



AUGUST 1991.

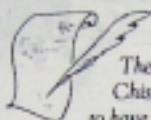
## Dhamma School Project Meeting

A meeting concerning recent updates and developments on the Dhamma School Project will be held at Amaravati:

**Tuesday, 20th August at 8 pm, in the marquee.**

It is open to all.

In particular, reports will be given on the progress of charitable registration and the recent conference (June 7-9) at Sharpham House on 'Buddhism and Education in the U.K.' For further details, write to Peter Carey, Trinity College, Oxford OX1 3BH.



## Letters to Rainbows

These are some of the letters sent by children from the Chiswick Vihara Dhamma class. They would be happy to have pen friends. If you would like to write, the address is: London Buddhist Vihara, 5 Heathfield Gardens, Chiswick, London W4 4JU

Dear Friend,

I am writing to you in my Dhamma class. My Dhamma class is in Chiswick.

I am nine years old. My hobbies are football and cricket. I have two brothers. They are called Shanil and Niran. Niran is my twin brother. He is two minutes older than me. Shanil is two years older than me.

How old are you? What are your hobbies? Have you got any brothers or sisters? Do you go to Dhamma class? Please tell me all about you.

Yours sincerely, *Sohan Sanarasinghe*

✍

Dear Friend,

My name is Sumudu. I am eight years old and I go to Dhamma School every Sunday.

My best ambition is to be an acro-bat or a doctor. If I am a doctor I can save lots of lives. The Buddha once did that to this man who was very ill. He would have died if the Buddha had not looked after him. This man was suffering and I don't want other people to suffer.

Best wishes, *Sumudu Kularajna*

✍

Dear Friend,

My name is Nilanthi. I am eight and a half. I go to Dhamma school every Sunday.

My hobbies are swimming and to listen to pop music. My ambition is to be a business woman.

My best colour is red. What is your best colour?

I would like to help the environment. I would like a pen friend from the Rainbow Room.

From, *Nilanthi*

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO RAINBOWS

We are always grateful to receive articles, drawings, stories, poems, etc., that are based on Buddhist principles. It is especially cheering to receive contributions from children. If you or your children would like to contribute to Rainbows, please do not hesitate to sit down and put pen/pencil/crayon to paper! Send contributions to

Rainbows Editor, Amaravati Buddhist Centre  
Great Gaddesden Hemel Hempstead Herts HP1 3BZ



Front Cover: art by Ross Barber

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# A Wish Leading to Perfection

*Did you know that our abbot, Ajahn Sumedho, found Amaravati and gave it its name before ever hearing of this Jataka tale? This is a curious coincidence . . .*

RETOLD BY VENERABLE SOBHANO



OUR INCALCULABLE PERIODS and one hundred thousand aeons ago, in the land that is now India, there was a city called Amaravati. And it just so happened that there was a certain nobleman there called Sumedha, who had inherited vast fortunes.

Apart from the usual talents and abilities that a man of his station would be expected to possess, Sumedha was also very wise. And so he reflected on his great wealth, 'If all my ancestors, after years of hard work, could not take a single gold coin away with them after death, why should I expect to be any different? I should seek the path to freedom and true happiness while I can.'



So the Wise Sumedha gave all of his fortune away to beggars and wandering monks near the city of Amaravati. He then thought:

*There must be an escape.  
It is impossible there should not be!  
I'll search and find the way.  
I'll find release from the bonds of existence.*

He put on the garb of a holy man, and let his hair grow long and become matted. He travelled far to the north, and eventually came to the Himalaya Mountains. Completely alone, with only wild animals for company, the Wise Sumedha found even a simple hermitage too distracting. So for seven days and nights he lived at the root of a tree.

At that time, the Buddha Dipankara of the Ten Powers was passing through the very same area where the Wise Sumedha was. When Sumedha heard of this, his eyes lit up and his ears twitched – and he said, 'I must meet this man, this King of sages, this knower of the worlds, and teacher of Gods and human beings.' He set out to find him.

He found the Buddha Dipankara and the four thousand disciples who



were travelling with him. Just as he saw them, the Wise Sumedha also saw a muddy part of the road. He instantly threw himself down, and stretched his matted locks out to let the great being carry on without dirtying himself in the mud. While stretched out over the mud, the Wise Sumedha had a very powerful wish: he thought, 'One day, may I also become a perfectly enlightened being just like the Buddha Dipankara of the Ten Powers.'

Reading the thoughts of the Wise Sumedha, the Buddha Dipankara halted the great assembly behind him with the force of a thunderbolt. He turned to his disciples and said, 'Do you see that holy man stretched out



in the mud? One day, in the far distant future, he will become a Buddha like me.'

The Gods of the Ten Thousand Worlds cheered and celebrated these wonderful words. And while the Wise Sumedha was still stretched out in the mud, the Gods showered him with flowers and heavenly perfumes, saying, 'May you make perfect all of the goodness of your heart, and realise Complete Enlightenment in no time.'

So the Wise Sumedha became a 'Bodhisatta', a Buddha-to-be. For countless future lifetimes he lived only for the welfare of others and the liberation of all beings, practising the ten powers of goodness until he had fully developed each one of them.

*These are the ten powers of goodness – known as paramitas – that the Bodhisatta Sumedha practised in his later lifetimes until he finally was born as Gotama, the Buddha of our age.*

## The Ten Powers of Goodness – *Paramitas*

<u>ENGLISH WORD</u>	<u>PALI WORD</u>	<u>MEANING</u>
1. Generosity	<i>Dana</i>	Giving or sharing what we have with others
2. Morality	<i>Sila</i>	Acting and speaking in ways which are good, and not harmful to others
3. Renunciation	<i>Nekkhamma</i>	Giving things up that we don't need
4. Energy	<i>Viriya</i>	Making effort
5. Wisdom	<i>Pañña</i>	Understanding people and things, and knowing the difference between good and bad
6. Patience	<i>Khanti</i>	Being willing to wait for things
7. Truth	<i>Sacca</i>	Being very honest with oneself and others
8. Resolution	<i>Aditthana</i>	Making promises and keeping them
9. Loving-kindness	<i>Metta</i>	Friendliness
10. Equanimity	<i>Upekkha</i>	Being even-minded and peaceful, whether things are going well or not

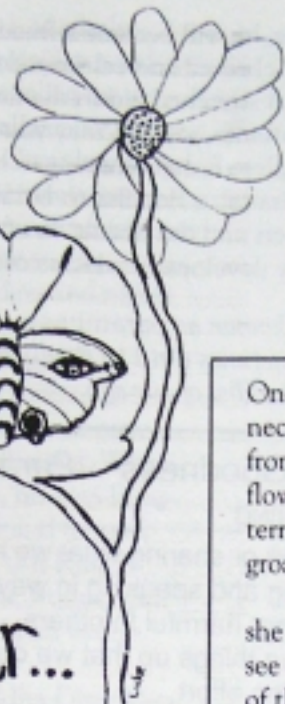
*Only Buddhas have developed all of these virtues completely. Until we become Buddhas, we should keep practising them as long as it takes to make them perfect.*

### Questions to Consider:

- > Can you think of some of the good things you have done that require paramitas?
- > Can you think of a story that is a good example of one or more of the paramitas?
- > Try practising a paramita on a special day – like your birthday or someone else's birthday or a day when you're at the monastery. See what difference it makes in your life.
- > What are the qualities of a Bodhisatta? Do you know anyone who you think lives like a Bodhisatta? Why not send them a picture or a present to encourage them.
- > Can you think of a special situations where it would be good to practise each paramita?
- > Some animals have special qualities and characteristics. What animal or animals are most suited to each paramita? Make a list of the animals next to the list of paramitas.

# One thing

Leads  
to  
Another...



Story and drawings by Julia, Luke and Penny Heron

ONCE UPON A TIME in a land where there lived many creatures, a beautiful delicate butterfly emerged from a chrysalis. The wings were fragile and translucent. This butterfly was so light that it could float along in the gentle breeze.

One day as she went about the tasks of collecting nectar and pollen from glorious flowers, she heard a terrible roaring and groaning.

Looking down, she was amazed to see one of the largest

and fiercest animals of the region, a huge tiger. The tiger had unfortunately caught his leg in a net and was obviously very frustrated. He was yelling and roaring with all of his might. The butterfly felt very sorry to see such a magnificent creature in such a state. Quite naturally she wanted to do something to help.



'But what can I do?' The butterfly thought, 'I'm so small and weak and helpless. I'm not at all important. How can an insignificant creature like me help such an impressive tiger?' Resting quietly on a leaf for a moment to reflect, a little plan began to form in her mind.

Without wasting time, she flew off and fluttered ever-so-gently near a large green leaf. One of her tiny antennae softly touched it. The tiny movement of the leaf tickled the

nose of a resting monkey. And then the monkey began to SNEEZE. This so startled a squirrel in a nearby tree that

the squirrel dropped the acorn she was holding. . .





The acorn fell – PLOP – onto the head of an owl who seemed to be asleep but who was really doing his daily meditation practice.

The owl opened his wise old eyes and of course, being the owl, knew exactly what to do. . . .



The owl summoned all of the gnawing, nibbling and chewing creatures he could think of who lived nearby, and instructed them to bite through the net. This took a great deal of nibbling by a great many creatures, but eventually, the paw of the mighty beast was freed! The tiger, limping a little went on his way with his heart filled with gratitude, and all of the creatures returned to their daily tasks.

After a short while, the tiger thought he felt on his brow, between his eyes the presence of something tiny. Although he could hardly feel her, he somehow knew that the butterfly had settled to accompany him on his journey.



# A Lotus Blossom

Sister Uppala – whose name means 'Lotus' in Pali – is the oldest member of our community at Amaravati. In April we celebrated her 89th birthday. She was invited by Ajahn Sumedho to come and live at Amaravati as an Anagarika, a nun who wears white. She has been living here for over six years, having come to Amaravati soon after it first opened.

We are fortunate to have Sister Uppala living with us. Being much older than the rest of us, she has a rich store of tales to tell, and her dedication and commitment to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha and to the realisation of Nibbana is inspiring for many of us in the community.

When she was asked if she had some advice or words of wisdom for the readers of Rainbows, this was her offering.



Dear Rainbows readers,

I was very pleased when I was asked to write for Rainbows. I knew at once what I wanted to say. I am very old and know it is true. It is very important to be kind always, to try always to have a kindly heart in every way.

One thing you can do if you see a silly earthworm stranded on the concrete path is to think of him, take time to stop and carefully lift him up and put him on another patch of grass. Do it very gently as earthworms are easily hurt. Be very kind to him. Even kindness to an earthworm is important. Without kindness, one cannot ever have any real joy or real peace.

The other thing I wanted to say to you is to always try and tell the truth. It is so very important to be honest and truth telling to yourselves about yourselves and to everybody else. Unless you observe telling the truth with big things and little things, you will never be at ease with yourself. There will always be a little unease in your mind and heart. With this little unease, you will never be really at peace. Watch yourselves, be careful with what you say. Know how you feel so that what you say can be truthful.

When you do these two things, keep your heart kindly in every way and observe telling the truth, your mind will become bright and clear and you will be peaceful and happy with Truth.

With love to you all from *Sister Uppala*

P.S.: You are all very fortunate for finding the Triple Gem so young. I looked for it until I was 65 years old before I found it. You all have the loveliest chance now of realising Nibbana.



Kuan Yin  
Bodhisattva:

The  
Mother of  
Compassion



When you finish colouring this page, you can make it into a stand-up picture.  
Cut off this bottom strip at the line just above. Glue the picture onto some stiff card,  
and also glue this bottom strip onto another bit of card. Next, bend this strip at the  
dotted line (to the right) and glue it to the back of the picture, just behind her heart.

With luck, it should prop the picture up.

Bend here  
and glue to  
back of  
picture

The following story comes from the oral tradition of the Hasidic Jews.

## The Three Sons

ONCE, IN A SMALL VILLAGE, there lived a man who had three sons. He loved his sons as much as a father could. He did everything he knew to raise them well and teach them the ways of the world and matters of the heart.

The father deeply felt the need to honour the tradition which was the life-blood of his ancestors. And so, being Jewish, he did the things proper and suitable to being a Jew.

Now it happened that it was Spring. The time for celebrating Passover had arrived. Every year the family would gather and retell the Passover story. Remembering it every year would make the day rich and add fullness to their lives. So it was this year.

During the Passover celebration, the father would ask his sons, 'Why is this day different from all other days?' And in turn each one would respond.

The eldest son was very bright and was frequently praised for his ability to think clearly, and express himself with confidence. So this night when he was asked, he replied, 'Father, tonight is different from all other nights because tonight we tell the story of the exodus from Egypt. Tonight we talk about slavery, and about how Moses was called forth by God to take his people to a land of freedom. Father, we tell this story not only to remember the people of the past but to remind ourselves that we are all on this journey. Tonight we think about the ways we are still slaves and where true freedom really is.'

And the father, delighted with the clear true words of his son, beamed in pride.

The middle son was very simple in nature. So when he was asked the question, he replied, 'Father, tonight is different because tonight we eat only *matzos*.\* On other nights we can eat *matzos* and bread. Tonight we eat only *matzos*, to remember that the people left in a hurry. They didn't have time to bake bread.'

And the father, touched by the tenderness of his words, radiated joy.

Now many children from the village often made fun of the youngest son, because he didn't often speak and was considered stupid. And so on this night when he was asked the

question, he turned towards his father silently. The father looked into his son's soft brown eyes, which illuminated a great depth. The boy's expression told of his own journey through difficulties to understanding true freedom. The father could see that in his silence which refused to settle on words, this boy knew more than most men would ever dare to know about the journey from slavery to freedom. His silence was a song of awakening.

So deeply touched by his youngest son's testimony, the father couldn't help the tears which escaped from his heart through his eyes.

\**Matzo* is a traditional Jewish food which resembles a very large savoury biscuit.





*I am a new member of the family at Amaravati. But am not so easy to recognise because I don't look like anyone else. I'm a bit scaly and I have a long tail. My eyes are full of light and, if I want, I can breathe fire and fly in the air. My favourite places are usually deep in the sea or on top of the highest mountains. That's because I like to hide away and not let anyone find me except very special people.*

*I have come from a land very far away to live here and to guard the biggest treasure in the whole monastery. People have always liked me to live near their temples to protect them. That's because they say that I am very powerful. Usually people are afraid of me because of my powers and secret ways, but I can also be quite likeable and wise.*

*What kind of creature am I?  
Do you know where in the  
monastery I live, and  
what treasure  
I guard?*



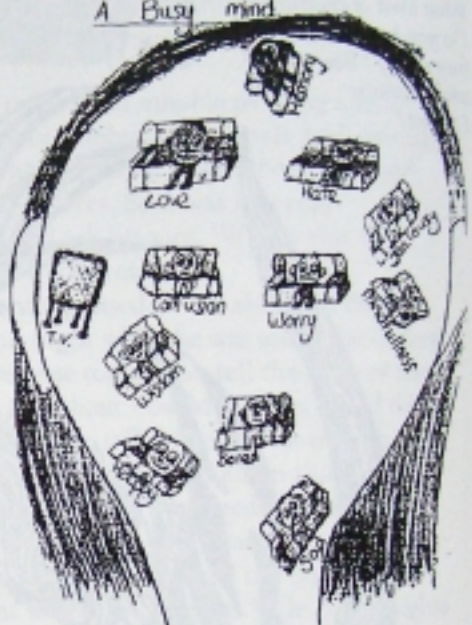
# ROOH BYBBLES



Roshana

A HAPPY DAY SHARING APPLES

A Busy mind

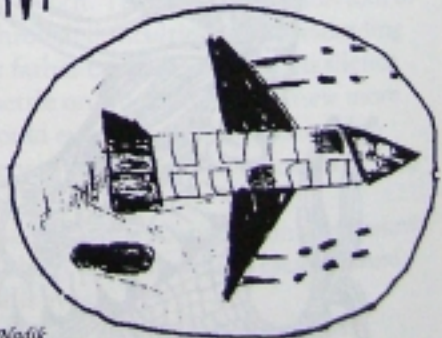


## Buddha

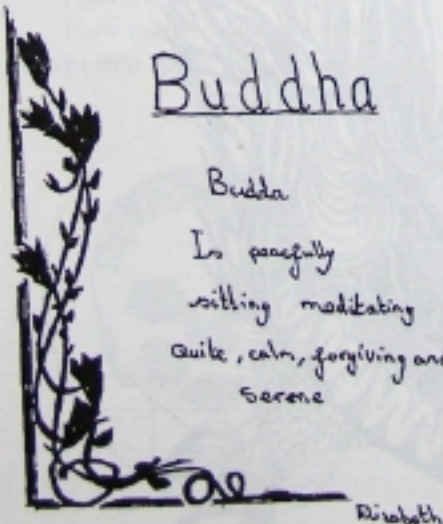
Buddha

Is peacefully  
sitting meditating  
quite, calm, forgiving and wise  
serene

Do  
not  
kill

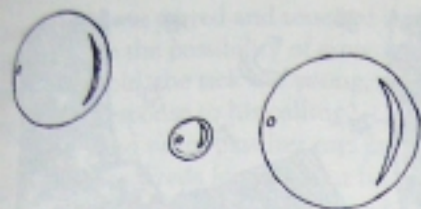


Narvik

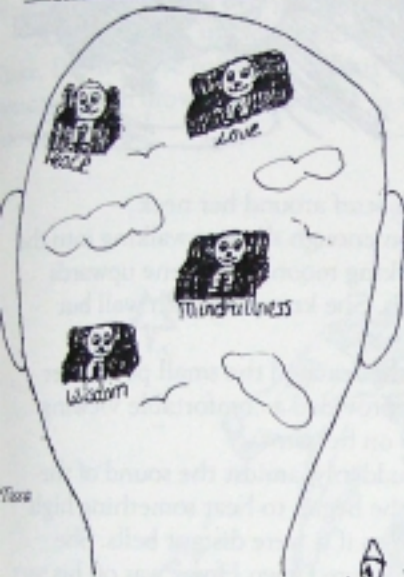


Rishabh

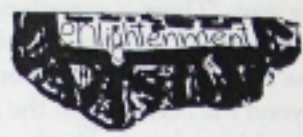




A Clear Raccoon mind



Alfred



Happy  
calm and peaceful  
gentle nice and soothing  
standing perfectly in silence  
Brightly

Sam



Freda 6 1/2 years



THE BUDDHA



By  
Geri Ace 9 3/4

# Dawn Horse

by Sister Satima

**F**REDA WOKE VERY EARLY one Sunday morning. Her kitten had snuggled up on her pillow. Her loud purring was doing a much better job than the usual sound of her alarm at awakening her. Stretching sleepily and moving gently so as not to disturb the kitten, she began dressing in her warmest clothes by the light of the moon.

Icicles hung from the window ledge and the cold air lent an extra sparkle to the morning stars. 'There is something special about wintertime,' she thought whilst wrapping a thick scarf around her neck.

The back door made no sound when she left. Soon enough she was walking into the field beyond the boundary of the garden. Shafts of sparkling moonlight shone upwards from the whitened path. Its silver trail lead her onwards. She knew the path well but covered in whiteness, it felt like crossing a new land.

While there was still no sign of dawn in the sky, she reached the small pond. Her favourite stone was now cushioned with snow but still provided a comfortable viewing point facing east. She sat down feeling the cold breeze on her brow.



Suddenly, amidst the sound of the wind, she began to hear something high pitched as if it were distant bells. She knew for sure Dawn Horse was on his way. As the first faint blue spread itself in the east she saw his shimmering image appear on the horizon. A noble stallion who brought dawn shimmering in his wake! His hoof-beats sounded across the sky, and like a million hearts, spoke of energy, joy and vigour. What a privilege to catch sight of this elusive creature. Dawn Horse, a master over time, created dawn from the image of night.

Freda thought she could feel the breath from his nostrils warming her face. She caught hold of the silken mane that was flung purposely within reach. Before thinking twice, the stallions strong shoulders had become her carriage flying high into the winter's air.

Circling the earth, she began to see



how all life was stirred and touched by this great being. His breath and vigour awakened dull forms to the possibility of growth and expansion . . . to the possibility of joy and peace. The old, the sick the young, animals and even the very blades of grass couldn't fail to echo in response to his calling.

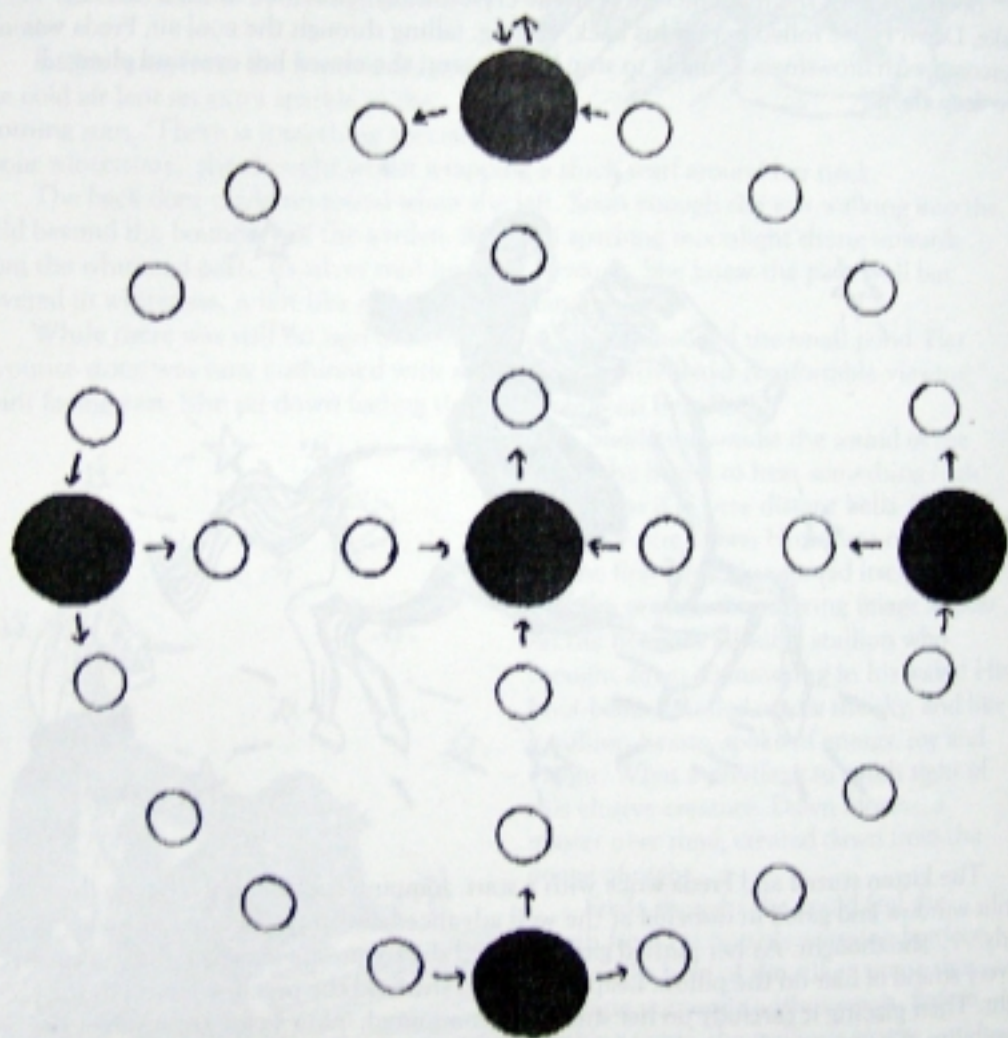
The wind swept past her ears as they circled this small planet riding timelessly through space. Freda forgot about home, her kitten, school and even lost sight of the image of the Dawn Horse she was riding. Nothing but the joy of expansion flooded her being as she felt how life itself pulsed in peaceful communion with the energy of awakening. Here was a place where seasons couldn't penetrate, where winter made no sense and time eluded every number on the face of every clock.

Soon however, she felt a picture of home crystallising before her. With a friendly shake, Dawn Horse rolled her off his back. Falling, falling through the cool air, Freda was overcome with drowsiness. Unable to stop her descent, she closed her eyes and plunged into deep sleep.



The kitten stirred and Freda woke with a start. Jumping out of bed she ran to the sunlit window and gazed in disbelief at the well advanced morning. 'Surely I woke up early. . . ' she thought. As her puzzled gaze surveyed the room, she caught sight of a silken silvery strand of hair on the pillow. Leaping forward she held the precious strand in the light. Then placing it carefully on her shrine she murmured, 'Now I can never forget the possibility of being completely alive. It is there in the icicles, the sparkling stars and the darkness. It is an offering from the dawn to those searching the secret of light. No, I can never forget - Dawn Horse is more than just a dream.' She went about her duties of feeding the kitten and making tea with deep contentment and peace.

# NYOUT





# NYOUT

## About the Game

Nyout is a game which comes from Korea and is at least 1000 years old. The board is made from wood or paper, and the pieces are usually carved from wood or stone. Small flat strips of wood are used as 'dice' and are often thrown through a ring to keep it within a boundary. The game of Nyout may have been taken to North America across the Bering Strait, as similar games are also played by the North American Indians.

## How to Make the Game

- Cut out the Nyout game opposite and glue it to a piece of cardboard to make the game board.
- Colour in the circles and decorate the board with your own pattern or pictures.
- Find 8 small stones or buttons, four of one colour, four of a different colour.
- Find 5 small sticks (3-4 cm long) and paint them white on one side and black on the other. (Or cut 5 strips of cardboard and paint them in the same way.)
- Make a bag for the sticks and stones: cut a square piece of material, put the sticks and stones in the middle, wrap them up with the cloth and tie some string around it.

## Object of the Game

- The game ends when someone has all their pieces go around the board and reach the exit point at the top.

## How to Play

- The game is for two players, or for four players playing in teams of two.
- Each player or team has 4 pieces (the buttons or stones). At the beginning of the game there are no pieces on the board.
- The players take turns throwing the sticks into the air. They score one point for each stick which lands with the white side facing up. Adding up all of the sticks which have landed white side facing up, they move according to their score.
- After throwing the sticks, players can move one of their pieces around the board. New pieces join the board at the top circle.
- If a piece lands on a large dark circle, it is a special situation. On the next turn, the piece can either go straight to the middle and to the exit point, or can carry on going around the board. The player decides which is best.
- If a piece lands on a circle where one of the other player's pieces is, the other player's piece has to go back to the start.
- If a piece lands on a circle where one of the same player's pieces is, both pieces can be moved together on each turn until they reach the end.
- Players can have any number of pieces on the board at any one time. This means that a player can move an existing piece or play with a new piece at each turn.

In this world we have to answer questions and tell teachers, parents, and friends what we think about things. We often need to make decisions and use our judgement in a situation. Sometimes people ask a question, and they have a particular answer they have in mind. Sometimes people ask questions sincerely wanting to know what our ideas are. Occasionally people ask a question hoping to shed light on the very process of thinking itself.

There are many different kinds of thinking and ways of using our minds. With the following questions try some experiments. First, go through all of the questions as if there is a right answer to each. What is that answer? Then, go through each question as if you are talking to someone who trusts and respects you very much and sincerely wants to know how you feel. How do you respond then?

Finally, use each question as a question for reflection. In other words, don't try to think of an answer. Just use the question to see how it makes you feel in your heart. What happens after you gently bring the question into your mind and then move your attention to how it feels? Keep going back to the question as often as you need to keep the idea alive in your heart.

Take as much time as you need with each question and spend most of the time exploring its effects. What is your experience of this kind of thinking? Try these thought experiments with the following questions.

> **What is the greatest gift you could give someone?**

His Holiness The Dalai Lama, the most senior Buddhist monk from Tibet, is a very wise and well-loved religious leader for people all over the world. He is also the political leader for Tibetan people. Earlier this year there was a conference where many people came to hear him speak. One of the things he said during the conference was,

> **'Religion isn't essential for human beings. But what is essential is having an affectionate heart.'** What do you think he meant by that?

> **What is the saddest thing about war?**

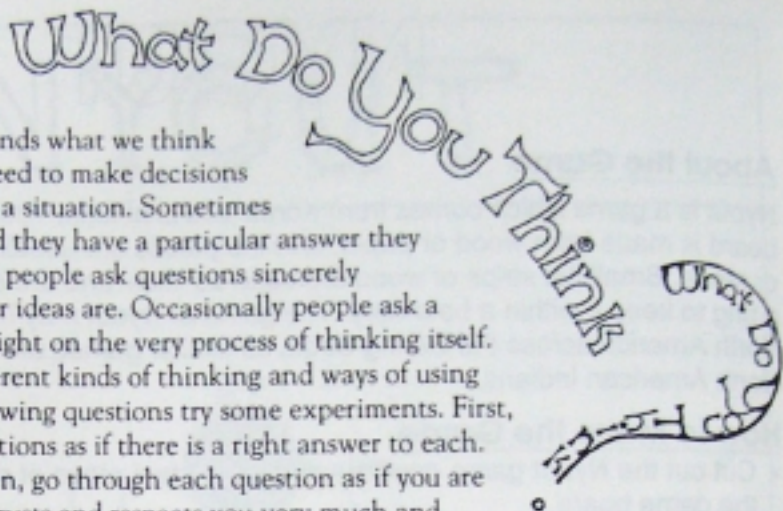
> **What image, or poem, or feeling comes into your mind when you think of being completely free from all suffering?**

> **Think of the most noble thought in the world. What is it? Now think the most horrible, ugly thought in the world. What is it? What do these two thoughts have in common?**

> **Who am I?**

*If you would like to share your ideas, or poems or drawings with 'Rainbows' after any of these thought experiments, we would be very happy to receive them and publish some of them. Send them to:*

'Rainbows', Amaravati Buddhist Centre  
Great Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 3BZ (England)



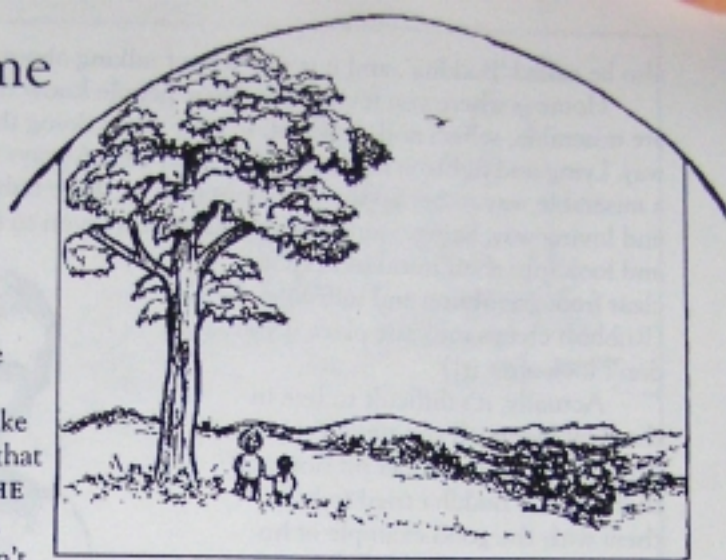


# Our Real Home

AJAHN SUCITTO

## WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

You probably see monks and nuns in monasteries, going about their duties. So you think, 'That's where they live, in monasteries.' But actually although you see many of these people in brown robes walking around the monastery, acting like they belong there, the truth is that **NONE OF THEM LIVES IN THE MONASTERY!** If you think I'm crazy or telling a lie (monks don't tell lies, do they?) wait a minute and listen. . . .



Ask yourself where you have been today. Your body might have been moving around your house, out into the street, to school and back . . . but where were YOU? All day long, were you thinking about what will happen next, or in a hurry to get somewhere, or worried about what your friends are doing, or looking forward to playing with the dog when you get home? Most of the time your mind is not really where your body is. And then at night you go to sleep. Your body is just lying there, but you can really go places then! We seem to be living on a wandering ship, often not knowing where our mind will be from one moment to the next. Is there any place where your mind stays put? Ask yourself: where is your real home?

This is what the Buddha wanted to know. He looked to see if there was some place where his mind stayed. He couldn't find anything in the world or any state of mind that

stayed forever. Then he noticed that when he watched his thoughts and feelings come and go, or noticed the *feeling* of walking, or looked at the world around him without any desire to go places or get anything out of it – he noticed how that which was watching was steady and peaceful. His mind, when it was watchful and not wanting anything, felt at ease and at home in the world. This watchful mind can





also be called 'Buddha', and it is one way of talking about our Real Home.

Home is where you feel at ease. Wise people know that you can't feel at ease if you are miserable, selfish and confused, so they avoid doing things that make them feel that way. Lying and fighting really make you feel bad. Always wanting things you don't have is a miserable way to be. So the wise ones give up those habits, and instead live in a gentle and loving way, being content with whatever is given to them. They also like to meditate and look into their mind to keep it clear from grumbling and selfishness. (Rubbish creeps into any place if you don't look after it!)

Actually, it's difficult to live in the Real Home all the time. People get confused and wander off now and then. So the Buddha tried to help them with the good example of his life and teaching. The Buddha gave a whole set of descriptions of the Real Home, and most importantly, how to get there.

'When I die,' he said, 'these instructions will be your Guide.' And because the Buddha's words are about the way things are – no matter where or when – they are still a valuable guide to the Real Home.

So this is the place that monks and nuns live in. As you can see, this means it doesn't really matter where you put your body! Sometimes they go on those long walks that you hear about, up the hills and through the rain, sleeping out on the grass or in someone's barn. Why? Because the aim of a wise person's life is to be at home with whatever happens, no matter where their body is. So instead of thinking, 'Oh rain, ughh . . . I hate it! I don't want to be here,' wise people stop making those grumbling noises. Instead, they think: 'Oh, rain is part of life, I bet the trees are enjoying this.' Or when they meet someone who is unfriendly, instead of thinking: 'Oh horrible person, drop dead! I'm frightened, go away!' – they think, 'May they be well, may they be at peace.' Wise people know that to live in fear and with hatred is horrible. So they stop thinking in those ways and change. It may not make the rain or the person go away, but it means that you no longer live in those places in your mind that make you feel bad.

When you can do that – to be at home with whatever happens – then you have found your Real Home. You don't really live in the world; the world comes alive in you! When your Real Home is everywhere, then all beings are your family, and you have great kindness and forgiveness for them. So make your life like a door to that place of peace, showing people where it can be found and inviting them in.

Many people want to find their Real Home, and here is one way that we can help each other live in that place of peace. This is something that you can chant:





## Circle Game

LOOKING FROM MY WINDOW, out across the fields, I saw a herd of young cattle chasing something. They were mooing and leaping, and reminded me of a bunch of lads having fun with a football.

The game continued for some time. The prey was licked, and nuzzled and butted along. Every time it made a run for it, the cows followed and blocked its way.

Suddenly they lost interest and disappeared over the rise. I wandered out across the fields and came to the spot where they had abandoned play. There, making strange jerking movements, was a small grey rabbit. Its fur coat had chunks licked out of it and had patches of blood showing. Its face was smeared in sticky bovine spittle.

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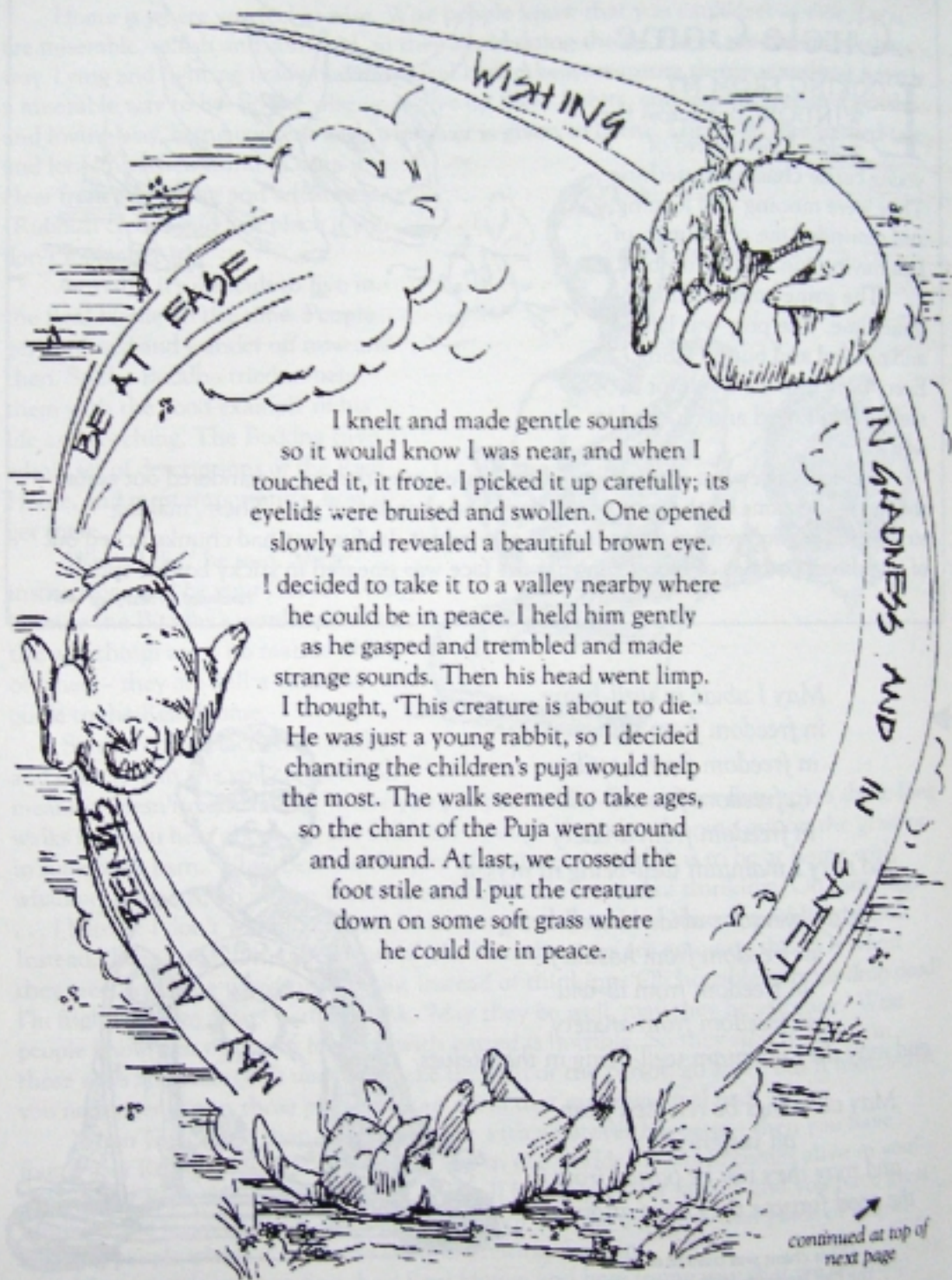
→ May I abide in well-being  
in freedom from affliction  
in freedom from hostility  
in freedom from ill-will  
in freedom from anxiety  
and may I maintain well-being in myself

May everyone abide in well-being  
in freedom from hostility  
in freedom from ill-will  
in freedom from anxiety  
and may they maintain well-being in themselves

May all beings be released from  
all suffering  
and may they not be parted from  
the good fortune they have attained.



(This chant was translated from the Pali language by Ajahn Sucitto.)



I knelt and made gentle sounds so it would know I was near, and when I touched it, it froze. I picked it up carefully; its eyelids were bruised and swollen. One opened slowly and revealed a beautiful brown eye.

I decided to take it to a valley nearby where he could be in peace. I held him gently as he gasped and trembled and made strange sounds. Then his head went limp. I thought, 'This creature is about to die.' He was just a young rabbit, so I decided chanting the children's puja would help the most. The walk seemed to take ages, so the chant of the Puja went around and around. At last, we crossed the foot stile and I put the creature down on some soft grass where he could die in peace.

continued at top of  
next page



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Suddenly he lifted his head, sniffed the air and while making a hoarse squeal, mustered all of his energy and shot off along the path. Finally he rested behind a tuft of grass. When he reappeared again, his eyes were wide open and bright and gave me a long look before disappearing for good.

I walked home, marvelling at the mystery of it all. At home, I returned to my chores. Back to the ironing, I picked up my Amaravati printed tee-shirt bearing my astrological symbol - the Rabbit.

Beryl

Simply trust...  
don't the petals  
flutter down  
Just like  
that?



ISSA

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There is one thing, if you practise and make much of it,  
that leads to enlightenment, to lasting peace and true freedom.  
What is that one thing? It is bringing to mind the Buddha.



What is the Buddha?  
Where can the Buddha be found?

*The quote at the top is adapted from the Gradual Sayings, Chapter 16.  
With grateful thanks to the Pali Text Society.*