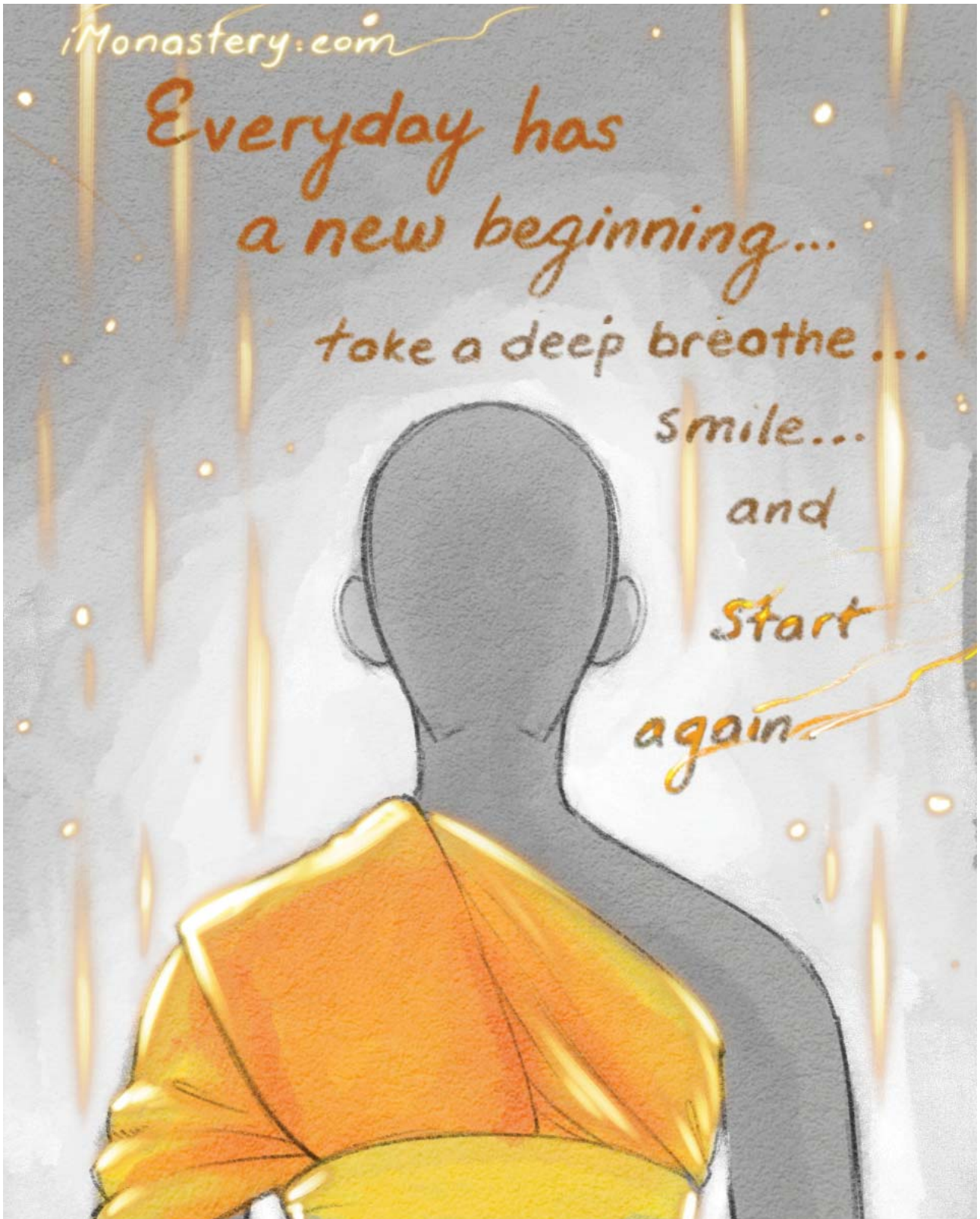


# HAND BOOK

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## Monk's Life 101



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# The Journey of a Monk's Life

## Welcome to Monk's Life 101.

This handbook will be a trusty ally in training to be a monk both outside and inside. It cannot replace the guidance and mentorship of the Teaching monks and Mentor monks, but it is meant to be a spark that ignites the fire to **learn and to live** what it means to meditate, to live a life of inner peace, to live as a true monk.

## From Man to Monk

In this training, you will be what they call a **Dhammadayada** which means "Heir to the Buddha's Teaching." Means one who develops oneself by the teachings of the Buddha. In this training, you will be taken care of by the Teaching monks and Mentor monks. They will guide you on this journey from layman to monkhood.

- In the first phase of the training, you will train in the Dhamma and discipline as a layman taking the 8 precepts. You will learn the Dhamma, practice meditation, and rehearse the chanting to enter monkhood.
- The second phase is after ordination where you have entered the Sangha Order as a monk. You are now considered a fellow brother to the Teachings and Mentor monks. You will experience the concept of "**Unity brings Happiness**" and learn to live the life of the Middle Way.

## The Life of the Middle Way

The path to inner peace is **The Middle Way**, a way that is neither too tight nor too loose. Too loose being submerged in the flood of sensual pleasures. Too tight being chained by the pain of self-torment. The way that is just right is one that balances comfort and discipline. Buddhist monks walk this ancient path rediscovered by the Buddha over 2500 years ago. It is a life that is most suitable for attaining true happiness. True happiness that is gained only by **stopping and stilling the mind**.

Once the mind is at a standstill, peaceful, and focused that is when the real journey begins, the journey within, the journey to true happiness. The journey itself is one of ease and happiness, the problem is that the mind has a tendency to wander here and there, to this and that, jumping from thought to thought...the opposite of stillness. So the mind must be trained to stop and be still. A monk's life is one dedicated to this training.



## The Monk's Training

### Training To Stop and Still The Mind

The training consists of both outer and inner work.

- Outer work: Developing habits that support stillness of the mind.
- Inner work: Meditating to clear away the hindrances and defilements of the mind.
- While seemingly different on the surface both the **outer and inner work go hand in hand**, they complement each other, develop quickly together and follow the same foundational concept for success, **Sati and Sabai**.



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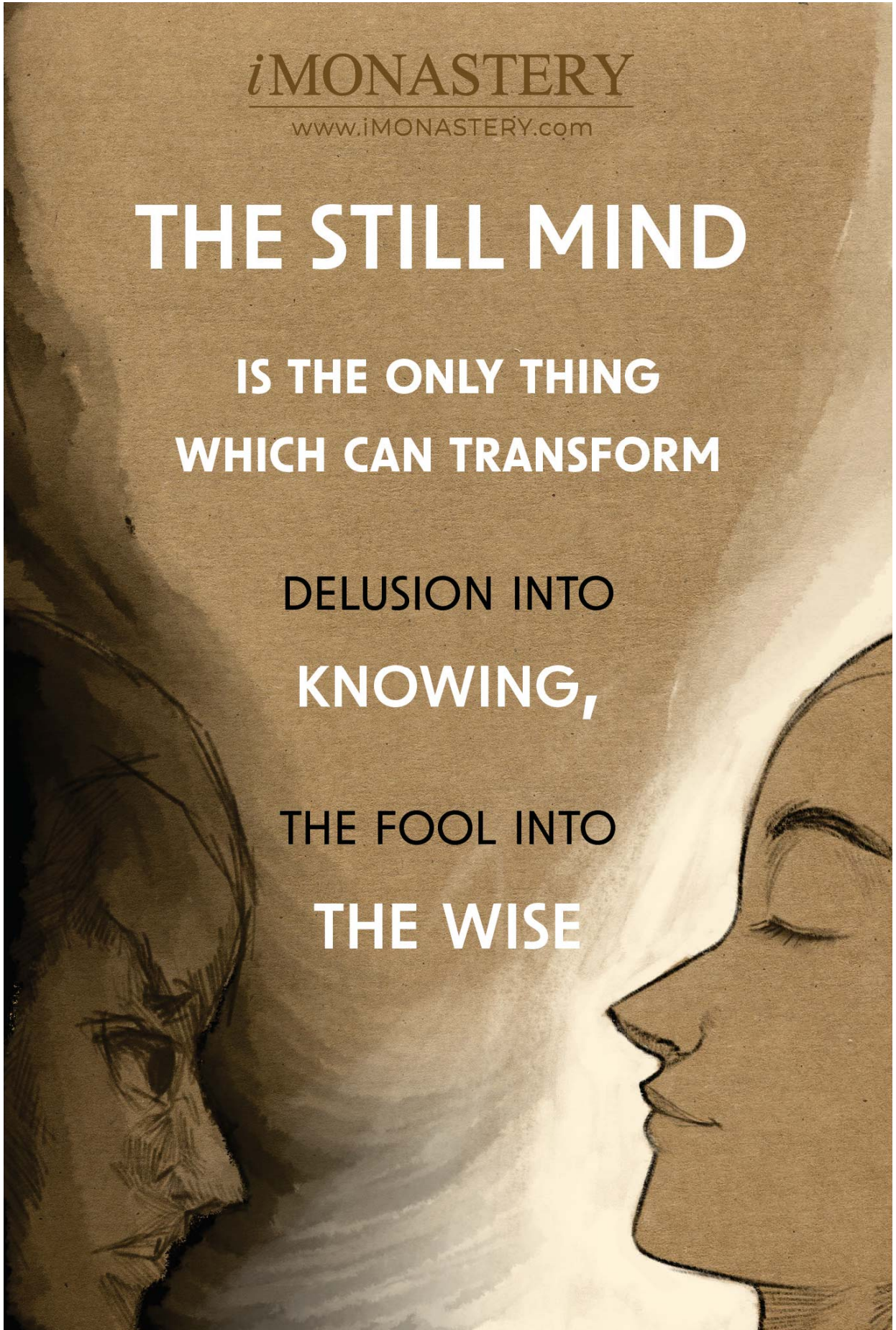
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# THE STILL MIND

IS THE ONLY THING  
WHICH CAN TRANSFORM

DELUSION INTO  
KNOWING,

THE FOOL INTO  
THE WISE



## Stopping The Mind with Sati and Sabai

- Sati (Sa Ti): Conscious, Awareness
- Sabai(Sa Bai): Comfortable, Calm

## Benefits of Sati and Sabai

- Sati + Sabai = Stop
- "Stop is the Key to Success"

Stopping the mind is the key to success in both the world of the mundane and the world of Dhamma. You will understand this phrase more as you practice meditation. **The mind that is stopped and stilled within the body, is a mind that is powerful.**

- When you have the right balance of Sati and Sabai your mind will stop and still. You may notice in life examples that show this effect to a certain extent like

Nature walks awareness with walking, while calm and comfortable in the natural setting of tranquility.

Passion or Hobby: You may notice you get in the "zone" when you do something you love. Your awareness is with what you like to do and comfortable because you like it.



So it's most likely that in your life you've experienced the effects of Sati and Sabai, but how **complete and balanced** the ingredients of Sati and Sabai were, results in varying grades of a still mind. So to become a skilled chef of the mind, you must learn to find the right amount of Sati and Sabai in any given situation like ingredients in a dish. Sitting meditation is one of the most well suited situations to find that balance and we aim for **100% stillness of the mind.**

## Examples of daily applications of Sati and Sabai

- Knowing what you are doing in a comfortable way
- Comfortable awareness of the moment
- Check if your body is Sabai
- Check if your mind is Sabai
- Observe where your awareness is; outside the body, with the body, or at the center of the body?

## Applying Sati and Sabai to Daily Life

- Daily Chores

Chores are important to complete, but it's possible to complete them in a **Sabai way**. If you fol-

low the protocol of every chore with a mind of ease and acceptance that's Sati and Sabai.

If you ever find yourself rushing or trying too hard to get things done on time, come back and check that your **body is Sabai** and continue from there.

Always be observant of how you can work **as a team** to complete the chores. This will create Sabai from the camaraderie and comfort that you will get the job done quicker to have more free time.

## Daily Schedule

- The daily schedule is a great training tool for Sati and Sabai. If you're focused only on being on time and you constantly rush to get where you are going, that's Sati but without Sabai. If you just sleep and skip every session, that's too Sabai without Sati.
- A good balance of Sati and Sabai according to the daily schedule would be **managing time to follow the schedule in a natural way** where it feels like you're just flowing from activity to the next. Some tips:

On-time doesn't mean on time but it means 5 -15 minutes before the session. This will allow time to **relax** and show respect to the Teaching monk.

Manage time to account for a relaxing and comfortable transit between blocks of the schedule.

Sometimes we'll find an activity we like a lot, like cleaning for example. But if it goes overtime at the expense of meditation time, it's suggested to **practice letting go** to move on to the meditation session. This practice of detachment will have benefits in the meditation. We can decide later whether we want to go back and finish the cleaning.

When the daily schedule is settled in, the mind will settle in easier.

- **The perfect balance of Sati and Sabai is simply the middle way.** The way that is neither too tight nor neither too loose. This is the monk's main training, to find the balance of Sati and Sabai in order to stop and still the mind. The Monk's Life is the best suited for this training because of the worry-free quality and just bountiful amount of free time. This training is one that is supported by the laity out of faith through donating all our necessities. A monk is expected not just to survive, but to thrive in this training.

## **Thrive in the Monk's Life**

A monk no longer has to worry about how to survive. Lay people support him by offering food and other needs. It is now his job to thrive in the Dhamma and Discipline of the Buddha's teach-

ings. There are **4 responsibilities** that should be taken care of so that they do not become 4 problems that hinder a monk in his journey within.

- **Body**

The body is like a vehicle that is used to do good deeds, share kind words, and most importantly, meditate. **When the body is Sabai, the mind will be Sabai.** So it is important to look after the wellness of the body by exercising, stretching, and reflecting on food consumed.

- **Mind**

The mind is like the driver that needs to **see clearly to know** where he is going. Anger, greed, and delusion cloud the mind making it hard to see things clearly. Consistent training of mindfulness and meditation will not only build a defense against these viruses of the mind but also advance in clearing them out.

- **Team**

The training of The Sangha is like a brotherhood, a family. The Buddha spoke of **spiritual friendship as not merely “half the spiritual life” but the whole of it.** In the monk’s life, there may be moments it feels like your flame to go on fizzles. It’s important to have good teachers, mentors, and friends to reignite the light. Helping strengthen others, in turn, helps

strengthen yourself. An uplifting and harmonious atmosphere helps greatly in the sustainability of training the mind. **Unity brings happiness.**

- **Duty**

A monk has many duties such as chanting, cleaning the temple grounds, studying the Dhamma, meditating, etc. Not only are these duties beneficial for cultivating good energy for meditation, but also help in **habit development supporting stillness of the mind.**

Now that you have an idea of how to journey along the Monk's Life, you may want to know more about the Buddhist Culture that has supported the continuation of this ancient path till this day.

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Let no one  
ever come to you

Without leaving better  
and happier

-Mother Teresa



# Buddhist Culture

The goal of this section, Buddhist Culture, is to give a better understanding of why a Buddhist may act, speak and think in the way they do. Also to avoid any discomfort with what may be deemed disrespectful in a Buddhist's view. It is written with hopes to help with adapting easily and comfortably to a possibly completely foreign way of life and mindset. Buddhist culture is integrated into Thai culture to an extent, so sometimes the word Thai culture will be used.

## Roles in Buddhism

The roles in Buddhism have one main distinguishing feature, The Precepts. The one with more precepts has a higher role. In Buddhism, sons should bow to their parents' feet, but when they ordain as monks, the parents bow to their sons because of the higher amount of precepts that the monks hold.

- **Monks**
  - Phra, Bhikkhu, Luang Pi
  - 227 Precepts
- **Novice Monks**
  - Saminane, Samanera
  - 10 Precepts

- **Upasok / Upasika / Nun**
  - 8 Precepts
- **Laity**
  - 5 Precepts

### **Role of a Monk / Novice Monk**

- A guardian of the Teachings
  - Study the Dhamma
  - Meditate to be free from suffering

### **Role of the Laity**

- Supporters of Buddhism
  - Provide the 4 necessities

## **Respect in Buddhism**

Respect is the quality of one's mind to find the good in people, things, and situations. Not only just seeing the goodness, but wanting to give acceptance and admiration with body, speech, and mind with the hopes that **goodness will arise within yourself**.

Showing respect is the result of **seeing the goodness** and importance of a person, thing, or situation thus expressing acceptance and admiration through bodily action.

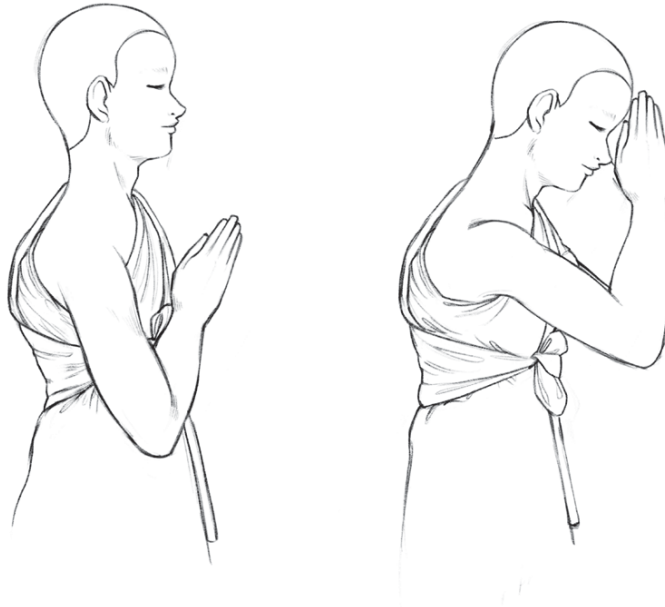
A benefit of practicing to display respect and find qualities to have respect for is helping to cultivate humility and **softness of the mind**. A soft mind will be ready to receive new wisdom from all aspects of life.



## Ways of showing respect

### Body:

- Lotus Palm



- Bow



- Offerings
- Following the Teachings through body and speech.

**Mind:**

- Reflecting on the goodness, value, and importance.
- Following the teachings through thought.

## The Triple Gem

The Triple Gem is the highest refuge in Buddhism. **The Buddha, The Dhamma, and The Sangha** are the three sublime gems that complete The Triple Gem. They are compared to gems because precious gems delight their owners. Whoever sees them can't help but take delight in them. The Triple Gem, when seen or reflected on, brings a sense of safety, calm, and peace. In Buddhism, there are no gems or material wealth that can ever be compared to The Triple Gem. That is why Buddhists give The Triple Gem the highest respect.

**Ways of showing respect**

- Bow 3 Times
- Offer flowers, light, etc.
- Follow the Teachings
- Meditating

**Things to be cautious of**

Pointing your feet at anything representing the Triple Gem is taken as a sign of disrespect in Thai culture.

These may include;

- Buddha Statue
- Picture of The Buddha

- Picture of Monks
- The Teaching monks
- Older monks / Brother monks
- Dhamma Books/ Chanting Book

## Laity to Monks

- Lay people will show monks the highest regards, as monks are the Sangha, one part of the Triple Gem
- Lay people will usually hold their hands up in the Lotus Palm while speaking to monks or listening to Dhamma Lectures.
- The Layperson will greet you with, **“Na Ma Sa Karn Krup”**
- The Monk will reply, **“Jalung Pohn”** (May you be blessed)

## Monks to Monks

Phante-Awuso system: The Sangha order has a tradition of respect based on the amount of time ordained as a monk. It has been a tradition that has lasted over 2500 years. It is a **tradition supporting the harmony of The Sangha**. At a peer level, it can be like an older brother and younger brother relationship. We'll call it the Phante-Awuso system. **Phante** (Pun-Tay) is the senior monk and **Awuso** (Ah-Woo-So) is the junior monk. When one ordains it is as if they are reborn, so if one stays a monk for a year, they are considered 1 year old. Even if a monk is ordained one second earlier than another monk, he is considered the Phante.

- Awuso to Phante  
Should greet first by raising Lotus Palm and say **“Ka Ra Wa Krup”** and Bhante will reply with Lotus Palm and **“Sa Wat Di Krup”**
- Phante to Awuso  
Usually, Phante may wait for Awuso to greet, but Bhante may also greet first in any way he feels comfortable, such as being friendly by calling out the Awuso’s name.

## Common Questions about Buddhism

Why are there different types of Buddhist Monks?

- Buddhism split into 3 main schools over time. Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana.
- We are in the Theravada School of Buddhism.

Do you have to be a vegetarian to be a Buddhist?

- According to Theravada Buddhism, no. In the texts, it’s explained that The Buddha taught the monks to be easily supported. Therefore eat whatever is offered whether it is meat or vegetables. However, a monk shouldn’t eat meat if it was seen, heard, or suspected that the living being was killed for the sake of the monk. There are also 10 types of meat that The Buddha forbade eating for various reasons: humans, elephants, horses, dogs, snakes, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, and hyenas.

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The thing about meditation is:



You become more and more you.

# Cleanliness and Order

## Clean Out Clean In

“Clean out Clean in” means the **outward act of cleaning**, whether it’s sweeping, wiping, mopping, washing the dishes, washing clothes, cleaning the bathroom, etc., and **has an effect on cleaning the mind within**.

**Mindset is key here.** Hospitals are clean, hospitals have to clean, disinfect and sterilize. Soldiers are trained to be orderly, marching in lines together with their footsteps booming. Though both deal with the enemy’s outside. The cleanliness of hospitals is meant to kill bacteria and germs, but a monk’s cleanliness is meant to aid in killing the viruses of the mind. The discipline of Soldiers is meant to defend against the enemies outside, but a monk’s discipline is meant to fight the enemies within. A monk is both a doctor and a warrior against the enemies within, the viruses of the mind, the defilements. Every action that you take to clean, is to aid in overcoming the defilements, whether it’s by beating laziness or lowering ego.

You may think of cleaning as an arena to overcome defilements. As you gather more and more victories, making **cleanliness a habit and virtue**, it becomes a peaceful space where the feeling of Sabai can be easily gathered and nourished.

Remember, clean the temple ground, clean to purify the

mind. Clean outside, clean inside, clean until you're bright.

## Universal Goodness

When you apply cleanliness and orderliness with objects, manners, time, and the mind they become universal goodness. **Clean, Orderly, Polite, Timely, and Meditation are Universal Goodness** because it is something that is seen as good no matter where you come from or where you go. This will up the training of the mind by covering all aspects of your life from the places and objects around you, your manners and actions, even how you use and manage your time, and then going into the more refined zone with a mind that is clean and clear.

- Clean: Being clean is goodness that cleans the mind.
- Order: Being orderly is goodness that calms the mind.
- Polite: Being polite is goodness that softens the mind.
- Timely: Being timely is goodness that frees the mind.
- Meditation: Meditating is goodness that focuses the mind.

## Daily Chores

Daily chores are a responsibility of the community to take care of the places and things we use. It is something necessary for the upkeep of the training grounds. With **the right mindset**, it can be used as training for the mind. Day after day it will be an activity

to develop the habit of cleanliness, orderliness, and teamwork. It will allow you to practice maintaining Sati and Sabai during more involved tasks. Below is just some details of every chore, remember to keep the mindset of clean out clean in and cultivating your Universal Goodness.

Chore times will usually be around 06:30 - 07:00 and 16:15 - 16:45

Chores include: Cleaning the Meditation Hall, helping to prepare the food and dishwashing line, doing laundry, and cleaning the bathrooms. During this training, we will stay at different sites and the chore descriptions will change slightly.

## Additional Training

### Clean and Dry

Whenever using water utilities like sinks, showers, bathrooms, etc. It's good practice to make sure the next person to use it feels like they are the first one by **cleaning and drying** the water spilled or droplets leftover.

### Gathering Gems

The little bits of trash such as plastic wrappers, ripped paper, rubber bands, etc. can be an opportunity to train the mind to be observant and familiar with cleanliness. It's a practice to **take these pieces of litter as jewels like diamonds and gems**. Instead of ignoring them, be excited to pick them up, clean the temple grounds, and clean your mind.



## Catching Goodness

Catching Goodness means **finding the good within others or situations**. Make it a habit to catch the good things about people and situations. It's is a great way to maintain the softness of the mind in a training with people from different cultures with different characteristics and views.

## Special Duties

### Preparing the water for the Teaching Monk

- Before every session with a Dhamma Lecture, this duty prepares a glass of water for the Teaching monk.
- If possible two glasses would be optimal, one glass of hot water only and one glass of warm water. The glass of hot water will become warm on its own as time passes by during the Dhamma lecture.
- A good amount of water is about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the glass.
- If there is a dish placed under the glass, place a paper towel or cloth to buffer the sound when placing the glass back on the dish. This is because during guided meditation the Teaching monk may need to drink some water and would like to avoid as much noise as possible to ensure a happy inner peacetime for everyone.
- Providing water for the Teaching Monk is a great training of **respect and gratitude** for the teachings you receive.

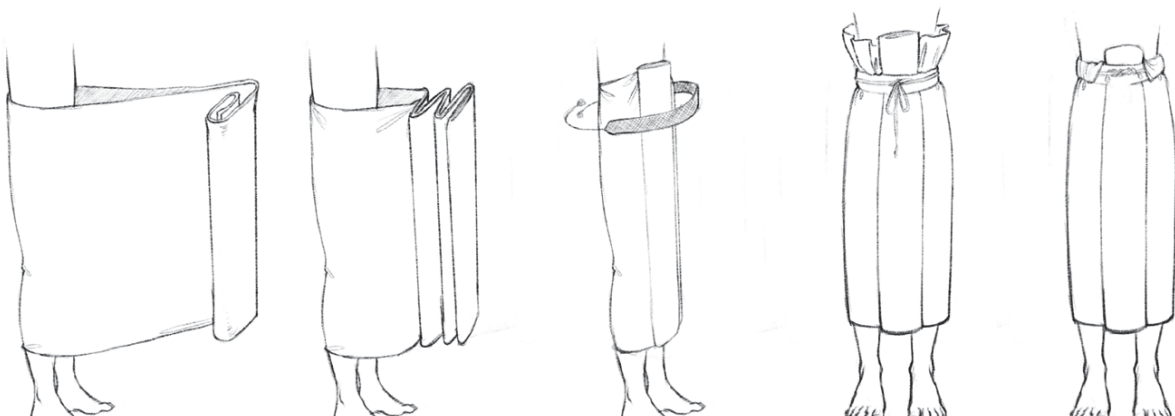
# Donning the Saffron Robes

## The Saffron Robes

The Saffron Robes are sacred in Buddhism. It is called The Flag of The Arahants because to ordain as a monk or novice monk is the start of self-development according to The Noble Discipline. **The Saffron Robes consist of a Sangkhati, JiWon, and Sabong.** The Buddha assigned Phra Ananda to design the robes over 2500 years ago. The patch design is based on the rice paddy fields. The robes have the purpose to cover up your body, to protect against hot, cold, wind, sun, rain, and from lice, bedbugs, mosquitoes, and other insects.

## Robing

- First, you will have to wear the Sabong



- The inside of the Sabong is the side with the raised edge of the thread.
- Keep the Sabong raised about half of your calf.
- The two sides will connect and then be folded about a hand width twice or three times depending on your preference.
- Then the fold will become zig-zag until reaching your body  
Tie the belt around the Sabong to keep it tight, then pull the cloth around the waist to reduce wrinkles.
- Fold the front inwards.
- After the Sabong is on, wear the Angsa.
- “Don’t worry too much about this, we will teach you in due time”

## 3 Main Styles

**Hom Dong** (Formal Style), **Hom Buep** (Casual Style), and **Hom Krum** (Cover Style)

### Dressing in Hom Dong

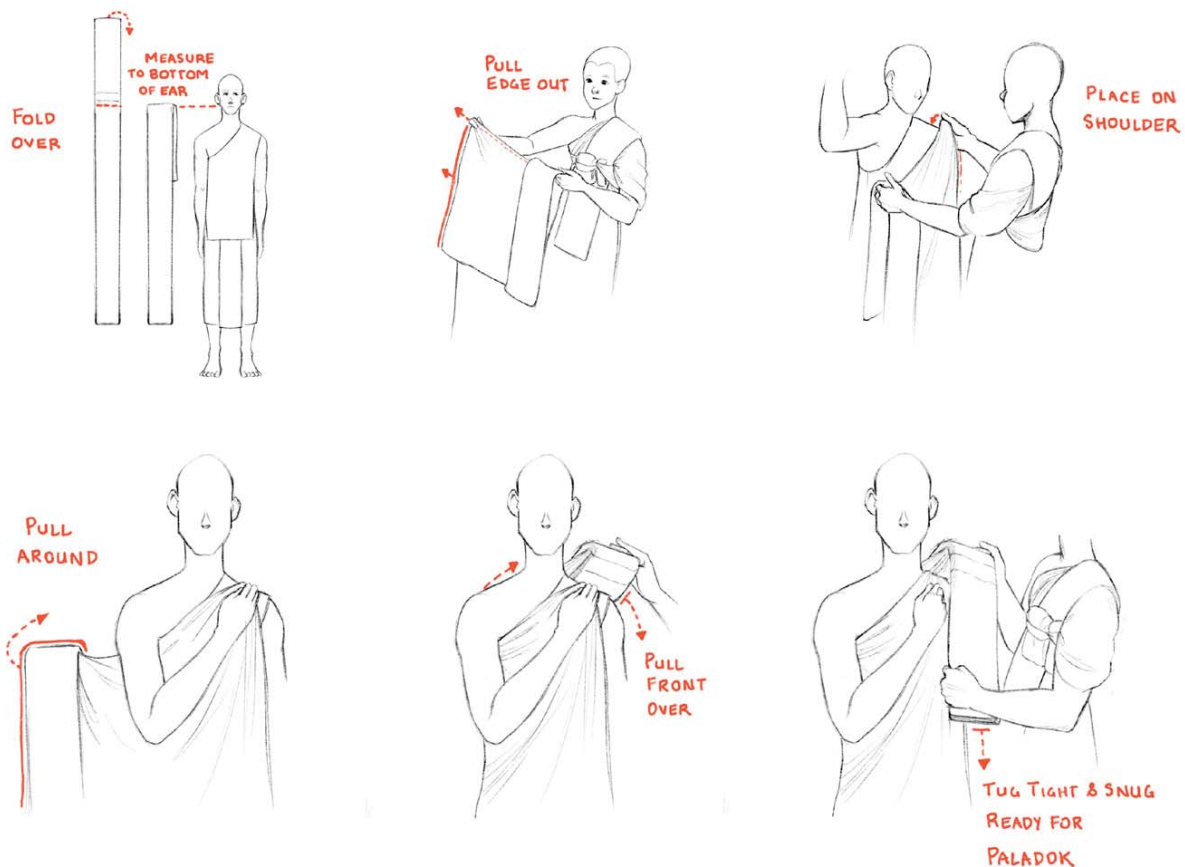
#### Folding

- This is the most formal style that is worn to ceremonies and formal events. New monks will usually wear this style because it is the easiest to wear and maintain. Usually during

Dhamma Lectures Hom Dong is the style to wear.

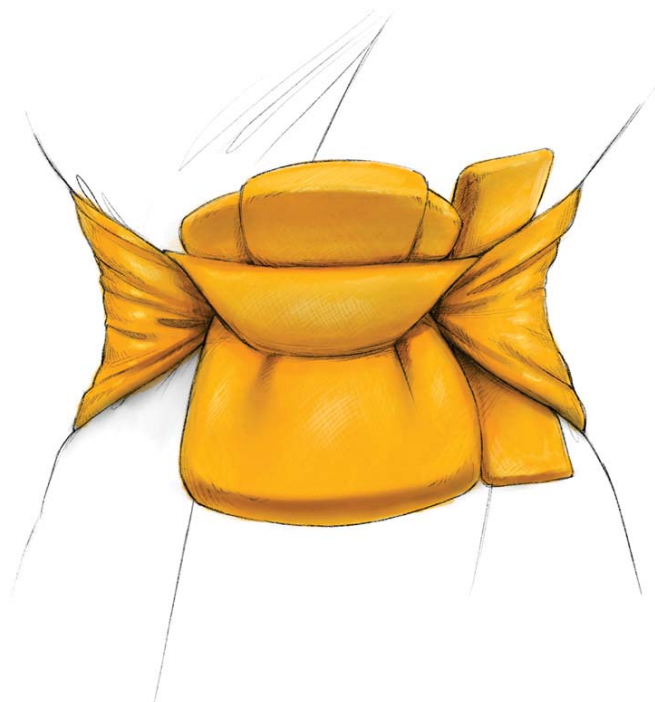
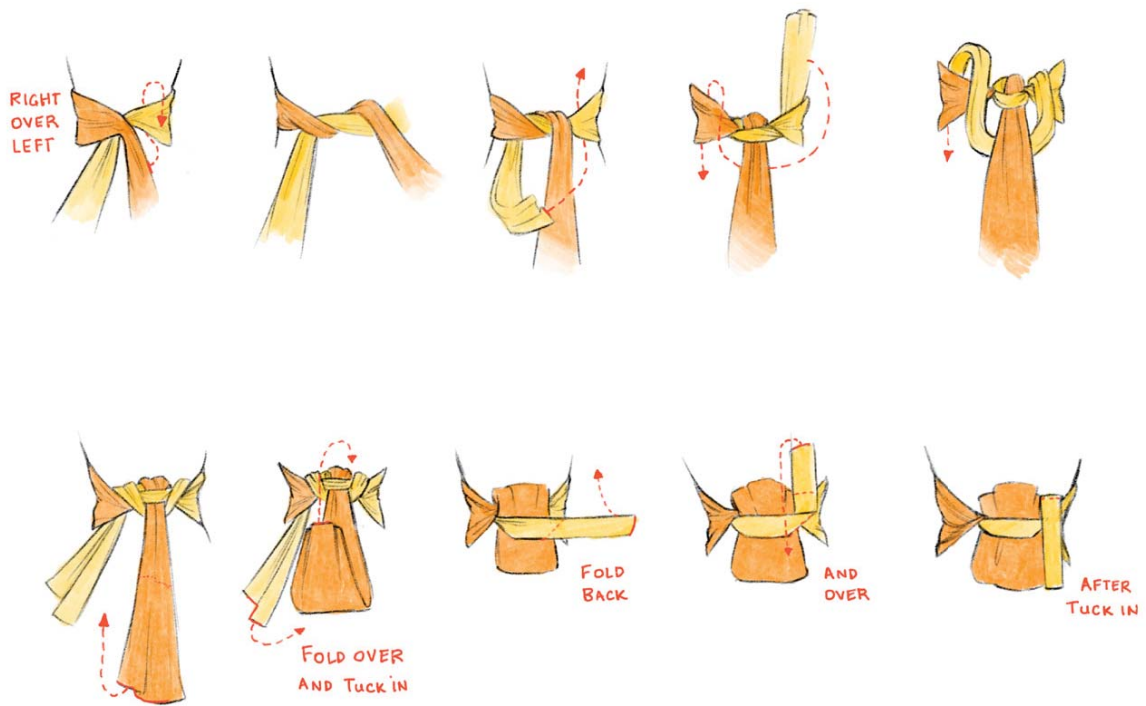
- Hom Dong is a style that will use two people to fold and wear. This creates a sense of teamwork and generosity to help.
- First, will be to fold the Jiwon. The monk will pair up and they will both hold one side each.
- Folding inwards twice they can start to zig-zag.

## Dressing



- The friend will dress by finding the two bars on the Jiwon and make sure it's facing away from him with the shorter side.
- He will pull the cloth from inside about 3 folds worth and place it on your left shoulder and go around as you lift your right shoulder.

- The friend will pull it over your shoulder and tie the Paladok around.
- Tie the Paladok
- Pull the should sleeve out after and tidy up.



## Dressing in Hom Buep

- This one is easier, you just have to roll the edges together and wrap it around your shoulder.
- The trick is to roll the top first then roll down until your right arm is at a 90-degree angle.
- Then pull the cloth from there over your shoulder.

## Hom Krum

- We will save this one for later if you decide to continue in the Monk's Life longer. It is a bit more difficult and only necessary for going outside of the temple.

Learning how to dress nicely is a good way to train your mind in orderliness. It will help you to increase Sati and it looks Sabai when others see you.

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# A Smile

is the  
shortest  
distance  
between  
two people



# Alms Round

Almsround is one of the ways the monks can receive food from the laypeople. You may get a chance to experience this. To prepare yourself you will need an Alms Bowl, an Alms Bowl cover and strap.

The monks will walk in a line and receive the food from the laypeople. While walking, try to maintain your Sati and Sabai. **Let the inner peace flow out into the way you walk.**

You may also repeat the mantra, **“Samma Arahang”** while you are walking as a way to still the mind. Just repeat the mantra until you feel more Sabai, then let go.

## Tips to guard the mind

- Keep your sight inside the alms bowl or on the monk in front of you.
- Walk on the ground as soft and gentle as you can to create the feeling of Sabai.
- **Spread Loving Kindness** as you are journeying on your alms round. May all the living beings around you be happy, healthy, and free from suffering.

After receiving food you give a blessing together. **Be Sabai and let the blessing resonate** from the center of your body into the atmosphere around you.



- “Su Khi Thi / Kha Yu Ko / Pha Wa / A Phi Wa / Tha Na Si Lit / Sa Nit Jang / Wut Tha / Pa Ja Yi No / Jat Ta Ro / Tham Ma / Wat Than / Ti A Yu Wan No / Su Khang / Pha Lang”
- “May you be happy, and live long! He of respectful nature who always honors the elders, Four qualities increase for him: Long life, beauty, happiness, and strength.”

Almsround is one of the ways that a monk can be a light for the laypeople. They practice generosity with the monks because they have faith and believe in the Teachings of The Buddha. It's nice to train and uphold the manners of a monk to not only train your own mind but maintain the faith and good spirit of the people around you.

## Manners of a Monk

The manners of a monk have benefits to both the community and oneself.

### Benefits for the community

The relationship between monks and laypeople is one of **faith and trust**. The laypeople who have to work day in and day

out to earn a living to survive, may not have time to cultivate wisdom that will help cure their stresses. They support the monk with food and necessities so the monk will have time to study the Dhamma and meditate. A diligent monk will apply the Dhamma to solve his problems and stresses, meditate to dig for the treasures of wisdom within and share what he has **learned and lived** with the laypeople.

- This relationship starts with faith. And sometimes this faith arises simply by walking in a humble, calm, and cool manner. Talking in a peaceful and caring tone. Smiling with warmth and compassion. These seemingly little things can end up **being the doorway** for one who doesn't have faith into one who opens up their mind to the wisdom and teachings of the Buddha.

## Benefits for oneself

Manners of a monk are important not only for the benefit of the community and people around but also to the training of your mind.

- It is the same concept as clean out clean in. Meditation will improve your manners and manners will improve your meditation. You are just simply taking cleanliness and order to the next level by being clean and orderly in your actions and movements.

## Listening to Dhamma

When listening to Dhamma lectures it is good to show respect to the teachings by being on time. The Dhamma teachings are highly respected as a way to overcome suffering in life. It is ok to take notes during the Dhamma lecture and even encouraged as there will be many topics covered.

## Chanting

In the time of The Buddha, the monks would have an audience with The Buddha, morning and evening, to listen to his sermons. The chantings hold some of the teachings of The Buddha, so chanting morning and evening is recollecting the goodness and virtues of The Buddha and his teachings.

### A Way of Chanting

It's Buddhist culture to chant with the highest respect, this respect and action of **chanting can bring calmness and stillness to the mind**. You may try for yourself how these practices help in the training of the mind.

- Chant with your hands in Lotus Palm. Visualize your hands as if you're offering a Lotus in homage. You may try visualizing it as a Crystal Lotus if you want.
- Chant from the center of your body or wherever you feel Sabai. Let the chant radiate and expand into the atmosphere around.

- Chant with an intention to give **Homage** to The Buddha, to **Heal** the world with The Dhamma and to **Harmonize** with The Sangha. 3 H's. The Dhamma is the chant and The Sangha are the monks you are chanting with.
- Chanting is a great transition into meditation, so chant with the intention to enter meditation mode during and after.

The sound of the chanting is like a declaration that Buddhism is still alive. It is one of the monk's duties to **chant every day**. It is a time for the monks to gather as a team and **chant as one**. Maintaining this daily activity will have great benefits for the community and training of the mind.

## **Standing, Sitting, Walking, Talking**

All of us have different bodies and different characteristics, what makes us Sabai may be different. That's why it is important to have a standard to base our outward manners while we train within. When we talk about the actual practice of being mindful of our manners, we need to be aware of **Sati and Sabai for ourselves and others**. If a layperson is offering their hard-earned money to support your life and see you sleeping on the patio all day or shouting insults, how would they feel? They may not be so Sabai. If you play around with laypeople too much, even if they enjoy it, the mind will wander more. Your manners must foster the **stillness of your mind and the stillness of others' minds**.

With time, manners will adjust naturally as the mind becomes cleaner and clearer. So just think of this training as a **tuning process**. Another tool to help in training the mind.

## How you stand

- **Body**

When standing, make sure your body is relaxed and calm. If possible maintain a comfortable composure.

- **Mind**

Maintain Sati of where your mind is going. If it goes outside, then become more aware of your senses. Observe if the mind is sticking to the outside objects or simply just gathering Sabai. If your mind is attached to outer objects, maneuver your body to avoid those attractive objects. Readjust your body to be Sabai and use a recollection that helps you; for example, recollection of death, recollection of impermanence, recollection of your goal to train the mind, etc.

## How you sit (outside of meditation)

When sitting, there is a standard process that helps the unity of the group. When everyone sits at the same time in the same way it feels harmonious.

- **Body**

Managing movements softly and subtly can avoid loud collisions and noises. Especially if you're sitting on a chair.

- **Mind**

You may have Sati with the comfort of your body on the cushion or the chair. If you're listening to a Dhamma lecture or activity you can try maintaining Sati and Sabai of yourself while engaging in the lecture or activity.

- **Additional Notes**

While sitting, just simply make your body Sabai, by adjusting your posture. If you feel aches just readjust mindfully. Slow and steady is good as to not disturb the others around you.

## How you walk

Walking is one of the easiest ways to cultivate Sati and Sabai while exercising.

- **Body**

Just simply let your body be relaxed, relax every muscle, every bone, release your head, and walk easily. You may notice going with the flow it is easy to walk with your back straight while still maintaining a sense of ease as you let your body flow with the natural rhythm.

- **Mind**

Just observe the Sabai of your body and let go, check periodically the level of your Sabai and if you can be even more Sabai.

- **Additional Notes**

It is nice to practice lifting your feet enough so they don't drag on the ground, to avoid noise and dust.

## How you talk

Talking is one of those double-edged swords. We have to be aware of what we talk about and how we talk.

- Talk about: Dhamma, Things that make people feel Sabai, the more you talk about Dhamma, **the more joyful and free you feel.**
- Avoid talking about: Worldly matters, unsettling things, the more you talk about worldly matters, the more your mind wanders and constricted you feel.
- If laypeople are around, try not to talk too much or too loud. It is to maintain their Sabai as well. Just simply practice your mindfulness and meditation.

Again the goal is Sati and Sabai for oneself and others. But if it makes you feel stressed to follow a standard, then just take these as suggestions to try out whenever you feel. If practiced skillfully, the way you stand, sit, walk and talk can benefit those around you and train to stop and still the mind continually.

## Eating

The dining hall is another arena to train the mind. Food is a necessity for the mind and a possible **source of Sabai** for the mind. Like all of the necessities, you will need to train in balancing what you eat, how much you eat, and reflecting on the benefits of it. There is a saying **“You eat to live, not live to eat.”**

When we eat we should reflect on the food before, during, and after.

- It's best to meditate and still the mind before going to get your food.
- While lining up it is respectful to allow the Teaching and mentor monks to go first. Then follow in Phante order.
- **Be mindful while picking your food.** It's ok to eat whatever you like, but also ask is this necessary for my body type? Am I following my cravings too much? Will this help or harm my meditation practice?
- While sitting down to eat, you may take some time to meditate while you wait for the rest of the team to come to sit down. **Reflect how lucky you are to have this food.** The laypeople offered this food with faith and hope that you will use it for pure purposes, to free yourself from suffering, to be their field of merit. This food is going to transform into your flesh and blood and may you use every second of your life for goodness and training to purify yourself. This is just an example, you may reflect in your own way that makes you feel thanks and gratitude for the food that is in front of you.
- While eating the food, **enjoy the food!** Observe how it makes you Sabai. Be thankful for every bite,



savor every taste with Sati and Sabai. **Sabai is the middle way**, which is neither too tight nor too loose. Observe the Sabai, but don't let it go too loose into gluttony, overeating, or insatiable craving. Also, don't be too tight on yourself about the fact that you may be eating more of your favorite food than you planned. **With time you will find the balance** and your love of meditation will take the lead in your decisions while eating.

- After eating you may have some time to meditate before the end. If you can meditate, meditate. If you feel it's tough in the moment, just continue cultivating that gratitude, thankfulness, and contentment.
- You may go for a nice relaxing walk to digest the food more easily. Continue to cultivate gratitude and thanks, Sati and Sabai.

Be aware of the dangers of eating too much food: Makes you fall asleep in meditation easier, can be unhealthy in the long run and there might not be enough for everyone else.

If you can win in the arena of the Dining hall, you've gained a huge victory in the training of your mind and the wellness of your overall life. Not only will you be happy with the elements that fuel your journey, but the ones who offered these elements to you will be **happy in your triumph**.

## Meeting with laypeople

It's advised not to meet with laypeople too much, even with your families because it may make the training to still the mind harder than it needs to be. Sometimes they will drag you into worldly affairs, throw heavy problems on you, create unnecessary worries, etc. It's like swimming, you need a safe environment to train first, but as you become more skillful and stronger you can swim in bigger pools, oceans and even save people. So first **save yourself, then there will be a time to save others**. But if for some reason you have to meet, here are some guidelines to follow for the benefit of yourself and others.

- To show respect for the Triple Gem and the precepts, the monk should sit on a chair or higher place, while the lay people kneel or sit on a mat.
- The laypeople believe they will get bad karma if you, as a monk, raise Lotus Palm to them. So the monk should not raise Lotus Palm to the laypeople.
- To avoid misunderstandings, a monk should not be close to a lay female when taking pictures, you must be accompanied by an adult lay male. Also, avoid taking pictures hugging a child.
- It's best to dress fully or at least cover your shoulders.
- When receiving offerings, use a receiving cloth (Pa La Pa Cane) to receive any items.

# MENTAL IMPURITIES

CLOUD OUR MIND

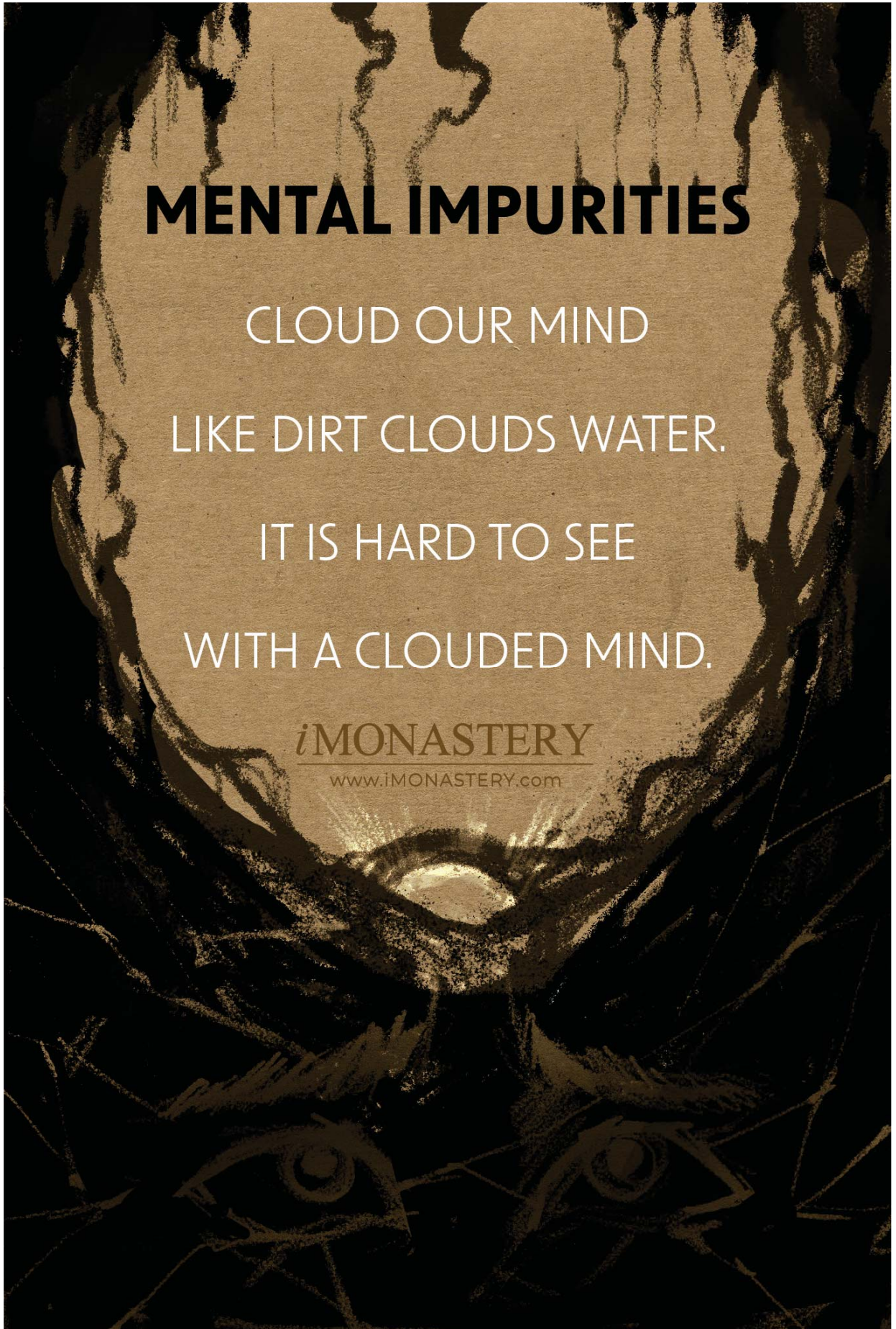
LIKE DIRT CLOUDS WATER.

IT IS HARD TO SEE

WITH A CLOUDED MIND.

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- Be mindful of your Sati and Sabai while conversing.
- Guard your senses by just letting your mind stay with your Sati and Sabai. Worldly attachments can be like a flood trying to drown your mind.
- Reflect on behaving like a monk, speaking like a monk, and thinking like a monk. Your job is to help them feel more at peace.

So if you have to meet with laypeople make sure you are ready to be a role model, a sanctuary for them to place their faith in, and a light to destroy the darkness in their minds. To avoid any problems later on, take some time to go over the precepts, especially the essential ones.

## Essential Precepts

A precept is a discipline Here we will go over the essential precepts that a monk needs to be aware of as soon as they ordain. These are precepts that cannot simply be confessed to reinstate them.

Parajika and Sanghadisesa are the precepts that one should be aware of before ordaining as a monk and mindful not to break while ordained. The 4 Parajika and first 5 Sanghadisesa will be covered in this book because of the urgency to be aware of them. The 1 Nissaggiya precept here deals with the robes and involves an extra level of mindfulness to maintain. If broken, it involves a process to

reinstate the precept, therefore it is good to be aware of it as soon as one ordains. For the full 227 precepts please refer to the book, **“Monk’s Life Monastic Code”**

## Parajika

This term derives from a verb meaning to lose or be defeated. A bhikkhu who commits any of the four following offenses has surrendered to his own mental defilements to such an extent that he defeats the purpose of his having become a bhikkhu in the first place. It is analogized to a man with his head cut off.

A bhikkhu who breaks these precepts is immediately no longer considered a bhikkhu. Whether or not he confesses, wears, or takes off his robes, he is no longer part of the Sangha.

1. Should any bhikkhu—participating in the training and livelihood of the bhikkhus, without having renounced the training, without having declared his weakness—engage in sexual intercourse, even with a female animal, he is defeated and no longer in affiliation.
2. Should any bhikkhu, in what is reckoned a theft, take what is not given from an inhabited area or from the wilderness—just as when, in the taking of what is not given, kings arresting the criminal would flog, imprison, or banish him, saying, “You

are a robber, you are a fool, you are benighted, you are a thief”— a bhikkhu, in the same way, taking what is not given also is defeated and no longer in affiliation.

3. Should any bhikkhu intentionally deprive a human being of life, or search for an assassin for him, or praise the advantages of death, or incite him to die (saying): “My good man, what use is this evil, miserable life to you? Death would be better for you than life,” or with such an idea in mind, such a purpose in mind, should in various ways praise the advantages of death or incite him to die, he also is defeated and no longer in affiliation.
4. Should any bhikkhu, without direct knowledge, claim a superior human state, a truly noble knowledge, and vision, as present in himself, saying, “Thus do I know; thus do I see,” such that regardless of whether or not he is cross-examined on a later occasion, he—being remorseful and desirous of purification—might say, “Friends, not knowing, I said I know; not seeing, I said I see—vainly, falsely, idly,” unless it was from over-estimation, he also is defeated and no longer in affiliation.

## Sanghadisesa

This term means “involving the Community in the initial and subsequent acts.” A monk who breaks these precepts will have to confess and undergo a period of probation called Pariwat. Once he passes the Pariwat, the Community will lift the penalty. Sometimes it can be quite embarrassing to have to confess a Sanghadisesa and tedious to have to go through the Pariwat process. It is best to avoid breaking these precepts for the purity and pride of your monk’s life.

1. Intentional emission of semen, except while dreaming, entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community.
2. Should any bhikkhu, overcome by lust, with altered mind, engage in bodily contact with a woman, or in holding her hand, holding a lock of her hair, or caressing any of her limbs, it entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community.
3. Should any bhikkhu, overcome by lust, with altered mind, address lewd words to a woman in the manner of young men to a young woman alluding to sexual intercourse, it entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community
4. Should any bhikkhu, overcome by lust, with altered mind, speak in the presence of a woman in praise of ministering to his own sensuality thus: “This, sis-

ter, is the foremost ministration, that of ministering to a virtuous, fine-natured follower of the celibate life such as myself with this act”—alluding to sexual intercourse—it entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community.

5. Should any bhikkhu engage in conveying a man’s intentions to a woman or a woman’s intentions to a man, proposing marriage or paramourage—even if only for a momentary liaison—it entails initial and subsequent meetings of the Community.

## **Main robes precept from Nissaggiya**

If a monk dwells apart from (any of) his three robes even for one night, it is to be forfeited and confessed.

- The robes stated in the precept are the Jiwon, Sangkhati, and Sabong. A monk will have two sets of Jiwons, two sets of Sabongs, and 1 Sangkhati. One set of the Jiwon, the Sabong, and Sangakati will be resolved as the main robes, the rest will be considered as secondary robes.
- The main robes are the set that must stay close to you until the early morning. The times may vary, but a good standard is 5:30 am.
- This precept will help to practice mindfulness and



awareness of your saffron robes. Robes that are considered sacred. While at times this precept may feel tedious, the benefits of keeping it will show its effects with consistent practice. Please be proud of these saffron robes that you have been offered in faith and trust.

## Just The Beginning

As you may have noticed while reading there are a lot of ways we can practice to get ourselves started on the journey of the Middle Way. As you explore how the Journey of The Monk's Life and the Journey of the Middle Way connect, please remember the most important key to this journey is...patience. As is The Buddha's teachings,

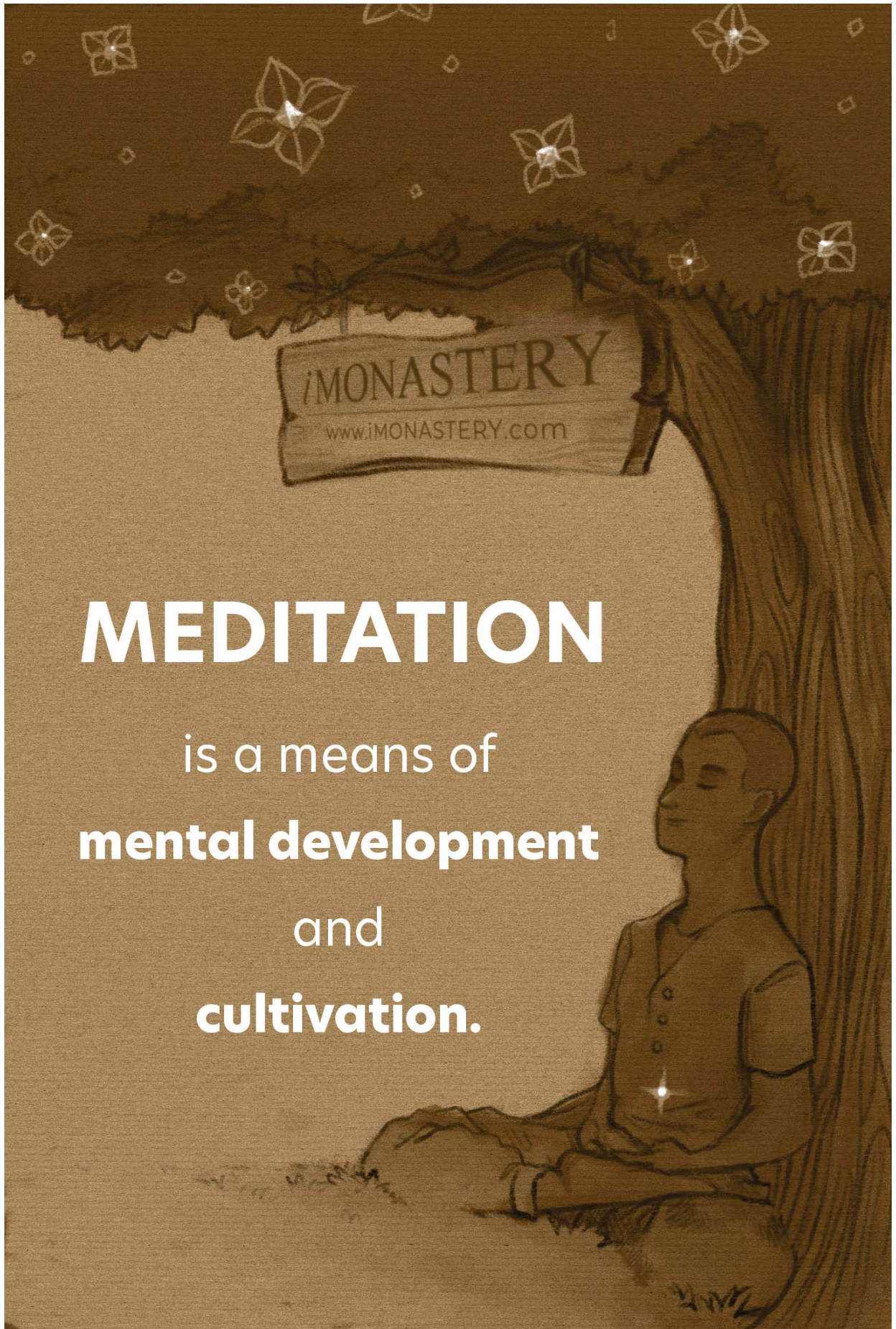
"Khan Ti Pa Ra Mang Ta Po Ti Tik Kha"

"Forbearing self-restraint is the supreme purifying practice"

No matter how easy the practice of meditation is, there will be obstacles encountered whether from the outside with people, places, and things or from within as you continue your journey to the center. The journey within is one that will provide happiness and fulfillment, so please never give up when you feel "I'm getting nowhere" or "it's too slow." Every time you close your eyes to med-

itate, you are advancing whether it's step by step or drop by drop. You are not alone as well, everyone has to advance along the same path, The Middle Way, with the same method, Stopping the mind. Ask whenever you need help, you are family and family means no one gets left behind. Have fun and stay on the path as we learn and live what it means,

“Stop is the Key to Success”



# MEDITATION

is a means of  
**mental development**  
and  
**cultivation.**



