, the aggregates, and so on. In other words, these are purely doctrinal terms or teachings, or Dharma aspects of a teaching. They should be understood on their own terms.

On a simplest level, the suttas and teachings use such words to show what constitutes “wrong view”: hence, such ideas or practices should be avoided. As our understanding grows, we discern more clearly what constitutes “right view.”⁴⁴ All such teachings point to impermanence, conditionality, self-reliance and non-self. These are the 4 essential characteristics of early Buddhism. Such teachings appeal directly to our wisdom.

2.4.2 Buddhist aesthetics

2.4.2.1 A vital tool in our task to have right view is the experience of joy. The principle is very simple: when we are truly happy or joyful, we are unlikely to do bad. One reason for this is that when we are truly happy or joyful, especially in a profound and prolonged way, we simply suspend our thinking.⁴⁵ Or, at least, we are unlikely to think negatively, that is, for as long as we *feel* happy or joyful.⁴⁶

What makes us really happy or joyful is our vision of truth and beauty arising together. There are two ways of looking at this. One way is that when we are able to see true reality, especially the impermanence of a situation, we are unlikely to have negative desires. This calms our minds or hearts, and this inner peace is a beautiful feeling.

The other way is when we experience something really beautiful, especially a meditation experience or some kind of “religious experience.” When we feel at peace with ourselves, we are more likely to see directly into true reality, even if momentarily. Such a vision, if properly recalled or reflected on, will often inspire us to lead better lives.

2.4.2.2 Another way of talking about Buddhist aesthetics is by way of meditation or mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*). The suttas often speak of two interdependent aspects of meditation as those of calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*).

In simple terms, **calm** (*samatha*) is that part of meditation where we learn to sit totally at peace within, undistracted by any sense-experience. On a deeper level, this is the overcoming, at least temporarily, of the mental hindrances (sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and remorse, and doubt).⁴⁷ This leads to the attaining of dhyana,⁴⁸ or at least some level of samadhi.⁴⁹

Insight (*vipassanā*) may arise from an understanding of the suttas which brings about a clear vision of, say, impermanence. This is a joyfully calming experience which is the basis for mental calm. In other words, calm is the basis for insight, just as insight can be the basis of calm; or, we can apply them together.⁵⁰

2.4.2.3 The meditative calm here is a great way of experiencing profound joy, which is best said to be simply “beautiful.” Beauty can be said to a state where our physical senses go beyond themselves, reaching a unified or total experience of our heart. It is a sense of forgetfulness, in the sense that we let go of all our senses and their limitations, and directly experience the reality before us. It is beyond words and language. For this reason, we need the humanities—music, art poetry, the performing arts, literature and the non-measuring or unconditional capacity of the human heart—to express such experiences.

The experience of the beautiful in Buddhist meditation leads on to a profound peace that clears up our mind of all thoughts, so that it is able to get a clear glimpse, a close encounter, of true reality. Such an epi-

⁴⁴ On right view, see esp **The notion of *ditthi***, SD 40a.1.

⁴⁵ See eg Piya Tan, Reflection, “Not by food alone, but by joy, too,” R197, 2011.

⁴⁶ See eg Piya Tan, Reflection, “Stop, thinking,” R235, 2012.

⁴⁷ See ***Nīvaraṇa***, SD 32.1.

⁴⁸ See ***Dhyana***, SD 8.4.

⁴⁹ See ***Samadhi***, SD 33.1a.

⁵⁰ See ***Samatha and vipassana***, SD 41.1. See also SD 33.8 (3.2).

phany is not easy at all for the unprepared to accept, much less remember. We might simply be terrified and shaken by such a revelation because we have neither the vocabulary nor any past notion of it.⁵¹

However, with a grounding in the cultivation of lovingkindness and an appreciation of the vitality of inner joy, such an experience touches us as something so suddenly familiar, as it were. The impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self of daily life are always there, but now we are able to see beyond them. It is profoundly blissful now that this knowledge frees us from the world's fetters. In this sense, beauty is truth, and truth beauty.⁵²

2.5 A GOOD VOICE AND ABLE TO CLARIFY MEANINGS

2.5.1 Sutta definitions

2.5.1.0 This quality is fully defined in the (Aṭṭhaka) **Alaṃ Sutta** as follows:

He is endowed with a **pleasant voice, articulate in enunciation [pronunciation], polished [urbane] in speech, clear-voiced, free from hoarseness, and who clarifies meanings**⁵³ [§2(5)]

Note that there are actually two qualities here: the first are those of the voice and the second how it is used, that is, for clarifying meanings (*atthassa viññāpaniyā*). Let us look at each in turn.

2.5.1.1 Only 5 qualities of the voice are mentioned in the Sutta definition of the fifth quality of one sufficiently capable in the Dharma [2.5.1.0]. **The Jana,vasabha Sutta** (D 18) and **the Mahā Govinda Sutta** (D 19), however, mention **8 qualities of the Buddha's voice (and speech)** (*aṭṭha, samannāgata sara*): they are distinct (*vissatṭha*), intelligible (*viññeyya*), gentle (*mañju*), pleasant (*savanīya*), full (*bindu*), concise [not diffuse] (*avisarī*), deep (*gambhīra*) and resonant (*ninnādī*).⁵⁴

The 8 qualities of the Buddha's voice are detailed features of the 28th of the 32 physical marks of the great man (*mahā, purisa*). **The Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (D 14) says that the Buddha has “a perfect voice (like Brahma's), sweet like the sound of an Indian cuckoo.”⁵⁵ The voice description given in the (Aṭṭhaka) **Alaṃ Sutta**, however, is that of an ordinary individual who is sufficiently capable in teaching the Dharma.

2.5.1.2 **The Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama Sutta** (M 27) gives us more details of the speech of such a capable person, in terms of the 4 kinds of right speech (that is, what is truthful, unifying, pleasant, and useful, thus:

- (1) One speaks truth, adheres to truth, is trustworthy and reliable, no deceiver of the world...
 - (2) one who reunites those who are divided, is a promoter of friendships, enjoying harmony, delighting in harmony, rejoicing in harmony, a speaker of words that promote harmony...
 - (3) speaking words that are gentle, pleasing to the ear, lovable, going to the heart, courteous, desired by and agreeable to many...
 - (4) one speaks at the right time, speaks on what is fact, what is good, on the Dharma and the Vinaya; at the right time one speaks such words as are worth remembering, reasonable, moderate, and beneficial.
- (M 27, 113/1:179 f), SD 40a.5

The secondary quality of “clarifying the meaning” is included in two of the 4 kinds of right speech listed here, that is, the first (truthful speech) and the fourth (useful speech).

2.5.1.3 **The Araṇa Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 139) gives us further details of the speech of one sufficiently capable in the Dharma. His speech is said to be “unconflicting” (*araṇa*), that is, he speaks unhurriedly and makes use of regional language or local dialect (that is, the language of the masses).⁵⁶

Furthermore, he also counsels others with “**secret speech**” (*raho, vāda*, or personal advice), that is, “when you know the secret speech to be true and right, and beneficial, then you may utter it, knowing the

⁵¹ See eg Piya Tan, Reflection, “When God walks away,” R332, 2014.

⁵² See SD 40.1 (8.1.2); also Piya Tan, Reflection, “No views frees,” R255, 2012.

⁵³ *Kalyāṇa, vāco ca hoti kalyāṇa, vāk, karaṇo poriyā vācāya samannāgato vissatṭhāya an, ela, galāya atthassa viññāpaniyā*: see §2(5).

⁵⁴ D 18, 19/2:211 = 19, 8/2:227.

⁵⁵ *Brahma-s, saro ca karavīka, bhāṇī*, D 24, 1.22(28)/23:144, SD 36.9.

⁵⁶ M 139, 13(5)/3:236 @ SD 7.8.

time to do so.”⁵⁷ Interestingly, the Sutta allows “**strong words**” (*khīṇa, vāda*),⁵⁸ thus: “when you know the strong words uttered before another to be true and right, and beneficial, then you may utter them, knowing the time to do so.”⁵⁹ The respective opposites of these two kinds of speech should not be uttered at all.

2.5.2 As speech as part of our physical being, it is possible to be a source of sensual delight and attachment.⁶⁰ Hence, it is helpful to reflect on another’s voice, especially that of a Dharma speaker or a teacher as being impermanent. A voice, no matter how sweet or alluring, is still unsatisfactory, as it cannot always be so. The speaker can fall sick, or have a sore throat, or uses the speech in a negative way.

The teaching voice conveys to us words and teachings of the suttas. Yet the words in themselves may be appeal to some, but not to others. In other words, the sounds of the teaching have no essence of their own. It is how we relate to the message of the voice—if we respond positively—that helps us to calm and clear our minds, or inspires us to be diligent on the path to awakening.

It helps here to reflect on this verse of the elder **Lakuṇṭhaka Bhaddiya** (“the dwarf”), who, though of deformed stature, has a beautiful voice:

Those people who have judged [measured]⁶¹ me by appearance
and who follow me by voice,⁶²
overcome by desire and passion, they know me not. (Tha 469)

2.5.3 Conducive sounds

2.5.3.1 We are also reminded by the Buddha not to confuse the means with the end, not to highlight the medium and leave the message in the dark. **The Gīta-s, sara Sutta** (A 5.209), for example, reminds us not to recite (or voice) the Dharma in a long-drawn singing voice (*āyatakena gīta-s, sārena dhammam bhaṇantassa*).⁶³ We are warned of 5 dangers that would arise from this:

- (1) We become infatuated with our own intonation.
- (2) Others become infatuated with our intonation.
- (3) Householder would complain, “Just as we sing, so, too, do these sons of the Sakyas!”
- (4) There is a distraction from concentration when we wish to refine the intonation.
- (5) Posterity will follow our (wrong) example. (A 5.209/3:251), SD 91.9

2.5.3.2 Strictly speaking, then, we should not be using any means that overly indulges the senses when we are working to focus the mind, to reflect on the Dharma, or to meditate. This is especially true when we are learning to let go of the sense-faculties, in preparation to fully experience the mind in all its bliss and joy. Monastics are especially warned against such involvement because they are supposed to be working toward stilling their minds to attain dhyana, and to awaken (attain arhathood or non-return) in this life itself.

⁵⁷ M 139,10.1+13(4) @ SD 7.8. Cf the qualities of a true friend, one who is “constant in joy and in sorrow”: He tells you his secrets; he keeps your secrets, **Sigāl’ovāda S** (D 31,23), SD 4.1.

⁵⁸ *Khīṇa* (adj) here means “(of words) strong, rough, hurtful.”

⁵⁹ M 139,10.2+13(4+4a), SD 7.8.

⁶⁰ See **Rup’ādi Vagga** of the Aṅguttara, where it is stated that “there is no other sound that so obsesses a man’s mind as a woman’s voice” (A 1.1.2/1:1), and “there is no other sound that so obsesses a woman’s mind as a man’s voice” (A 1.1.7/1:2). Although the statements here appear gender-based and culture-centred, the attachment to a voice can also occur within the same sex.

⁶¹ “Have judged,” *pāmimsu*, lit “(they) measured.”

⁶² “Who follow me by voice,” *ye ca ghosena anvagū*, alt tr “who follow me by my voice.”

⁶³ The origin story for this rule is found at V 2:108,5-25. Further Pāc 10 makes it an offence for a monastic to see dancing or singing or music, entailing expiation (V 4:267,29 f). This means that monastics should not dance, sing or play music, too.

2.5.3.3 Lay followers, however, have more latitude here, insofar as we are working towards either streamwinning or once-return. In other words, we, as lay practitioners who still enjoy sensual pleasures,⁶⁴ may listen to music, play it, even write it. However, this is a mindful “indulgence,” that is, one moderated by the 5 precepts and tempered with the constant reflection on impermanence. In other words, as lay followers, we are (or should) be working towards streamwinning with all our thought, word and deed, with our whole being.

2.5.3.4 We first learn the Dharma through listening to others, and, as teachers, we communicate the Dharma to others, especially the unconverted and unawakened, is through speech. If the speech (that is, the medium) is clear, then the message comes through clearly. In a way, we can say that these 6 qualities are those factors that make us the ideal or conducive media for the Dharma to arise in us, and for us to be effective transmitters of the Dharma to others.

2.6 INSTRUCTING, INSPIRING, ROUSING AND GLADDENING OTHERS

2.6.1 The instruction pericope. The sixth and last quality of a sufficiently capable person in terms of the Dharma is a well known stock, which can be called the “instruction pericope,” since it begins with different forms of the verb “instruct, teach” (*sandasseti*). In this Suttas, the stock passage reads: “he is one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis” [§1(6)].

The more common version of this stock is given in the absolutive, that is: “The Blessed One then instructed (*sandassetvā*), inspired (*samādapetvā*), roused (*samuttejetvā*) and gladdened (*sampahaṃsetvā*)... with a Dharma talk⁶⁵ This action sequence reflects the basic structure of the Buddha’s teaching method: (1) the Dharma is shown; (2) the listeners are filled with enthusiasm; (3) they are fired with commitment; and (4) filled with joy.⁶⁶

The Commentaries⁶⁷ explain that by instructing, the Buddha dispels the listener’s **delusion**; by inspiring him, **heedlessness** is dispelled; by rousing him, **indolence** is dispelled; and by gladdening, brings the practice to a **conclusion**. In short, when we teach Dharma to benefit others, we should do our best to **bring instruction, inspiration, motivation and joy** to the listeners. These 4 qualities are, in fact, the sixth or last of the ideal skills of a Dharma speaker.⁶⁸

2.6.2 The progressive talk. This last quality of a sufficiently capable person is the beginning stage of the progressive talk or gradual teaching (*ānupubbī,kathā*). The progressive talk is defined as that “on giving (*dāna*), on moral virtue (*sīla*) and on the heavens (*sagga*); and he explained the danger, the vanity and disadvantages of sense-pleasure (*kāma’ādīnava*), and the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamm’-ānisamsa*).”⁶⁹

This is a skillful means to prepare a student or the audience, so that “the mind was prepared, pliant, free from obstacles, elevated and lucid, then he explained to him the teaching peculiar to the Buddhas,⁷⁰ that is to say, suffering, its arising, its cessation, and the path.⁷¹ In **the Upāli (Gaha,pati) Sutta** (M 56), after the Buddha has given Upāli the householder this progressive teaching, he attained streamwinning.⁷²

2.6.3 The inspiration pericope. In meditation instructions, any of the 6 “inspiring meditations”—that is, recollections (*anussati*) on the Buddha, on the Dharma, on the sangha, on moral virtue, on devatas,

⁶⁴ On lay followers who “enjoy sensual pleasures” (*kāma,bhogī*), see see **Mahā Vaccha,gotta S** (M 73,10/1:491), SD 27.4.

⁶⁵ V 1:18; D 1:126, 149, 2:86, 98, 109, 110, 127, 3:27, 209; M 1:209, 354, 2:139, 3:155; S 2:215, 3:95, 4:183, 5:155; A 3:380, 4:67, 118, 307 (x2), 5:122, 125; U 39, 82, 87.

⁶⁶ For the arising of joy in our own practice, see **Vatthūpama S** (M 7,8/1:38 f), SD 28.12; also SD 30.8 (4.3).

⁶⁷ Eg DA 1:293; cf VA 1:65; MA 2:35.

⁶⁸ See L S Cousins, in his review of *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (tr Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi) in JBE 4, 1997:272, where gives a slightly different listing of the above. See also Kalupahana, *A History of Buddhist Philosophy*, 1992:65-67.

⁶⁹ **Upāli (Gaha,pati) S** (M 56,18/1:380 f), SD 27.1.

⁷⁰ *Buddhānaṃ sāmukkamsikā desanā*.

⁷¹ This is stock: V 1:15, 2:156, 192; D 1:110, 148, 2:41; M 1:379; A 3:184, 4:186, 209; U 49.

⁷² M 56,18/1:380 f @ SD 27.1.

and on charity⁷³—and the cultivation of lovingkindness (*mettā, bhāvanā*),⁷⁴ can bring joy, which is the best fuel for a beginner in meditation, and a powerful booster for an experienced meditator. These 6 inspiring meditations are given in **the Agata, phala Mahānāma Sutta** (A 6.10), and they are all recorded as bringing about streamwinning (“the Dharma stream”) in the practitioner, thus:

Mahānāma, when the noble disciple recollects the Tathagata thus, his mind is not obsessed by lust, not obsessed by hate, not obsessed by delusion. At that time, his mind is straight,⁷⁵ inspired by the Tathagata.

Mahānāma, a noble disciple whose mind is straight	
gains inspired knowledge in	the goal [the meaning of Dharma],
gains inspired knowledge in	the truth [the Dharma],
gains gladness connected with	the Dharma;
when he is gladdened,	zest is born;
when the mind is zestful,	the body is tranquil;
the tranquil body	feels happy;
when one is happy	the mind becomes concentrated. ⁷⁶
	(A 6.10), SD 15.3

At the end of each of this meditation, the meditator is declared a “noble disciple,” and “he dwells impartial (*sama-p, patta*) amongst partial [vicious] people; he dwells unafflicted (*avyāpajjha*) amongst afflicted people; as one who has entered upon the Dharma stream,”⁷⁷ he continues his meditation. (id).

2.6.4 Teaching by example. The 6 qualities of those sufficiently capable in the Dharma begins with rooting ourselves in qualities for mental cultivation and wisdom, that is, qualities (1)-(4). The last two qualities are those of an effective teacher, especially when we are already rooted in the first 4 qualities. Hence, we have here a true practitioner who makes an effective teacher, who teaches by his own example, and thus benefitting others who are willing and able to see the Dharma.

The close phrase, referring to others “who are willing and able to see the Dharma,” reminds us that Dharma realization may occur spontaneously, but it is not an automatic or mechanical response. When we teach the Dharma to others, even when we are in the right frame of mind and saying the right things, the audience may be respond as we might expect. This is like trying to light a candle: if the wick is wet or too short or simply absent, that candle would not light. However, when the wick is there and it is dry and ready, it will light up. Still, we should always be ready with the light. That’s compassion.⁷⁸

3 The 4 kinds of learners

3.1 The first 3 kinds of saints (that is, the streamwinner, the once-returner and the non-returner) are the classic examples of the 4 types of practitioners or “learners,⁷⁹ that is, according to the time that they have taken to understand the teachings and realize awakening, respectively, as follows:

- (1) An intuitive learner (*ugghaṭitaññū*), a genius, one who fully understands from only a brief instruction.

⁷³ See **Mental cultivation**, SD 15.1.

⁷⁴ See SD 38.3.

⁷⁵ “His mind is straight” (*uju, gata, cittam*), ie “his mind goes directly (*ujukam eva*) to the meditation on the recollection of the Buddha” (AA 3:337).

⁷⁶ On this *attha, veda* passage, cf the *nīvaraṇa, pahīna* passage at **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.76/1:73), SD 8.10n for other refs.

⁷⁷ “The Dharma stream,” *dhmma, sota*. Obviously here, the Buddha is referring either to streamwinning or one on the way to become one. For details, see SD 3.2 (A 5.202) n & SD 3.14 (A 6.44) n.

⁷⁸ For cases where the Buddha teaches even though his audience does not respond positively, see SD 1.4 (2.3).

⁷⁹ “Learner” (*sekha*) is a tt meaning that these saints still have “something” to learn or cultivate before attaining arhathood. The typology here describes *how* they learn. This typology also includes ordinary (worldling) learners, both monastic and lay.

- (2) A diffuse learner (*vipañcitaññū*), an intellectual, who understands after some detailed explanation.
 (3) A tractable learner (*neyya*), one who needs some guidance or is capable of being trained.
 (4) A rote learner (*pada, pārama*), one who only knows a teaching at the word or literal level.

(A 4.133/2:135; Pug 4.5/41; Nett 41/7, 743/125; MA 3:178, 5:60)

3.2 These 4 types of learners are listed in the **Ugghaṭitaññū Sutta** (A 4.143).⁸⁰ Details on the psychological aspects of these 4 kinds of persons & the 5 spiritual faculties are given in the translation of the **Pubba,koṭṭhaka Sutta** (S 48.44).⁸¹

4 The 8 types of those who are sufficiently capable

4.0 OVERVIEW

4.01 Table

	Individual type:	1 SO1	2 SO2	3 S1	4 O1	5 S2	6 O2	7 S3	8 O3
1	quick in comprehending Dharma	√		√	√		√		
2	remembers what he has heard	√	√	√	√	√			
3	investigates the meaning of what he has heard	√	√	√		√		√	
4	masters letter and spirit, and keeps proper practice	√	√	√		√		√	
5	A good voice, with an ability for clarifying meanings	√	√		√		√		√
6	instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens others	√	√		√		√		√

Table 4. The 8 types of individuals sufficiently capable for self-good and other-good

[Legend: S: Self-help; O: Other-help; SO: Self-help & other-help.]

4.0.2 On the term *alam* in the Sutta

4.0.2.1 The (Aṭṭhaka) Alam Sutta uses the word *alam*, “enough, sufficient” capable,” all by itself [1.2]. Hence, we have justifiably translated the Sutta title as “The Discourse on the Sufficiently Capable.” This is the approach we have generally taken in our analysis of the 8 types of capable individuals. In other words, we have disregarded the commentarial gloss on *alam* as “whose practice is beneficial (or good)” (*hita, paṭipatti*, AA 4:140).

4.0.2.2 This gloss is clearly helpful in reminding us of the task of our spiritual training and inspiring others to walk the path, too. On account of the commentarial gloss, we have amplified the translation with the word “good” (*hita*), in the sense of “benefit.” So we here have “self-good” (for *attano*) and “other-good” (for *paresam*) [§1 etc]. The import here is clear: the 6 qualities are those that qualify us (the individual) to work towards good, that is, effectively work with the 3 trainings (in moral virtue, mental cultivation and insight wisdom).⁸²

4.0.2.3 In a sense, the (Aṭṭhaka) Alam Sutta is unique in that it makes no mention of nirvana or arhat-hood, or even the attaining of streamwinning. The Sutta simply prescribes the 6 qualities—with the minimum of the last two of them—that qualifies us as being “sufficiently capable” (*alam*) for personal practice and for instructing others. It is in this spirit, that the Commentary has qualifying *alam* with the “practice that is good” (*hita, paṭipatti*, A 4:140).

4.0.2.4 However, more broadly, that is, taking the phrase *alam* alone as it is given in the Sutta, we will here examine the broad applications of the typology of individuals in terms of missiology, with a somewhat psychological bent, on the pressing, even insidious or pernicious, internal issues relating to some of the realities that confront Buddhism (especially the monastics) today. [4.1-4.4]*

⁸⁰ A 4.143 @ SD 3.13(3.3).

⁸¹ S 48.44 @ SD 10.7 (2+3).

⁸² On the 3 trainings, see *Sīla samādhi paññā*, SD 21.6.

4.0.2.5 The (Aṭṭhaka) Alam Sutta, as such, is a vital and timeless reminder for us, especially in our own times, to remember the true meaning and purpose of the Buddha Dharma, and to diligently work with them for our good and happiness, and that of others, as a basis for awakening in due course, if not, in this life itself.

4.1 AN ANALYSIS OF THE 8 TYPES OF CAPABLE INDIVIDUALS

4.1.1 The (Aṭṭhaka) Alam Sutta gives a list of 8 kinds of individuals against 6 qualities describing the level or breadth of their personal capability for self-help and other-help. However, in generic terms, these 8 kinds of individuals form 3 basic groups of individuals who are “sufficiently capable” (*alam*) for the good both of self and of others, or of only self, or of only others, or of neither.

4.1.2 The qualifier “**good**” or “**benefit**” (*hita*) explains the import of the Sutta’s key phrase, “sufficiently capable for himself and sufficiently capable for others” (*alam attano alam paresam*). This qualification or meaning is supplied by the Sutta commentary which explains as follows:

“sufficiently capable for himself and sufficiently capable for others” means capable, sufficient, proper for the welfare of oneself and of others (*alam attano alam paresan’ti attano ca paresañ ca hita,paṭipattiyam samattho pariyatto*⁸³ *anucchaviko*). (AA 4:140)

Generally speaking, that is, on a worldly level, such good or benefits refers to the ability to understand the Dharma for oneself or make others do so. On a higher, and more significant, level, this refers to spiritual benefit, both here and now, and in the hereafter are meant. More specifically, this good or benefit refers to the capacity for spiritual awakening for oneself and others in this life itself, or full liberation in due course. This more significant import of the teaching here should be carefully understood and explained to others for our own benefit and that of others.

4.2 THOSE SUFFICIENTLY CAPABLE FOR BOTH SELF-GOOD AND OTHER-GOOD (SO)

4.2.0 **SO types**. Those who are capable of good for self and for others (SO) are of 2 kinds. The first (SO1), the intuitive learner, has all the 6 qualities of capability, and the second (SO2) only lacks a quick comprehension of the Dharma. The SO individuals are the best kind of Dharma workers, counsellors and teachers, and the two subsets only differ in *how quick* they learn the Dharma. As a rule, the two of them make the best Dharma practitioners and teachers.

4.2.1 **SO type 1 (SO1)**. The SO1 individual is the ideal Dharma worker, counsellor and teacher, as he has all the 6 qualities of those who benefit self and others in the Dharma. He is an intuitively quick learner, a master of the Dharma, an excellent teacher, an effective dispeller of doubts, an inspiring exemplar and a true practitioner bound for awakening.

4.2.2 **SO type 2 (SO2)**. The second benefactor of self and other in the Dharma (SO2), may be a diffuse learner (who needs some explanation), or a tractable learner (who needs guidance). However, he is not a word-learner (the slowest of learners) [3.1] because of qualities 2, 3 and 4. His only difference from SO1 is that he is not an intuitively quick learner. He may be said to be a good Dharma worker.

4.3 SUFFICIENTLY CAPABLE FOR ONLY SELF-GOOD, BUT NOT OTHER-GOOD (S)

4.3.0 **S types**. Those who are capable of good for only self but not for others (S) are of 3 kinds. They all lack two common characteristics, that is, (5) and (6). **S1**, the best of the three, has the most good qualities, that is, the first 4 qualities (1-4). He is the only intuitively quick learner of the three. **S2** has three of the 6 good qualities, while S3 has only two of them. The last two, in other words, are either diffuse learners or tractable learners [3.1].

Since they all lack the last two qualities—(5) a good voice, with an ability for clarifying meanings, and (6) the ability to instruct, inspire, rouse or gladden others—they do not make effective teachers. However, since they all understand the spirit and the letter of the Dharma, and keep up a proper practice, they serve as excellent exemplars to others, while working out their own awakening.

⁸³⁸³ *Pariyatta* usu means “capable, mastered (an ability, etc),” but also glossed as “sufficient, enough” (PvA 33 = *alam*).

4.3.1 S type 1 (S1). The **S1** individual is one who is sufficiently capable only for self-good on account of having qualities (1)-(4). He is quick in comprehending the Dharma (a quick learner); he remembers what he has heard; he investigates the meaning or purpose of what he has heard; and he masters the letter and the spirit of the Dharma, so that he keeps up a proper personal practice.

However, like the other 2 S-type individuals, he lacks qualities (5) and (6). He neither has a good voice nor is he able to explain things clearly; and he is unable to instruct, inspire, rouse or gladden others. In short, he is not a good teacher, but one who is effective in his personal practice, and shines as a personal example.

4.3.2 S type 2 (S2). The **S2** individual lacks the first quality: (1) quickness in comprehending Dharma. He is either a diffuse learner or a tractable learner [3.1]. Otherwise, he has the same qualities as the S1 individual. He either needs a patient teacher or has to put in patient effort to learn the Dharma, and he is capable of doing so, as he remembers what he has heard and reflects on it, and having mastered the theory, he put them into proper practice.

4.3.3 S type 3 (S3). The **S3** individual is the weakest of the 3 S individuals, since he lacks the first 2 qualities: (1) quick comprehension of the Dharma and (2) remembering what he has heard. He, too, needs a patient teacher, or has to put in patient effort to learn the Dharma, especially as he does not have a good memory.

However, what he is able to learn or remember, he (3) investigates their meaning, and (4) masters them both in the letter and the spirit, and puts them into proper practice. In other words, he is a good practitioner and an example to others.

4.4 SUFFICIENTLY CAPABLE FOR ONLY OTHER-GOOD, BUT NOT SELF-GOOD (O)

4.4.0 The O types

4.4.0.1 The third and last type of those **sufficiently capable for good** is also of 3 types, that is, O1, O2 and O3. All these 3 types commonly lack qualities (3) and (4), that is, they neither investigate the meaning of what they have heard, nor do they master the letter and spirit of the Dharma, and keep up a practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

4.4.0.2 **In a worst-case, worldly scenario**, type O individuals do not live reflective and meditative lives, or are weak, even ineffective, in their moral and spiritual lives. Understandably, they are likely to be strongly self-centred, so that they are unlikely to keep to the Vinaya rules, as they tend to be very self-opinionated (hence, intolerant of others who are different) and innovative, even if outwardly they may appear calm, confident and cultured.

4.4.0.3 **The common good qualities** the three type O individuals share are those of (5) and (6), that is, they have a good voice, with an ability for clarifying meanings (that is, explaining teachings or ideas), and they are able to instruct, inspire, rouse and gladden others. In short, their understanding is not intuitive or from direct experience, but from second- or third-hand learning, that is to say, they are academic or intellectual or informed at best. This would encompass most of the well known or popular speakers of Buddhism we see today in both the academic and Buddhist circles (whether lay or monastic).

4.4.0.4 If the type O individuals **habitually lack reflection and meditation**, then they are unlikely to grow towards the path. In other words, despite their charisma and erudition, they would not attain any level of awakening in this life itself. After death, if the conditions obtain, they would at best be reborn in a heavenly state or some happy state in this world. This is, of course, assuming that they also keep to the monastic rules (if they are monastics) and do not habitually break the 5 precepts, and that they have faith in the 3 jewels.

4.4.1 O type 1 (O1)

4.4.1.1 The type **O1** individual is (1) a quick learner (2) who remembers what he has heard, but he (3) does not investigate the meaning of what he has learned; (4) nor does he master the letter and the spirit of the Dharma, so as to keep a proper practice. In other words, he is mostly a good scholar, even excel in Buddhism as an academic subject. Furthermore, since (5) he has a good voice, with an ability to explain things clearly, and (6) able to instruct, inspire, rouse and gladden others, he makes a good and popular teacher or lecturer.

4.4.1.2 However, despite having qualities (1) and (2), or even *because* of them—especially since he lacks a reflective life and proper Dharma practice—he is likely to measure himself against others, so that he would reject, even demean, those he regards as being neither his equal (socially, academically or religiously), or as being inferior to him, or those who cannot benefit him in socially or economically. In short, he may turn out to be snobbish or elitist.⁸⁴

4.4.2 O type 2 (O2)

4.4.2.1 Type **O2** individual is very much like his type O1 colleague, except that the O2 individual (2) does not have a good memory in term of learning. He is (1) quick in comprehending the Dharma, but is (2) not good in remembering it. However, if he is morally driven, then he might be diligent learning the Dharma just before teaching or dealing with others.

4.4.2.2 Since, he lacks Dharma depth and memory—and neither (3) investigates its meaning nor (4) masters its letter and spirit for proper practice—he is likely to rely on worldly learning or opinion, or act docilely or diplomatically before others, especially, those that he regards would be of benefit to him. If he lacks moral fibre, then, like the O1 individual, he, too, is likely to disregard the Vinaya and live an innovative and worldly life, even if he keeps up a front of a monastic or religious person.

4.4.3 O type 3 (O3)

4.4.3.1 The type **O3** individual is not only the weakest of the 3 O-type individuals, but of all the weaker types of “capable” individuals. This is because the O3 individual has only the last 2 qualities: (5) a good voice and speaking ability, and (6) the ability to move others. He is what we would call a at best “public speaker,” or, at worst, a charismatic cult guru, but is almost nothing else in spiritual terms.

4.4.3.2 **In a worst-case scenario**, a type O3 individual is greatly disadvantaged as a religious person, but he is unlikely to see this or understand its significance. Since he lacks Dharma learning, he may envy others who are good in the Dharma or effective teachers. Since he lacks Dharma experience, he would also lack the simple joys of being a renunciant or a practitioner.

Even as a monastic, he might try to compensate himself by excelling in worldly pursuits, such as in working for an academic title, or doing social work, or indulging in some secular activity (such as playing music) or business enterprise, or even dabbling in politics, or often concerned with money and fund-raising—even though these are clearly against the Vinaya. In short, he would, consciously or unconsciously, feel inferior, seeking ways to establish his relevance, and the approval of others. Hence, he is likely to be status-conscious.

4.4.3.3 **A type O3 lay person**, if his faith faculty⁸⁵ is strong, might be devoted to a particular guru, a group, or a teaching or practice, and be fervent or fanatical about it, even regarding all other teachings, including early Buddhism, as being false. Such a faith devotee is likely to be so “busy” with his devotion, especially to a guru, that he neglects to properly practise himself.

If a type O3 lay person has a dominant wisdom faculty⁸⁶—he has an intellectual tendency—then he is likely to turn to gurus he regard as “wise,” that is, who endorses his views. He is likely to window-shop for such teachings, and is unwilling or unable to commit to any proper teacher or training, as he is rather fixed in his own views.

4.4.3.4 In other words, if **the type O3 individual** lacks tutelage (the guidance of a competent and compassionate teacher) [2.2.3.3], he is likely to be a loose cannon that may direct itself at Buddhism itself, or at least shoot himself in the foot, so that he fails in his vocation. Whether as a monastic or a lay person, especially if he is wealthy or influential, he will do much harm for Buddhism, and prevent his own spiritual development.

4.4.3.5 On **the positive side**, such a capable public speaker or “engaged” personality should be under the tutelage of a wise, experienced and compassionate teacher, so that any negativity of his type O3 personality will evolve gradually through cultivating the other positive qualities. Indeed, all the O type individuals are likely to fail as religious teachers, even fail in their spiritual lives, if they were to go on their

⁸⁴ See **Me: The nature of conceit**, SD 19.2a.

⁸⁵ On the 5 faculties (*pañca'indriya*) and the need to balance them, see **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50), SD 10.4.

⁸⁶ On the 5 faculties (*pañca'indriya*) and the need to balance them, see prec n.

own steam. They all urgently need the tutelage of a good teacher or mentor to inspire and guide them towards the spiritual path.

4.5 THE NATURE OF THE 6 QUALITIES. The 6 qualities mentioned in the (Aṭṭhaka) Alaṃ Sutta are not those of fixed stereotypes. They are only traits we might see in ourselves or in others as we live our Buddhist lives. As long as we are unawakened, we are likely to show some of these qualities in a positive way or in a negative way.

The typology and analysis given here is to help us recognize these qualities, and if they are negative, we should accept them to be so, work to understand why we have them, and with that wisdom abandon them, and turn to cultivating the wholesome qualities. If we see unwholesome qualities in others, we may use our wisdom and compassion to help them realize their shortcomings, but this may not be easy. However, we should work with the understanding that everyone can change for the better.

If we see these wholesome qualities in ourself, we should work with them to strengthen them and use them to cultivate other wholesome qualities. It certainly helps for us to appreciate such qualities when we see them in others, then them as exemplars of such wholesomeness.

Finally, it helps for us to constantly remember that the purpose of the Dharma is to understand suffering and be free of it in this life itself. This meaning understanding our own minds, and helping others to understand their own. While we must have the courage—like the Buddha sitting alone under the Bodhi tree—to face our demons alone and so free ourself, it is more joyful to see other Dharma-inspired individuals who share these wholesome qualities or spiritual evolution.

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The (Eights) Discourse on the Sufficiently Capable

A 8.62

Originating at Sāvathī.

(1) Sufficiently capable for both self-good and other-good (SO1)

1 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 6 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) self and sufficiently capable for (the good of) others.⁸⁷ What are the six?

2 Here, bhikshus,

(1) a monk is quick in comprehending⁸⁸ the wholesome states;⁸⁹

(2) he remembers teachings that he has heard;⁹⁰

(3) he investigates the meaning of teachings that he has heard;⁹¹

(4) having mastered the Dharma and its meaning⁹² [the letter and the spirit of the teaching], he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;⁹³

⁸⁷ *Chahi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alaṃ attano alaṃ paresaṃ.* That is, he has benefitted from his practice so that he is able to benefit others, too, in terms of the Dharma in theory and practice (*attano ca paresaṃ ca hita, paṭipattiyāṃ samattho pariyatto anucchaviko*, AA 4:140). On *alaṃ attano alaṃ paresaṃ*, see (3.1.2). On related teachings, see (1.4.2).

⁸⁸ “Quick in comprehending,” *kippa, nisanti*. Comy says that he is quick in taking it up, meaning that when such teachings as the aggregates, the elements, and the sense-bases are being taught, he learns [knows] quickly (*kippa, nisanti* *kippaṃ upadhāreti, khandha, dhātu, āyatan’ādīsu kathyamānesu te dhamme kippaṃ jānāti attho*, AA 4:140). Cf “Skillfulness in the elements” (*dhātu, kusalatā*, Dhs §1333/229).

⁸⁹ *Khippa, nisanti ca hoti kusalesu dhammesu.*

⁹⁰ *Sutānaṃ ca dhammānaṃ dhāraṇa, jātikā* [so Be; Ce Ee Se *dhāraka, jātikā*] hoti.

⁹¹ *Dhātānaṃ ca* [so Be; Ce Ee Se *dhatānaṃ ca*] *dhammānaṃ atthūpaparikkhī* [so Be; Ce Ee Se *atthūpaparikkhī*] hoti.

- (5) he is endowed with a pleasant voice, articulate in enunciation [pronunciation], polished [urbane] in speech, clear-voiced, free from hoarseness, and who clarifies meanings;⁹⁴ and
 (6) he is one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.⁹⁵

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 6 qualities, a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) self and sufficiently capable for (the good of) others*.

(2) Sufficiently capable for both self-good and other-good (SO2)

3 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 5 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) self and sufficiently capable for (the good of) others.⁹⁶ What are the five?

4 Here, bhikshus, a monk is

- not quick in comprehending⁹⁷ the wholesome states; but

- (1) *he remembers teachings that he has heard;*
- (2) *he investigates the meaning of teachings that he has heard;*
- (3) *having mastered the Dharma and its meaning⁹⁸ [the letter and the spirit of the teaching], he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;*
- (4) *he is endowed with a pleasant voice, articulate in enunciation [accurate in pronunciation], polished [urbane] in speech, clear-voiced, free from hoarseness, and who clarifies meanings; and*
- (5) *he instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.*

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 5 qualities, a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) self and sufficiently capable for (the good of) others*.

(3) Sufficient capable for self-good, but not other-good (S1)

5 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 4 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) self, but not for others.⁹⁹ What are the four?

6 Here, bhikshus,

- (1) a monk is quick in comprehending the wholesome states;
- (2) he remembers teachings that he has heard; [297]
- (3) he investigates the meaning of teachings that he has heard;
- (4) having mastered the Dharma and its meaning [the letter and the spirit of the teaching], he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma.
 - But, he is *not* endowed with a pleasant voice, *nor* articulate in enunciation [pronunciation], *nor* polished [urbane] in speech,

⁹² Alt tr “purpose.”

⁹³ *Attham-aññāya dhammam-aññāya dhammānudhamma,paṭipanno ca hoti.*

⁹⁴ *Kalyāṇa,vāco ca hoti kalyāṇa,vāk,karaṇo poriyā vācāya samannāgato vissatthāya an,ela,galāya atthassa viññāpaniyā:* this is stock, see D 1:114,8 f ≈ 132,3 = M 1:67,4 (MA 3:418,28 = DA 282,20); A 3: 114,5, 4:328,25 f. **Kalyāṇa-vāk-karaṇa** (mfn), “speaking, reciting pleasantly” (D 1:93,21 of Ambaṭṭha; D 1:122,16 of Soṇa,danda; M 2:168,30 of Kāpaṭhika Mānava; A 1:24,13 Soṇa Kuṭi,kaṇṇa, foremost of monks with this quality (AA 1:237,11, qu UA 313,6); V 2:139,2 of 2 brahmin brothers: CPD sv. **An,ela,galāya** (lit, “not dripping with drivel,” or “not drooling,” said only of speech), ie “pure, clear, faultless” (only of speech), articulate: CPD sv.

⁹⁵ *Sandassako ca hoti samādapako samuttejako sampahaṃsako sa,brahmacārīnaṃ.* The more common stock phrase here is *dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādhapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā*, “...**instructed** (*sandas-setvā*), **inspired** (*samādapetvā*), **roused** (*samuttejetvā*) and **gladdened** (*sampahaṃsetvā*)... with a Dharma talk.” See Intro (6) for details. **Viññāpaniyā** (gerundive) from *viññāpanī*, “instructive, making clear (of speech)” (D 1:114, *atthassa viññāpaniyā* = *viññāpana,samatthāya*, “capable of clarifying,” DA 1:282); A 3:114; Dh 408 (= *attha~* DhA 4:182); Sn 632.

⁹⁶ *Pañcahi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam attano alam paresaṃ.*

⁹⁷ “Quick in comprehending,” *khippa,nisanti*.

⁹⁸ Alt tr “purpose.”

⁹⁹ *Catūhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam attano nālam [Be:Ka no] paresaṃ.*

nor clear-voiced,
nor free from hoarseness,
nor is he one who clarifies meanings;

- and he is *not* one who instructs, inspires, rouses nor gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 4 qualities a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) self, but not for others*.

(4) Sufficiently capable for other-good, but not self-good (O1)

7 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 4 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self.¹⁰⁰ What are the four?

8 Here, bhikshus,

(1) a monk is quick in comprehending the wholesome states;

(2) he remembers teachings that he has heard;

- But he does *not* investigate the meaning of teachings that he has heard;
- *Nor* does he, having mastered the Dharma and its meaning, practise the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma.

(3) But he is endowed with a pleasant voice,
 articulate in enunciation [pronunciation],
 polished [urbane] in speech,
 clear-voiced,

free from hoarseness, and

who clarifies meanings; and

(4) he is one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 4 qualities a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self*.

(5) Sufficiently capable for self-good, but not other-good (S2)

9 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 3 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) self, but not for others.¹⁰¹ What are the three?

10 Here, bhikshus,

- a monk is *not* quick at all in comprehending the wholesome states.

(1) But he remembers teachings that he has heard;

(2) he investigates the meaning of teachings that he has heard;

(3) having mastered the Dharma and its meaning, he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;

- But he is *not* endowed with a pleasant voice,
nor articulate in enunciation [pronunciation],
nor polished [urbane] in speech,
nor is he clear-voiced,
nor free from hoarseness,
nor is he one who clarifies meanings;

- *Nor* is he one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis/

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 3 qualities a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) self, but not for others*.

¹⁰⁰ *Catūhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam paresam nalam [Be:Ka no] attano.*

¹⁰¹ *Tīhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam attano nalam [Be:Ka no] paresam.*

(6) Sufficiently capable for other-good, but not self-good (O2)

11 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 3 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self.¹⁰² What are the three?

12 Here, bhikshus,

(1) a monk is *not* quick at all in comprehending the wholesome states.

- *nor* he remembers teachings that he has heard;
- *nor* does he investigate the meaning of teachings that he has heard;
- *nor* is he one who, having mastered the Dharma and its meaning, he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;

(2) But, he is endowed with a pleasant voice, articulate in enunciation [pronunciation],

polished [urbane] in speech,

clear-voiced,

free from hoarseness, and

who clarifies meanings; and

(3) he is one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 3 qualities a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self*.

(7) Sufficiently capable for self-good, but not other-good (S3)

13 Bhikshus, accomplished in these 2 qualities a monk is sufficiently capable (for the good) of self, but not for others.¹⁰³ What are the two?

14 Here, bhikshus,

- a monk is *not* quick at all in comprehending the wholesome states.
- *nor* he remembers teachings that he has heard;

(1) But, he investigate the meaning of teachings that he has heard;

(2) And, having mastered the Dharma and its meaning, he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;

- But, he is *not* endowed with a pleasant voice, *nor* articulate in enunciation [pronunciation],

nor polished [urbane] in speech,

nor is he clear-voiced,

nor is he free from hoarseness,

nor is he one who clarifies meanings; and

- *nor* is he one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.

Bhikshus, accomplished in these 2 qualities a monk is *sufficiently capable for (the good of) self, but not for others*.

(8) Sufficiently capable for other-good, but not self-good (O3)

15 Bhikshus, accomplished in these two qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self.¹⁰⁴ What are the two?

16 Here, bhikshus,

- a monk is *not* quick at all in comprehending the wholesome states.
- *nor* he remembers teachings that he has heard;
- *nor* does he investigate the meaning of teachings that he has heard;

¹⁰² *Tīhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam paresam nālam [Be:Ka no] attano.*

¹⁰³ *Dvīhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam attano nālam [Be:Ka no] paresam.*

¹⁰⁴ *Dvīhi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu alam paresam nālam [Be:Ka no] attano.*

- *nor* is he one who, having mastered the Dharma and its meaning, he practises the Dharma in keeping with the Dharma;
 - (1) But, he is endowed with a pleasant voice,
in enunciation [pronunciation],
polished [urbane] in speech,
clear-voiced,
free from hoarseness, and
who clarifies meanings; and
 - (2) he is one who instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens his fellow brahmacharis.
- Bhikshus, accomplished in these two qualities a monk is sufficiently capable for (the good of) others, but not for self.

— evaṃ —

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