

# **BUDDHISM** and its **EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

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# Founding of Buddhism

- An offspring of Hinduism but not that famous anymore in India
- Common in China, Korea, and Japan
- Founded by Siddhartha Gautama, known to history as Buddha
- Born around the year 560 BCE to a very wealthy family
- sheltered from the outside world, lived in a very comfortable cage
- Escaped from the cage and shocked to see real life and the sufferings it brings



Retrieved from: [www.ancient.eu](http://www.ancient.eu)

**Siddhartha Gautama**

**Buddha**

# 4

people he  
saw that  
changed his  
life:

sick man  
old man  
dead man  
ascetic/monk

Questions: Why must humans  
suffer? Why is there pain in this  
world?

Monk-he took it as a sign to leave  
his family and his lavish life

-turned to a life of asceticism, or  
severe self-discipline, avoiding all  
forms of indulgence

## Awakened One

- Traveled in India and learned from Hindu priests
- Disenchanted and went into complete asceticism, eating only one grain of rice per day
- Came to awareness that he might die before he reached enlightenment
- Gave up starvation and turned to a life of meditation
- One day under a Bodhi Tree/Tree of Wisdom, he went into a deep meditation and reached Nirvana
- claimed to have been free from suffering, desire, and the sense of self

**BUDDHA**  
The  
Enlightened  
One

# 4

## NOBLE TRUTHS

dukkha

Human life  
inevitably  
involves  
suffering

samudaya

Suffering  
arises from  
our desires

nirodha

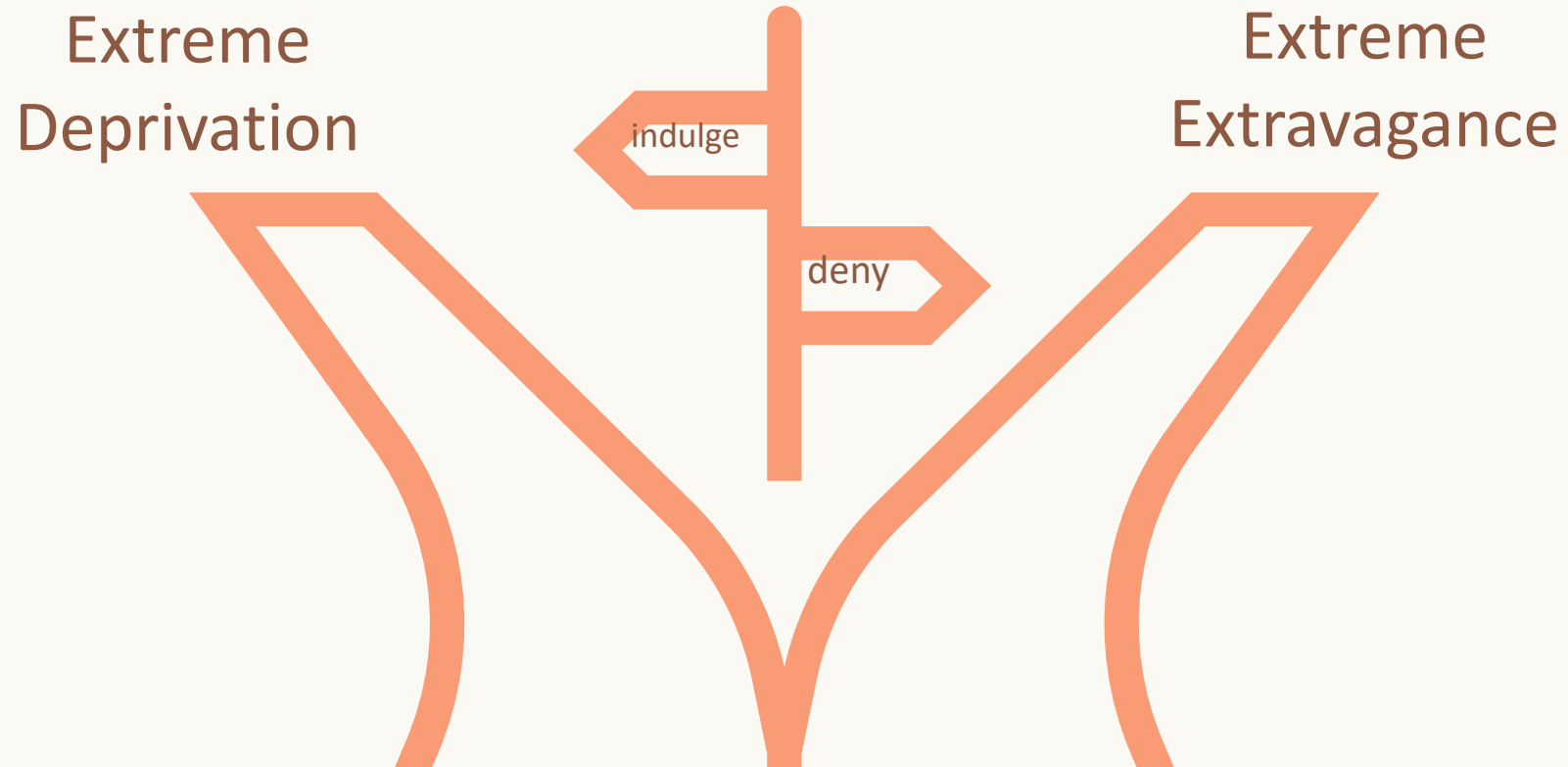
There is a state  
of being in  
which there is  
no suffering

marga

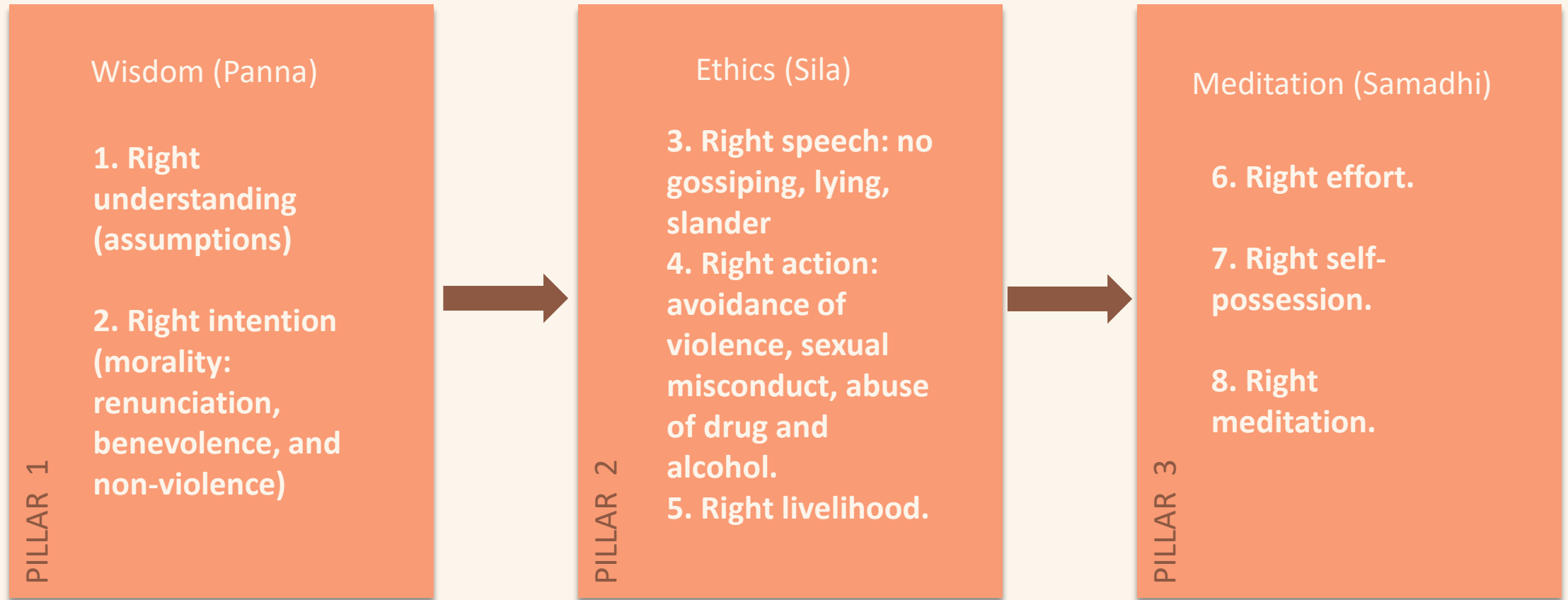
There is a  
way to  
achieve this  
being

# BUDDHISM: The Middle Way To Enlightenment

Which is the Middle Way?  
3 Minute Buddhism



# 8 Principles to Nirvana



# Branches of Buddhism

## Theravada



- **Most orthodox/conservative**
- **Holds the original themes and teachings of Buddha**
- **Belief that human existence is full of suffering, nothing is permanent**
- **Therefore stay away from evil, seek only what is good, and continually purify your minds**



# Branches of Buddhism

## Mahayana



- enlightenment is universally accessible to everyone
- followers can be reborn into a Western paradise before attaining true nirvana
- belief that its followers should not merely seek enlightenment for themselves but to help others find their way, and that they can delay going to nirvana to be able to help others

# Branches of Buddhism

## Vajrayan



- **fastest way to reach nirvana, but difficult and takes a lot of training and practice**
- **predominant Buddhist branch in places like Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, and Mongolia**
- **Includes the use of techniques such as sexual yoga**

# Aims of Buddhist Education

- based on knowledge, social development, vocational development, religious development, character development with the following:
- To follow the moral values of Buddhist religion
- To adopt good conduct and violence
- To achieve the final goal of Nirvana
- To propagate Buddhism
- To eradicate Vedic *karmakanda or ritualism*
- To give up caste system

# Aims of Buddhist Education

- To take the teachings of Buddhism to the masses.
- To leave yajna and sacrifices for achieving knowledge
- To provide education in the language of masses
- To emphasize the progress and development of the society rather than the individual
- To provide education through the new system this was stated by Buddha.

# Buddhist Principles of Education

- **Avidya that is ignorance must be removed through education as it is the root cause of sufferings**
- **Education should be provided in peaceful surroundings in Buddhist monasteries, viharas and organized educational institutions.**
- **Pupils should be educated in a democratic atmosphere**
- **Things of luxury must be prohibited for students**

# Buddhist Principles of Education

- Framed few commandments for the Suddhvi, Harika(new entrant) at the time of 'Pabajja' ceremony. A ritual called as pabajja ritual was necessary for admission to a monastery for education. Educational period for this phase was 12 years.
- After 20 years of age Upsampada ritual was performed to gain an entry into higher education.

## Elementary Education

- Popular elementary education was religious in nature, up to the age of 12 years, pupils received instructions in reading, writing, arithmetic and religion.
- Curriculum of Elementary education : Thorough learning of Grammar, Hetuvidya (Logic), Nyaya (science of reasoning), Adyatmavidya (philosophy), shilpasthan(arts & crafts) & chikitsya vidya(medicine)

## EDUCATION SYSTEM

## Higher Education

- Well organized, carried out at Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist universities. Higher education was given to only those students who intended to be monks or nuns. Emphasized both theoretical and practical aspects.
- Following subjects were included in the syllabus of higher education: - Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism, Theology, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Logic, Sanskrit, Pali, Astronomy, Astrology, Medicine, Law, Politics, Administration, Tantrik philosophy

# Methods of Teaching

- Mostly verbal
- Question, answer, discussion and debates
- Agra shishyapranali (Monitorial system)
- Travelling and nature study method
- Book method
- Preaching and conference method
- Medium of instruction was Pali and also importance to vernacular dialects





# Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy

- **Cosmopolitan:** Buddhist education was free from communal narrowness, there was no favoritism on the basis of caste , creed in the centers.
- **Total development of personality:** Buddhist education laid much emphasis on the physical, mental and spiritual development of the novice, even today the aim of education is integration of personality that can develop the various aspects of the individual which are interlinked.
- **No corporal punishment:** corporal punishments were absolutely forbidden which is also very true in the present scenario of education.



# Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy

- **Positivism: Buddhist philosophy is positivistic and has a careful logical systematization of ideas**
- **Ethical: it is ethical, the eightfold path to Nirvana makes a universal appeal**
- **Democratic: it is democratic as it believed in freedom of enquiry. Democratic and republican procedures were followed while running the educational institutions**
- **Development of good conduct: the entire techniques of Buddhism provide directions to develop good conduct and which is also the essence of a sound system of education. Also its belief in Karma lays stress on the necessity to be constantly on the vigil to maintain one's conduct in the present life.**



# Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy

- **Moral Discipline :** The Buddha Bhikku (monk) took the vows of chastity and of poverty. Character was the basis of moral discipline.
- **Emphasis on Manual skills :** Training of manual skills like spinning and weaving was emphasized to enable men to earn for living.
- **Pragmatic:** It is pragmatic, everything is in a state of flux as it is only momentary. Change is the rule of the universe. It does not believe in the absolutism. It is witnessed in the present era of globalization.
- **Methods of Teaching:** the methods of instruction was oral. Preaching, repetition, exposition, discussion and debates were all used. Buddhist council organized 'seminars' to discuss the major issues at length. Learned conferences, meditation, educational tours.



# Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy

- **International impact :** Buddhist education helped India to gain international importance. It also developed cultural exchange between India and other countries of the world. International exchange of scholars attracted students and scholars from far off lands.
- **Value education & Character development:** To be moral being one must follow noble path, the eightfold path as preached in Buddhism provides guidance for moral education and peace. The entire techniques of Buddhism provides directions to develop good conduct which is also the essence of sound system of education.
- **Curriculum:** Curriculum included secular as well as religious subjects.
- **Organization and Structure of Universities :** Universities established during this period are still serving as a guiding force.



# Educational Implications of Buddhist Philosophy

- **Education as a social institution :** Education as a social institution got its existence as a result of Buddhist system of education.
- **Imparting education in practical subjects :** An important contribution of this period is the imparting of education in various practical subjects, a tradition which has come down to the present day also.
- **Collective Teaching Methodology :** It was in this period that the method of collective teaching and the presence of numerous teachers in single institution was evolved.



# Points for Reflection:

- **•What is the most significant implication/s of Buddhist education that you have discovered and had an impact on you?**
- **What is the relevance of Buddhism to present day education system in terms of curriculum? Programs? Innovations? Future directions?**
- **Do you see any similarities between our own educational system and Buddhist educational system? Discuss.**