

RAINBOWS



IN New Zealand

We would like to thank all of those in New Zealand who have helped to put together this edition of 'Rainbows'. Besides the wonderful material offered, it is good to see a sharing of this kind taking place in different locations around the globe. So thank you once again, monks and laity of the New Zealand Vihera.

REPORT OF SUMMER CAMP '87

Twenty-five families with children from a few months to 13 years old let loose on a monastery for six consecutive days. Can it work? It can - and did - at AMARAVATI in the last week of August. Instead of pecking the children off to bed at 7 o'clock to find some 'peace' - we stretched the days from 7:30 a.m. puje to the evening campfire - going to midnight -, spending as much time as possible with good friends. Monastic Sangha, parents, friends and children mixed at every opportunity, sharing together a picnic, a grass production of the life of the Buddha, the making of a Chinese dragon, cookery classes, Yoga, craft, meditations and talks. Many, many thanks to all who helped and as they sit at home glowing with happy memories, I would like to remind them of the words of a song, "When you come to the end of a lollipop".....You make note in your diary for July 25th next year!

MEDHINA

FAMILY SUMMER CAMP '87 THE DRAGON!

During the summer camp, John and some of the "children" spent many an industrious hour working together. The end result was the creation of a wonderful paper dragon! Here is a reflection from John---TO EVERYONE -- Making a dragon is rather like sawing a large log of wood in half. If many take turns sawing - which cut is more important, the first, the last of all the cuts in between.

May we all share in the merit of a happy day. Although it has already slipped into the great void, the good feelings will last a long time.

It would be impossible to mention each one who helped, so thank-you to everyone.

- May I be well and happy
 - May you be well and happy
 - May all beings be well and happy
- love John (Abhaya)

The head of the DRAGON



Mr. Sucitto painting the eyes of the DRAGON!



DRAGON in ACTION!



FAMILY DAYS at AMARAVATI.....Remainder of '87

11th Oct.

1st Nov.

There will be a special 'Return of the Light' family day on 20th Dec. All are welcome to attend, please contact 'Rainbows' c/o Amarevati if you would like to come. If there is sufficient interest it may be possible to organize a week-end gathering at this time. Please let us know soon if you wish to come either for the week-end or just on the Sunday. N.B. please note the time has changed for the regular Family Days- meal offering is at 10:30, children's class 12pm-2pm.

DEER IN THE FOREST,

Like most children I learned about deer mainly from books or sometimes they could be seen eating grass in the fields next to the forest where I lived. I got the impression from books that they were lovely animals which it would be nice to touch and hug, they looked friendly and harmless with their bright eyes. Somebody it would be very nice to meet. In fact it wasn't until I was over 20 years old that I met three wild deer in the forest. I shall tell you the story.

It was a quiet spring day in the mountains and I was in a very still and peaceful spot near the forest repairing a fence for cows, and there, just over the fence, were lying two baby fawns asleep. I had never seen wild animals as close as this before. At first sight they looked like they were frozen to death, after all it had been a very cold winter. But then I saw movement from their skin and noticed that they were breathing. But how come they were alone? I looked around to find the mother but she was nowhere to be seen. So for a long time I just kept still and watched. I remembered that someone once told me not to touch wild animals because their family could recognise the smell of humans, get afraid and avoid them. So I didn't know what to do because if they were left alone they might get eaten by foxes or eagles or other big birds. I decided to leave them but to come back later to see how they were. I returned after lunch but the two little deer were still there; what should I do I thought? Slowly, slowly I moved closer, so close that I could touch them.

How sensitive they looked, how fine and delicate. There was a lot of movement from their skin especially around their eyes and ears. They were lying close to each other to keep warm. They were very nervous and ready to jump up at any moment. I felt they had a lot of fear in their little bodies. They didn't look like the deer in books because the ones in books don't move and you can't touch them and they don't look like they would be afraid. But with these little creatures one could feel the wildness of their life in the forest. They looked shy and innocent and I began to feel very sorry for their life full of fear. Deer have a lot of enemies, wild beasts as well as humans, so they often have to hide somewhere.

"What should I do?" I thought. What would you do? So I said a few words and their eyes opened and closed again. When I said some more words their eyes opened and one of the fawns jumped up and started crying. It was afraid of me. Then the other fawn got up and started crying as well. Then something unexpected happened. Just a few steps away a big deer stood up and it was the mother. I got rather timid but at the same time I was glad to see that the two young deer were not alone. The mother deer started running away but the young deer were confused and one of them ran after his mother and one of them ran after me. I tried to explain that I wasn't his mother but he got more confused. Eventually he ran to hide under a small pine tree. His mother called to him but stayed hidden. I left them alone in the hope that his mother would find him.

After work at the end of the day I went back to the little pine tree to see if the baby deer was still there but it was gone. Mother had probably taken it to a place where they felt safe again. Later I thought, deer in the forest are very different from the ones in books. They are alive, like life really is.

by *Bodhinando Bhikkhu*



Here are some deer in the forest.

Can you draw your own picture of some deer?



The Way of Peace

The Buddha looked with a kind heart equally on all living beings,

therefore we call Him 'The Compassionate One'.

To develop compassion in our lives is skilful.

Can you colour these pictures in ?



What is the life of a wild deer like?
What could happen to you if you were a deer?
Have you ever thought about it?

THE SUFFERING OF A FISH

When a fish meets the fishhook

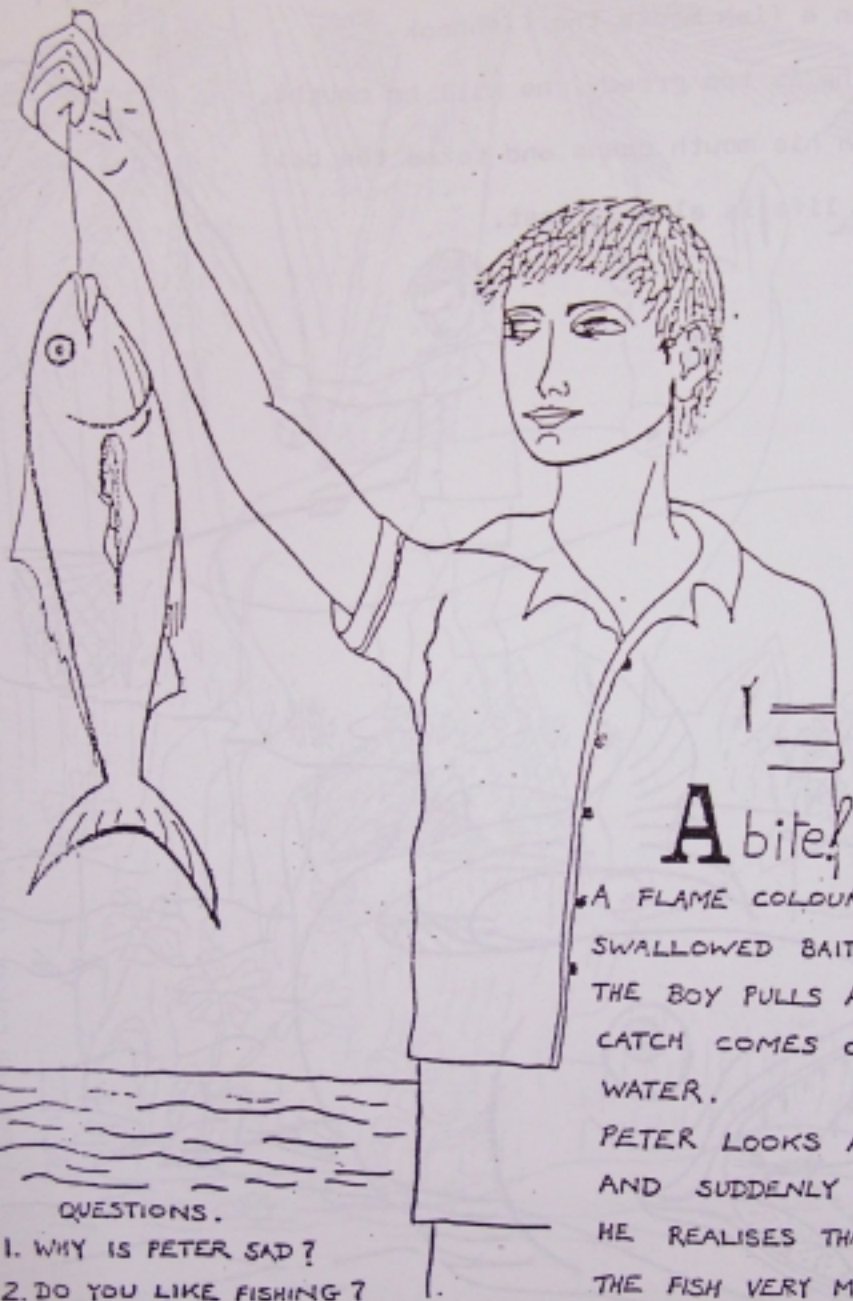
If he is too greedy, he will be caught.

When his mouth opens and takes the bait

His life is already lost.



COMPASSION



A bite!

A FLAME COLOURED FISH HAS SWALLOWED BAIT AND HOOK. THE BOY PULLS AWAY AND HIS CATCH COMES OUT OF THE WATER.

PETER LOOKS AT THE FISH AND SUDDENLY HIS HEART IS SAD HE REALISES THAT HE HAS HURT THE FISH VERY MUCH AND CAUSED IT TO DIE.

QUESTIONS.

1. WHY IS PETER SAD?
2. DO YOU LIKE FISHING?
3. WHAT DOES 'COMPASSION' MEAN?

The five Precepts

1. I will refrain from harming any living being.
2. I will refrain from any form of dishonesty including stealing.
3. I will refrain from misuse of the senses.
4. I will refrain from wrong speech.
5. I will refrain from taking drugs or drinks which tend to cloud the mind.

REFRAIN means 'Try not to'.

Questions :

In the story of Peter, when did he break a precept and what precept did he break?

What did he feel like when he broke that precept ?

What could he do not to break a precept ?

Do you know what these 5 precepts mean?

In your everyday life, are you able to keep any of them ?

In what way could you break each of these precepts ?

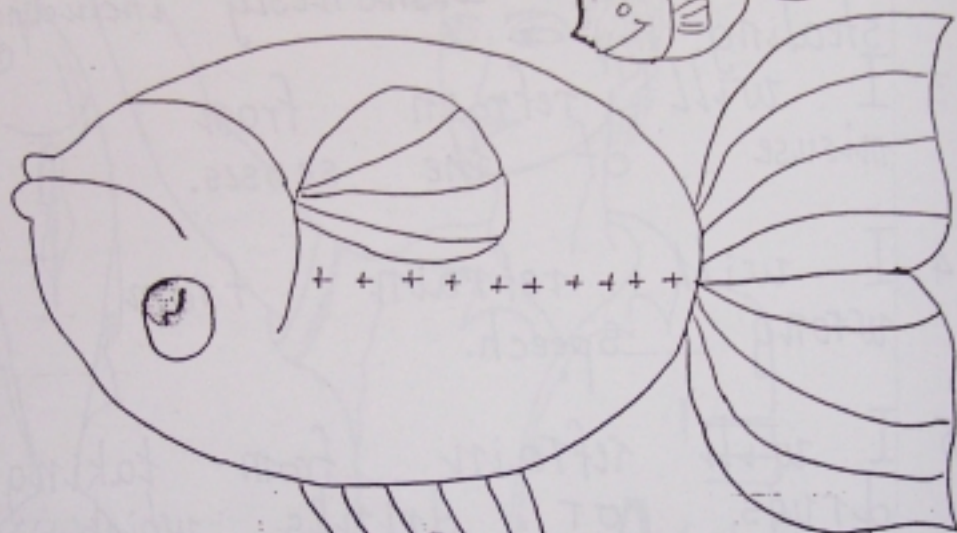
What do you feel like when you break a precept ?

In what ways can we keep the precepts ?

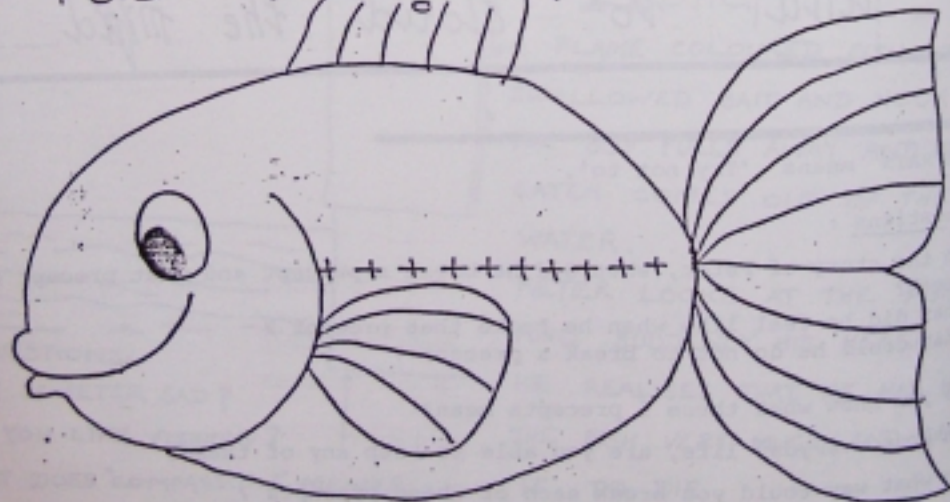
Fish mobile.

There are many beautiful fish.

Here are some for you to colour and perhaps you might like to make some more for an 'underwater mobile'.



Fold → <





the picture on ?

THIS IS THE GREAT STUPA AT ANURADHAPURA, SRI LANKA.
IT ENSHRINES THE LARGEST PORTION OF THE RELICS OF THE
BUDDHA. IT IS A SYMBOL OF PEACE AND ENLIGHTENMENT.

A drawing from the Amara-wati
Summer
Camp.





DISCOVER MEDITATION

In my room I close the door
Cross my legs and fold my hands
And sit upon the floor.

All is quiet in the house,
Just my breath goes in and out
As softly as a mouse.

Ssh! There is nothing now to hear.
Then suddenly the voice of silence
Bursts upon my ear.



I am a seven year old girl born in England. When I was born my parents consulted the Buddhist priest in the London temple to find the initials for my name. I am Asha Samantha Wettasinghe. When I was one year old I was first fed by the head priest in the London temple. I have visited a number of temples in Sri-Lanka and Thailand. In Anuradhapura there are lots of massive temples. I am very happy and lucky to be a buddhist.

A Parent's Reflection

According to Buddhist Philosophy, a child arrives in the world because of craving. Although a couple may want a child and take appropriate steps to have one, if there is not a "karmic consciousness" present the woman will not conceive.

Hence the physical manifestation, the genetic makeup of a child derives from its parents, but the karmic consciousness born into the world is separate. That being so, it seems to me that we cannot look upon our children simply as reflections of ourselves, and assume rights over them as we would our property. Rather, we can regard our children as dependent beings whom we must care for until they are old enough to take care of themselves.

As caretakers of our children, we are responsible for providing for their needs as best we can. In doing so, however, we must be careful not to overstep our responsibility by projecting our values and expectations upon them.

We can set what we consider to be a suitable example for them. (Which in fact is the most powerful method of teaching), and if it is appropriate for them they will follow it. But we have no right to pressure them, or to mould them to the way WE would like them to be.

I think we must remind ourselves often that despite their cuteness our children are ageless beings making their own way in the round of samsara. If we think of them more like this and less like little people we must domesticate, we might be prepared to let them learn by themselves without interference.

All too often we parents try to force our children to live up to our expectations, albeit with the best of intentions. We have a set of rules we expect them to keep, and if they don't we discipline them so that they will learn to keep the rules in the future. The well-disciplined child is a sign of a "good" child and an "effective" parent, so they say...

We are so proud when our children are "good" and so ashamed when they are "bad", as if WE are responsible for their moral state. Yet we know that there is no good without bad, and it is because they are human that they (and we) are both good and bad. It is not because they are intrinsically good or bad beings.

The Buddha teaches us that all humans are good and bad; that is our nature. Our responsibility as parents is to let our children know that it is normal and human to feel and to be good sometimes and bad others. That is their nature. It is our responsibility to let our children live with themselves as they are; knowing that it is their humanness not their essence which is good and bad.

If we do not accept our children as being totally human and therefore likely to be both good and bad, they will waste a lot of time trying to be something they can't be. Since they derive their view of themselves from the way we view them, if we accept both their good and bad sides, they will also. If they can accept their nature as it is and the world as it is, they can work WITH it and not AGAINST it towards a better life.

If we can do this much for our children, if we can show them an example of patience and acceptance with ourselves when things go wrong, as well as with them, then we shall have given them a worthwhile start in this lifetime.

Jane Elizabeth

Impermanence

Remember this now
To save all the trouble,
Life is a rainbow,
Life is a bubble.

Everything changes
Nothings the same,
First there is sunshine
And then there is rain.

First there are smiles
Then there are tears,
Things last for awhile
And then disappear.

Sad becomes happy,
Rain becomes fine.
Minutes are hours,
So goes the time.

Life is not good,
But life is not bad
Everything happens
Both happy and sad.

Everything changes
So everyone's free,
Don't cling to wishes,
Just live now and BE.

