

**Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine Seminar**

**Held at the King's Fund**

*On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000*

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**BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR**  
**Held at the King's Fund, London**  
*On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000 from 3.30pm – 5 pm*

The King's Fund held a seminar on '*Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine*' on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May, Ayurveda is very much in the news and we hope the event promoted a greater awareness on the value of Ayurvedic Medicine, which is the oldest medical system. It is recognised by the World Health Organisation and is widely practised around the world. Over a hundred delegates attended the seminar.

I am enclosing a copy of the programme together with a statement from the King's Fund on the work carried out by us in the field of complementary medicine and cultural diversity.

I have also attached a copy of the address by the *Ven.Pandith Medagama Vajiragnana*, Sangha Nayake of the UK (Chief Priest of Theravada Buddhism in Britain) on the links between Buddhism and Ayurveda.

If you need further information, please don't hesitate to contact me, my direct line at the King's Fund is 020 7307 2627, Fax: 020 7307 2811 and e-mail: [I.Corea@kingsfund.org.uk](mailto:I.Corea@kingsfund.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,

Ivan Corea  
Development Fellow

*Leadership Development*

# Views *from the Mews*

## Ayurveda arrives at the King's Fund

On 24 May, over one hundred delegates attended the finale of the King's Fund Race & Diversity Seminars, entitled: 'Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine'. This event was very much an 'awareness' seminar. Among the distinguished gathering were the Deputy High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Jayantha Palipane.

Since it was the last in the series, we decided to invite guests from the world of health care, senior diplomats, the media and key contacts. The King's Fund has been promoting cultural diversity as one of its four key themes/values - encouraging the health system to respond positively to diversity and provide services that reflect the needs of a multi-cultural society. Society is increasingly less trusting of Western medicine and patients are increasingly demanding a choice in the kind of care available to them (especially but not exclusively in mental health). The King's Fund believes in informed patient choice and that means widening the range of medical systems open to NHS patients.

Ayurveda is the oldest medical system in the world. It means the 'science of life'. It began in India over 5,000 years ago. Ayurvedic Medicine is recognised by the World Health Organisation and is widely practised around the world. According to Ayurveda, the human body, like the universe, is composed of the five elements, or Panchamahabuta. They are: Apot (Water), Thejo (Fire), Vayo (Air), Patavi (Earth) and Akasa (Space or ether). The Ayurvedic concept of creation focuses on four factors - the Body, the Mind, the Consciousness (or soul) and the panchamahabhata - the five elements.

Ayurveda has been in existence in Sri Lanka for over 3,000 years. Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne in his book 'Buddhism & Traditional Medicine in Sri Lanka' noted that Ayurveda in Sri Lanka does not differ from Ayurveda in India although it has 'certain peculiarities of its own therapeutics, medicinal compositions and medicinal plants.' Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka taught and trained medical practitioners in Ayurvedic medicine, and wrote books on traditional medicines.

It is in this context that we had such a fascinating address by the Ven. Pandit Medagama Vajiragnana, Sangha Nayake of Great Britain (Chief Priest of Theravada Buddhism in this country). 'Both Buddhism and Ayurveda maintain a holistic approach to life,' noted Ven. Vajiragnana who was visiting the King's Fund for the first time. He talked about the links between Buddhism and complementary medicine. Ven. Vajiragnana explained the Buddhist doctrine of the 'middle way' - an avoidance of all extremes and moderation in all things. 'Ayurvedic principles fully support this Buddhist doctrine, and both systems teach the same method of ethical life,' added Ven. Vajiragnana. Addressing the delegates, Dr. Shantha Godagama, President of the Ayurvedic Medical Association in the UK noted that Ayurveda aimed towards the promotion of health on three levels - the mental, physical and spiritual dimensions.

Paul Houlby, Brand Director of the Bodyshop International, explained why the Bodyshop decided to promote a new range of products. Ayurveda is now a million-dollar industry. Two directors of the Hettigoda Group in Sri Lanka - Vidyani and Lankani Hettigoda flew in from Colombo for the event. The Hettigoda Group are the leading manufacturers of Ayurvedic products in South Asia under the brand 'Siddhalepa.' The Hettigoda Group brought with them 100 complimentary gifts of Ayurvedic products for delegates.

The library had an exhibition of books to mark the event and Carla Morris had an exhibition of books on sale including 'A Handbook of Ayurveda' by Dr. Shantha Godagama and 'Buddhism & Traditional Medicine in Sri Lanka' by Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne of the South Asia Institute in Paris.

Earlier, to commemorate the Festival of Wesak, Norman Rigby provided staff with a delicious Sri Lankan meal in the restaurant at lunchtime. Norman was a hot favourite after the seminar as he had a range of Sri Lankan food - a perfect ending to an interesting occasion.

If you would like to respond to this article, or write for *Views from the Mews* on the topic of your choice, please send letters and articles (of no more than one side of A4) to the page-editor, **Andy Bell**. All articles for the next edition to be received by midday on Friday 16 June

# King's Fund

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## PUBLICATIONS ON AYURVEDA AVAILABLE FROM THE KING'S FUND BOOKSHOP

Two publications written by eminent Sri Lankan experts on Ayurvedic Medicine are now on sale at the King's Fund Bookshop-

### BUDDHISM & TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN SRI LANKA

This book (ISBN 9559044354 – published by Kelaniya University Press - £20.00 ) written by **Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne** of the South Asia Institute in Paris was released in time for the King's Fund seminar on '*Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine.*'

### THE HANDBOOK OF AYURVEDA

Published by Kyle Catchie Ltd in the UK (ISBN -1-85626-223-5 / £9.99), this book has been written by **Dr. Shantha Godagama**, President of the Ayurvedic Medical Association of the UK who also participated in the King's Fund seminar.

Both books could be ordered from: **Carla Morris, The King's Fund Bookshop, 11-13 Cavendish Square, London W1M 0AN. Telephone: 020 7307 2591.**

For further information please contact:

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# Positive Health

## The Principles of Ayurveda

Until fairly recently we thought we were living inside a static mechanical Universe which has been mulling about and around like an oversized Swiss cuckoo clock. We went to and fro in huge factories, had jobs for life and as steady citizens, had been looking forward to a gold plated watch and a secure pension. When we got sick we could expect the illness kicked out of our bodies with a huge wedge of wonder medicine. Illnesses were perceived as foreign to the body, enemy viral spy forces to be pushed and exterminated by a simple straight forward chemical agent dispatched from outside by an all knowing doctor. And all was well – until the Universe began to change right in front of our amazed eyes.

No longer is the world that simple or even made of firm matter. The Universe is a living thing, constantly changing and developing. It is much more complex, unpredictable and alive than we were led to think during the past hundred years. The more we studied matter the more we realised there is no such thing. The more we studied energy, the more we comprehended that energy is all there really is. The stuff that dreams are made of: one unbroken, constant vibrating field of energy of which we are but a part.

Illness began to look like an integral part of our state of mind and life style habits. In other words, we have seen the enemy and it is us. It took us merely five thousand years to realise that the truth has always been with us. An enormous contingent of modern scientists and their many expensive tools and instruments have only served to confirm this truth long ago laid before humanity by the ancient sages of Vedanta.

### Ayurveda, The Science of Life

From the people who brought you yoga, meditation, reflexology and many systems of medicine comes Ayurveda, The Science of Life. Out of the field of constant



by Dr Liliana Stringer

tension between two essential principles: the conscious but undynamic Spirit and the unconscious but dynamic Nature comes the continuous creation of the Universe and All, and that includes you, and me.

The stranger than fiction life that unfolds before us from the perspective of modern science and ancient Vedic wisdom requires an active participation from mankind. The same principles that govern the progress of the stars and the planets rule our own progress through life. We consist of the Universe and vice versa. The philosophical system that is the basis of the Vedanta is not so difficult to understand because it rings a bell within everyone's soul. That the world is an alive and creative force has been the foundation of all known philosophical systems, including early science.

After all, we must not forget that those foundations have been laid down in the West by the Knights Templars who brought magical thinking back from the East. Science at birth was magic and the first scientists were the alchemists and magicians who often ended their days on the bonfires of the Inquisition.

The wisdom of Ayurveda was at the root of most of the known civilisations. The only problem with learning it is the same problem it shares with science: namely, it is full of jargon. Both Ayurveda and science

out of necessity rely on a heavy dose of the Sanskrit language on one hand and mathematical formulas on the other.

I have lately seen quite a few slightly confused people who keep looking for their doshas. They seem to be interested in Ayurveda, appreciate the wisdom of it and understand that it is becoming trendier every minute. But the oversimplification that has crept in with the newly founded popularity of Ayurveda tends to produce this confusion. Let's face it: Pitta, Vata and Kapha cannot be seen. They are forces not perceived by the eye. Only by the results of their actions on the body can we understand their workings. Additionally, in Ayurveda everyone is an individual. The mixings of the doshas vary greatly from person to person and what would be a perfect harmony and balance in one person between the three doshas could mean imbalance and disease in another. That is why it usually takes six years to learn the basics of Ayurveda and another four of practical work as a minimum to be a medical Ayurvedic practitioner. So the moral of the story here is to go and visit a qualified practitioner if you want to avail yourself of medical advice.

However, it is a science of life indeed. It is all about three things and I stress them: right life style, right life style, right life style; prevention, prevention, prevention; detoxification, detoxification and more

detoxification. Put simply: if you follow these Ayurveda principles you will never have to see a doctor or be concerned about your doshas. The doshas will go quietly about their business building and mending your body whilst you have fun living your life.

### The Right Way To Approach Health

For everybody who begins to study Ayurveda their initial instinctive feeling is that this is the right way to approach health. Ayurveda talks about the infinite ability of humans to appreciate the world outside as part of ourselves and ourselves as a part of the world. It points our attention towards our senses and urges us to trust them. Did you ever have that gut feeling, that surge of intuition? It is there for a reason: to help and warn you. In the Western industrialised civilisation the essential requirement is for everything to be measured, weighed and analysed. We are not in control of our own existence as we have to rely more and more heavily on the machines that produce the print out of our life blood and less and less on our own God-given five or six senses.

Let's take an example. John Doe doesn't look well. His friends and colleagues realise it instantly. Mr Doe also knows that he is somehow not his usual self. However it takes a long time to be diagnosed by a doctor as an ill person. Mr Doe will have to make an appointment. The doctor will prescribe a painkiller or antibiotic - something routinely prescribed as a rule. Mr Doe gets no satisfaction from it. He has to make an appointment to see a specialist. It takes time to ascertain which specialist exactly. But it is not until some lab assistant somewhere far away will write to the specialist saying that his machines have found out that some cells in our friend Mr Doe's body do not behave as they should according to the test technique. The doctor at last has a right to say, "Well Mr Doe, my dear patient, there is something not quite OK here with you."

Between the first feeling of unease and the final tests confirming the morbid bodily changes a few years may pass. By this time it is too late to do much. The sad story continues for a while with the use of heavy chemicals and surgeons' knives and slowly the human spirit is extinguished. This is the usual situation with a lot of diseases.

### What is Disease

But what is "disease"? A lack of ease to live fully? How can this be diagnosed? Who goes to the doctor just to say, "I am not my usual self"? Most of the time the doctor has no idea what the patient's usual self is. It is the industrialised nature of

health care that prevents both doctor and patient from discussing those small, undetectable, slow gradual changes that precede illness. In other words to avail yourself of the newest wonder drug you have to be already very ill indeed; and of course there is a huge industry of medicines and multi-national pharmaceutical companies who rely on a steady supply of extremely ill people to continue their existence.

In the old days the best and most highly paid doctor was the one whose patients were never sick. Wouldn't that be nice? Just not too realistic. The whole point of the Ayurveda treatment is to detect these imbalances on a subtle energy level and correct them at the earliest stage. In the Charaka Samhita Vedic text the writer states, "Each individual is the unique expression of a recognisable finely tuned

that control the whole energy economy in living organisms. They always work as a team and one never appears without the others. Their interplay decides the objective condition of a living organism. A harmonious relationship of these three bioenergetic principles is the mark of good health. Any imbalance - and the equilibrium is very unstable - reveals itself in a wide variety of symptoms.

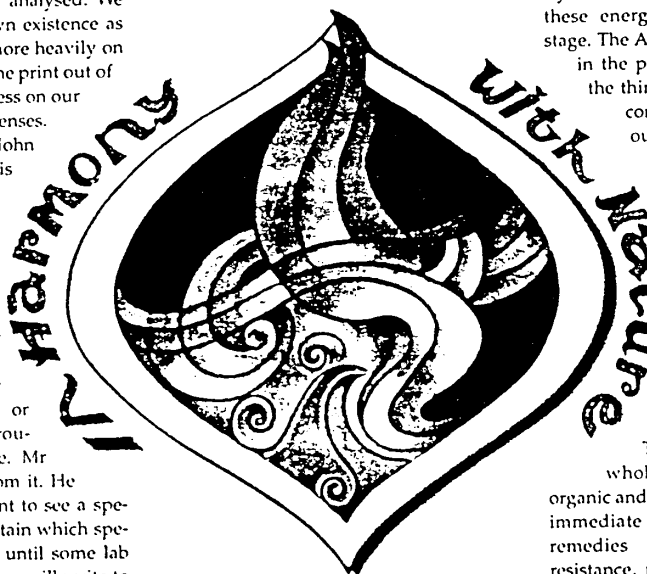
It would be a gross oversimplification to look for the predominance of a certain principle in a concrete individual. We are all in a constant flux of these energies - just like the Universe itself. Hence, sublime changes in the state of mind can and do influence the body's physiological make up to a great extent. To put it bluntly we can be as much poisoned by our uncontrolled negative emotions, as we can be by yesterday's soggy sandwich full of salmonella. This is why the first step in the Ayurvedic treatment would be to catch these energetic changes at the earliest stage. The Ayurveda talks about six stages in the progress of the disease and by the third stage it is almost too late to correct the imbalance. So watch out for mood changes, strange thoughts and unusual food preferences - those are all early symptoms. And detoxify.

### Treatment of the Whole Person on an Energy Level.

Those are the main features of the proper Ayurveda treatment: it works on the energy level.

The treatment works on the whole person, it is completely organic and all remedies are taken from the immediate natural environment. These remedies strengthen the powers of resistance, promote healing and have no side effect. Modern orthodox Western medicines represent just one "active ingredient" usually taken from a plant. That is why these active ingredients pack such a powerful punch and often knock the living organism for six, producing an adverse reaction we know as "side effects". In Ayurveda, the Universe, man in it and every living plant and animal are thought about as a symphony. Each note in this symphony is harmonically interwoven into a whole body of music. Now imagine just a few notes taken out of context, turned up to the highest level of sound and then repeatedly played again and again and again. How long could you stand such music, even if these notes were taken from the finest piece by Mozart?

Some two hundred medicinal Indian plants a year are being tested in research laboratories of multi-national companies. If it is possible to isolate an active principle from a plant extract, it is then chemically



cosmic process occurring in time and space." This is what is so special about Ayurveda: it makes no bones about assuming a direct, physical relationship between man and the Universe. There are five senses and five "building blocks of being"; these are called Mahabhutas. But I am distracted from my original idea to write in a simple, easy to understand way about what Ayurveda can do for you. As I said, it is full of jargon and very, very complicated and precise. Just like life itself.

It is due to this extremely highly developed sense of the direct correlation between all the elements of being that led to a concept of the Tridoshas. All matter is built on the basis of the Mahabhutas or the building blocks of existence; but only living matter has the Tridoshas, the three forces regulating all biological processes. These forces are not material. They are dynamic principles, the forms of energy

analysed to discover how the atoms of its component molecules fit together and then, after clinical trials, synthetic copies are put on the market as a new money-making product. It has nothing to do with genuine Ayurveda. Just a few weeks ago I read in a paper about the clinical trials carried out in strictest secrecy by an unnamed multi-national pharmaceutical company producing a medicine for Alzheimer's disease from an unnamed Indian plant. Wow, what a secret! It has only been in use for the past five thousand years in Ayurveda! Its name is *Centella asiatica* and it is commonly used by school children as it helps to strengthen memory. I use it myself even as I write, in the form of an Ayur tea.

However, the nature of modern industrialised and commercialised medicine is such that "money can only be made from a patentable new drug not from a natural remedy".<sup>1</sup> It is little wonder that in 1833 the East India Company having seen fit to give India the benefit of Western science, closed and banned all Ayurveda schools and opened in Calcutta the first University for Occidental medicine. That had something to do with slow progress of Ayurveda into the consciousness of Western people. We know of the Chinese herbal treatments, reflexology and aromatherapy but so painfully little about Ayurveda where all these treatments have their origins.

#### Ayurveda and the Digestive System

If Ayurveda is all about prevention and detoxification it is only natural that the closest attention is given in Ayurveda to the digestive system. That is where the most important action of the exchange between our environment and our body takes place. We are indeed what we eat, as we eat our way through life nutrients and matter itself are taken into one end and after being transformed into our living body depart through another end. Should such a process be disrupted the end result will manifest itself as an illness. However, in today's world, most of the matter we consume is artificially made. The majority of Western food including fruit and vegetables is full of chemicals that come from factories, not from the earth. It is very difficult to underestimate the effect of such foods on present and future generations. Following the logic of the market place we can come to the conclusion that only genetically modified people can consume genetically modified food. Weird or what? We just have to wait and see whether all these strange ideas will become a reality. In the meantime however, we have to attend to our own health in the best manner possible.

It does not do us any good that we are living in an artificial world for which we are not as yet equipped. The way we humans developed was through evolution



Sinharaja: virgin rain forests of Sri Lanka

in a natural environment. We are made to hunt and forage for food and our bodies are designated for the stresses of the jungles. Today we find ourselves in an unnatural world made-to-measure for machines more than for humans. It is no great surprise that we find it so hard to survive in the big cities. Look at the modern diseases, most of them are the result of secluded, sheltered, comfortable living. It is the same with wild animals; if placed in a zoo they will develop stress, depression and excessive interest in sex or the contrary, they will not be able to reproduce normally. We are meant for a much harder existence. Some of our faculties may begin to suffer atrophy in too cosy surroundings.

Of course, Ayurveda is a product of very different times, when the food we ate was taken from an earth not yet polluted by various chemicals. That is why food and medicine are not separate entities in Ayurveda. The wrong food for your type will harm you and the right one will put you straight. Basically, all Ayurveda products are ingredients of the food chain. A few days ago I visited a wonderful Ayurveda restaurant in London. I had a delicious starter of Aralu fruit (*Terminalia chebula*). It is an essential part of the classical Ayurvedic remedy for improving the digestion: Threepala. This is one of the oldest remedies in the world and does wonders for controlling the blood sugar and pacifying the appetite. It has been used for thousands of years in the treatment of obesity and you also don't experience a proper hang-over if you use it; it detoxifies the liver very fast. So, food is both a nutrient and a medicine. Ayurveda is based on this thought. The famous Panchakarma treatments can be summed up as detoxify, detoxify, etc. – five times through all available means. All means will include the use of plants.

There is a lovely story in the Ayurveda scriptures about a young man aspiring to become an Ayurveda practitioner. The medical school he wants to attend is a very famous one and the competition for places is fierce. The future students must go through a variety of difficult assignments in order to be accepted. One of these tests is to go into the wilderness and find one plant that would be useless for medical purposes. One by one they disappear into the forest. One of them spends hours there and comes back with an unattractive weed. Another returns after a couple of days and brings back some poisonous berries. But one student went missing for the whole week and came back empty handed. He went on to become a famous doctor.

#### The Story of Pepper

Take the story of ordinary pepper. There is no doubt that this spice has made the deepest mark on human history. In the Middle Ages more value was placed on a sack of pepper than on a human life. Pepper was and still is a most important spice on the world market. It was the most expensive commodity, carried along caravan routes, it played a significant part in many trade wars for instance the struggle for supremacy between Venice and Genoa and it was a prime economic motive in the search for a sea route to India. Its high price inevitably led to adulterations of the powdered form and even today it is advisable to buy whole peppercorns. Black pepper is "dry", therapeutically it is heating, and its digestive product is pungent. In general, pepper suits those who display the characteristics of Vata and Kapha but not those with a predominance of Pitta.

Pepper sharpens the appetite and improves the digestion and it also helps to expel wind. The essential oil is absorbed by the lungs and thus reduces discomfort in



pharyngitis and tonsillitis. To treat those complaints, powdered pepper is mixed with honey and taken three times a day. When stirred into hot milk it can be used for bronchitis, sore throats and head colds. Pastes and oils containing black pepper are used for rheumatism and skin diseases. A hot decoction of black pepper is an effective mouthwash for toothaches. Pepper is also sudorific and resembles quinine in action. In fact, a mixture of pepper, ginger and honey is prescribed for malaria. In small doses Piper cubeb is dispensed for disorders of the urinary passages. Long pepper is given to children suffering from diarrhoea, coughs, fever and bronchitis; it is added to the diet of mothers to assist contraction of the uterus following childbirth.

### Building Healthy Houses

All the Ayurvedic remedies are multifunctional. The above mentioned Theerapala is used mainly in Kapha and Pitta disorders. It is beneficial for diseases of the kidney and bladder, diabetes, skin conditions, eye complaints, intermittent fevers, loss of appetite, constipation, dysentery as well as improving iron absorption. And you can eat it! This is the overall picture of Ayurvedic thought. There are so many aspects to this wonderful science of life that I can't possibly even begin to scratch the surface of this vast body of knowledge.

temperature so high he had begun to hallucinate. Consequently we were both so impressed we asked the main manufacturers of Ayurvedic products in Sri Lanka to produce some such remedy for us. All the remedies we bring over from Sri Lanka have been tested on human volunteers; ourselves and our friends and relatives. One of the Ayurvedic oils has proven to be a decisive factor in my daughter's eczema. The child has been plagued with it since she was four years old; every time she goes through stress she develops horrible weeping blisters. Now at last this has stopped happening.

Arishtas are elixirs or tonics that are prepared by using mixtures of appropriate herbs fermented with natural cane sugar for 45 days in large teak vats. They taste great and contain natural food vitamins in an easy-to-absorb solution. The thing about vitamins, you see, is that while they are very necessary for our day-to-day survival, they work best when they come into the body as part of food, not as a synthetic foreign material.

### Ayurvedic Holidays

One of the best presents you can give your body and soul is an Ayurvedic holiday. Imagine two weeks concentrating on Number one - you owe it to yourself to take care of your body. This is exactly what you'll be doing on an Ayurvedic

But, to summarise briefly, Ayurveda is so comprehensive as to include the rules for building "healthy houses". All the Yoga Asanas come from the Ayurveda schedules. Great attention is paid to the season to avoid congestion in any of the Doshas particularly active at any given time of the year. But above all, the great significance of this system lies in the fact that it is a road to self-development that stresses physical, spiritual and mental health. The value of preventative medicine of this kind in attaining all round well-being is obvious.

Health is a variable condition and depends not only on body but also on the entire personality. Health lies within us and not in a drug store. There is no way of achieving well-being of body and mind through intravenous injections. It is gained by making the best of life's ups and downs, by adopting a sensible regimen, by deliberately relaxing when stressed out, by cultivating harmonious human relationships and finding life meaningful.

### The True Healer is Within Us.

Ayurveda knows many simple, natural preventative measures for keeping the body in trim. According to Ayurveda, mental and physical health can be preserved merely by attentiveness; attentiveness to how we use our senses, adapt our daily routine to the demands of

holiday; letting yourself receive the best care in the world. Imagine: the tropical white sand and blue sea, lazy days of contemplating your navel whilst being massaged with warm oils every morning! These oils are doing more than just smelling nice - they actually serve to get rid of the toxins plaguing your body. Take two weeks out of every year for an Ayurvedic holiday and these treatments will take care of your detox for the next strenuous 11 and a half months. You will also be better informed on what foods are best for you personally; not everybody is temperamentally and physiologically suitable to give up wheat and meat. A completely salad diet is not necessarily everybody's cup of tea. We are all different and that is the glory of life. The choice of what is best for you will be made easier at the Ayurvedic resort. As a psychological detox is also a part of the treatment, you can deposit your burden of the year's negative emotions right down there where it belongs, with the rest of your body's toxins and waste. If we are to recommend anything at all to improve health awareness it would be such a holiday, and after that visiting a qualified Ayurvedic practitioner once at the start of every season for advice, detox and general guidance.

And then I could very confidently say: "To your best health!"



our environment, plan our diet and respond to internal and external rhythms. The object of Ayurveda is to assist nature. All the means used for cures do no more than support natural processes, they do not irritate nor do they suppress nature or substitute what the body can do for itself.

There are simple tried and tested remedies that act mostly as prevention. For example, the excellent cold and flu remedy Lakpeyawa consists of nothing more than a mixture of ginger, coriander, long pepper, Indian night shade and Jacquin's night shade. However, it is so powerful that when we were living in Sri Lanka and my boyfriend contracted dengue fever, this remedy put him right in just two days, despite having a

### References:

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- Vernon Coleman, *Bodypower*, The European Medical Journal, Publishing House, 1999.
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### About the Author

Dr Liliana Stringer, PhD., MA, BA, UK CPH (Dip), MPNLP, BMA is Russian in origin and has trained in psycho-hypnotherapy, NLP and homoeopathy.

She studied Ayurveda under the guidance of Dr Aleem Moulana, Head of Unani Department, General Hospital (Ayurveda), Borella, Colombo. She studied native herbalism and the Ifa (West African original philosophy) in Nigeria.

She now heads Ibis International Corporation, a company dedicated to the promotion of Ayurvedic principles, importing Ayurveda Products from Sri Lanka. She is on the board of the Ayurvedic Trade Association UK. She can be contacted on 0171-286 3326.



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# Hettigoda Group

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Siddhalepa Group of Companies are indeed proud to be selected to sponsor the Kings Fund Seminar on Ayurveda and Buddhism to be held on May 24, 2000 in London. It is indeed an honour to be part of a prestigious organisation such as King's Fund in its efforts to propagate the knowledge and enhance the awareness of traditional Ayurvedic system.

Ayurveda, which means the science of life, has been practised since time immemorial in South East Asia. It is a system of health care, which promotes preventative and curative measures to focus on illness and take corrective measures to balance the human system to avoid any illnesses. In addition, Ayurveda teaches humans how to lead a healthy life style through the forces of Mind, Body and Soul.

Dr. Hendrick De Silva Hettigoda established Siddhalepa, the largest Ayurveda Company in Sri Lanka, in 1934 as a family enterprise. He was a well-known Ayurvedic Kidney Specialist and a fourth generation Ayurvedic Doctor. Under guidance of Deshabandu Dr. Victor Hettigoda, Siddhalepa took a more route of rapid growth and became the First Ayurveda Company in Sri Lanka to receive the prestigious ISO 9002 International Quality Standards Certification in 1994. In addition, Siddhalepa Factories follow the Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) published by the Ministry of health for Ayurvedic Preparation in Sri Lanka.

Siddhalepa produces Herbal Balm, Herbal Oils, Herbal Inhalers, Herbal Toothpaste, Herbal Soap, Herbal Teas, Herbal Tonics, Herbal Massage Oils and various other Ayurvedic products all in all fifty-four. These products are exported to many countries in the world over. Today, Siddhalepa has become the largest manufacturer and exporter of Ayurvedic products in Sri Lanka.

Siddhalepa Group pioneered in the establishment of the Siddhalepa Ayurveda Hospital in 1988 to be the first private Ayurveda hospital with Specialist Channelled consultations. The Hospital acts as the Research and Development wing of the Siddhalepa Group and performs various patient tests before introducing any new products to the market. The hospital caters to the needs of local and foreign patients, as it has facilities and conveniences to provide quality medical care.

Besides Siddhalepa Ayurveda products, the Company manufactures Suraya Organic Fertiliser certified by NAASA, Australia who is a member of IFOAM.

Siddhalepa Ayurveda Health Resort, with a beautiful beach in the Southern Coastal town Wadduwa, Sri Lanka is the newest venture of the Siddhalepa Group. The Resort will promote the Ayurvedic system of therapy and propagate the knowledge of Ayurveda.

# NATURAL Herbal Products



With ISO 9002  
International Quality Certification

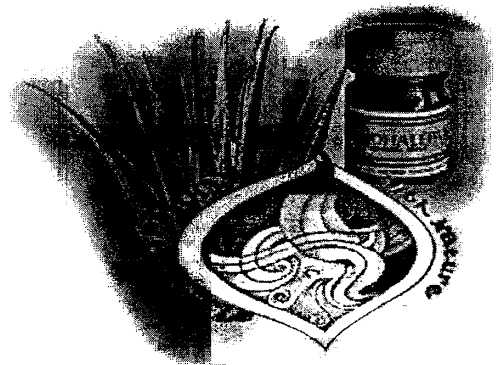
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yurveda means the science of life (Ayur=life, veda=science). It is the indigenous medical system practised in Sri Lanka and India, from time immemorial (2,000 BC).

According to Ayurveda, the human body, like the Universe, is composed of five elements which are called *Panchamahabuta* (*Pancha*=five; *Maha*=great; *bhuta*=elements) namely, *Apo*(Water) *Thejo*(Fire) *Vayo*(Air) *Patavi*(Earth) and *Akasa* (Space or ether).

Ayurveda is the most scientific and complete system of preventive and curative medicine and health-care system known to mankind. It is a science which focuses on illness and take corrective measures to balance the human system to avoid illness.

Ayurvedic concept of creation focuses on four (4) factors which are inter-related. They are; the Body, the Mind, the Consciousness (or soul) and the *panchamahabhatas*, the five elements referred to earlier.



Siddhalepa is the leader of producing Ayurvedic products in Sri Lanka. We have achieved a reputed name in the export world as our products are exported to Europe, USA and Asia.

Please go through our Web Site and leave your comments, Ideas and business enquiries. Our products range from Herbal Balm to Sophisticated Herbal Toxics (Elixirs).

<i>Svarasa</i>	The juice of herbs with or without water/sugar
<i>Kalka</i>	Paste prepared by grinding medicinal plant materials;
<i>Kasaya</i>	A decoction. Herbal materials such as bark, roots, leaves, fruits and flowers are cut, sliced or powdered coarsely and one part of the amalgamation is boiled in four, eight or sixteen parts of water (usually cups) and reduced to a quarter.
<i>Churna</i>	Medicinal plant materials in powder form.
<i>Guli</i>	Tablets or pills prepared singly or in combination.
<i>Asava</i>	Preparation where herbal drugs are soaked in liquids (mainly water) fermented and filtered. Sometimes natural alcohol obtained from herbs is added to expedite fermentation and efficacy.
<i>Arishta</i>	An Elixir a <i>Rasayana</i> preparation similar to <i>Asava</i> . Various decoctions are used and fermented for retaining efficacy over a long period of time.
<i>Leha</i>	It is a semi-solid preparation; sugar or <i>jaggery</i> is used as medium.
<i>Thaila</i>	Ayurveda medicinal oils; special procedures are followed in the preparation of these oils.
<i>Grita</i>	They are similar to the medicinal oils but the herbs are boiled in <i>ghee</i> .
<i>Lepa</i>	Kind of Medicinal paste for external application.
<i>Bhasa</i>	Calcified preparations where herbal extracts are subjected to intense heat
<i>Peyawa</i>	Concentrations of decoctions preserved with the help of sugar, jaggery or herbal alcohol.

According to Ayurveda, illness occurs when the balance of the three doshas - *Vatha*, *Pitha*, *Kapha*, is disrupted.

THURSDAY, 15 JUNE 2000

EVENING STANDARD



Naomi Campbell: one of many celebrities to try the fashionable Ayurvedic medicine

# Hindus 'take back' trendy treatment from the rich

by JO REVILL  
Health Correspondent

THE FIRST hospital in London dedicated to the ancient practice of Ayurvedic medicine is to open shortly, offering free treatment for patients who have suffered for years with chronic conditions.

The Indian treatment, which is based on the patient's personality and a mixture of herbs, massage and strict diet, has become hugely fashionable in the past year.

Everyone from Cherie Blair to Naomi Campbell has undergone treatment, and recently the Body Shop and other retailers have started to sell its herbal remedies.

But Indian practitioners say they are furious at the way it has been exploited, and have set up the first hospital run along strict Ayurvedic principles.

The hospital in Chislewick will have 30 beds and five doctors, and treatment will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis to

patients whom the doctors feel they can successfully treat.

Gopi Warrier, a practitioner and founder of the hospital, said: "Ayurveda is a sacred science that dates back more than 5,000 years. It is not the latest craze, to be diluted or distorted in a commercial environment."

"This form of healing is for all sections of society, not just for the fashionable or the rich. We are setting up this hospital to benefit the poor as well as the rich. I'm very worried about how unqualified people are taking advantage of people because they have an interest in herbal medicine."

Mr Warrier, whose family runs several Ayurvedic hospitals in India, said they will be treating serious ailments such as rheumatoid arthritis, depression, mental illness, ulcerative colitis and asthma, under careful supervision.

The residential treatment, which could take weeks, would involve dietary and lifestyle restrictions as well as detoxification therapies.

"Ayurvedic medicine is very successful in treating some common illnesses such as prostatitis, cystitis, irritable bowel syndrome and other conditions such as schizophrenia," he said.

He denied that it will in any way clash with treatments offered by the NHS. "We would turn away patients with serious acute conditions whom we could not treat, such as cancer patients," he said. "Many of those who come to us will be people for whom Western medicine has failed."

Ayurveda is a medical system based on the teachings of Hinduism that treats the whole of the body by balancing the different doshas, or constituents. It uses herbal remedies, massage, yoga and detoxification therapies but also says that a spiritual understanding is important for health.

Its practitioners say that disease is caused by an imbalance in the three doshas so that, for example, asthma is caused by an unbalanced kapha. They treat this through emesis therapy, by



"Sacred science": an Ayurvedic patient has oil and steam treatments at Gopi Warrier's clinic



Pictures: DAVID PAVSON

giving the patient drugs which make them vomit, and then herbal preparations. The vomiting apparently clears the lungs, and in time patients can no longer need inhalers.

Mr Warrier, who runs a clinic

in Wimpole Street, has found the initial funding for the first six months from trustees, but will need support from generous donors to meet its annual running costs of \$1.5 million.

GUARDIAN. SAT. 17/6/00.



Ancient cure ... A patient undergoes treatment at an Ayurvedic clinic (Photograph: Frank Baron)

## Life forces to be rebalanced at holistic hospital

Audrey Gillan

The first charitable Ayurvedic hospital outside of India and Sri Lanka will open in west London next month, offering free treatment for sick people wishing to try one of the oldest medical systems in the world.

The 30-bed Ayurvedic charitable hospital will open on

kapha through which these elements are manifested. In order to stay healthy, we must maintain the natural balance of all these elements.

People can be one of vata, pitta, or kapha or a combination of vata-pitta, pitta-kapha, vata-kapha. Vata types tend to be thin with dry, rough and dark skin. They speak quickly

## 'set'

The Swiss company have supplied the trigger for the bomb received by the army just a few days after the explosion, the trial heard yesterday.

Irwin Meister, a man who set up the explosives company, the rush order was November 1988.1 It has also been linked with the Libyans supplying combat equipment and the design of MST-13 timers.

But Mr Meister's court that when more timers can Christmas 1988, it have the right to duce its own evidence.

Instead it bought timers for delivery Mr Meister's boss, Edwin Bollie.

## M25

A breach of the human rights convention not lead to any appeal heard yesterday.

David Perry, who was opposing an appeal on behalf of Michael Johnson and Rowe - convicted and a series of around the M25.

July 1 in temporary premises in Hammersmith before moving to its permanent residence in central London.

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian treatment system that has recently become fashionable. The hospital's backers hope to eschew this glamorous image and demonstrate that Ayurveda is a serious practice that can cure illnesses where conventional medicine fails.

A holistic system, involving meditation, diet, exercise, massage, and herbal cures, Ayurveda — the name is derived from the Sanskrit for knowledge of life — is offered in Britain by around 50 qualified practitioners who are monitored by the Ayurvedic Medical Association UK.

Fears have grown that charlatans will exploit the fact that the treatment is now in vogue — its healing effects have been espoused by Madonna, Cherie Blair, Naomi Campbell and others — and set up clinics and offer herbal products that falsely purport to be Ayurvedic.

The hospital's chairman, Gopi Warrier, had been concerned that Ayurveda's image could become spoiled. He said: "Ayurveda treatment is serious treatment to cure a serious ailment. Some of the therapies, such as enemas and blood-letting, could be dangerous in the wrong hands."

Ayurveda treats the patient and not the illness and aims to prevent disease and promote health. Ayurvedic philosophy believes that we are all composed of various combinations of five elements: space, air, fire, water and earth, and that there are three forces, vata, pitta and

sleep little, can be emotionally insecure and can have an unpredictable temper. Pitta types are usually of medium height and build with soft, fair skin. They speak clearly, are intelligent but often aggressively so, love to eat and tend to be emotionally intense. Kapha types are usually big-built, can tend to be overweight, they speak slowly and need a lot of sleep. They have a long memory but are slow to learn and they are very loving and emotionally secure.

Ayurvedic treatment helps to iron out imbalances of vata, pitta or dosha by a series of treatments that include laxatives, enemas, massages, saunas, oils being dripped on the forehead (particularly effective for those suffering from psychological problems), meditation, meditation and yoga.

Mr Warrier, who believes that many are guilty of intellectual pilfering of Ayurvedic principles, explained: "We decided that we have to have a hospital because a lot of the treatment requires residential care. There has to be very rigorous restrictions on diet, temperature in rooms and to keep control of that it has to be in a hospital environment."

He added the hospital would be funded by a trust for the first six months. He and his two fellow trustees, David McAlpine and Lady Sarah Morritt then hope to raise funding from elsewhere.

"Ayurveda is not simply for celebrities. I am not interested in the transitory fame of celebrities. We are interested in people who have illnesses or problems," he added.

**BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR  
HELD AT THE KING'S FUND  
ON WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000**

The address given by the **Ven.Pandith. Medagama Vajiragnana**, Sangha Nayake of the UK (Chief Priest of Theravada Buddhism in Britain) at the '*Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine Seminar*' held at the King's Fund.

For further particulars please contact:  
*Ivan Corea (Development Fellow) 020 7307 2627*

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## BUDDHISM AND AYURVEDIC MEDICINE

(Ven. Pandit. Medagama Vajiragnana, Sangha Nayake of Great Britain)

Buddhism and Ayurvedic medicine originated in India and both aim at eliminating suffering. Buddhism primarily concerns with the well-being of the mind and Ayurveda deals with the well-being of the body. While treating one aspect of a person, one cannot neglect the other because both are inseparably linked together. Both systems regard the body and the mind as interdependent and inter linked. This relationship has been illustrated with a picture of a boat and a boatman. Body is the boat, mind is the boatman. The boat cannot go anywhere without direction from the boatman, but the boatman relies on the boat in order to make his journey. Similarly, with body and mind, both are interdependent and rely on each other. Let us look at the relationship between the medical profession and teaching of Buddhism. Both have healed the ailing mind and body throughout their history and will continue to do so in the future.

The Buddha said that his main concern was the problem of human suffering and how it could be eliminated. The term the Buddha used to convey the concept of suffering in Pali is "Dukkha". His whole effort was directed towards finding a way out of dukkha. It is very difficult to find a single English word which conveys the meaning of dukkha, but it has variously been translated as suffering, pain, sickness, unsatisfactoriness, imperfection and so on. It includes all ills of the mind and the body.

The Buddha said, "Monks, there are two kinds of disease. What are they? Bodily disease and mental disease. People are seen who say they have been physically healthy for a year, for two years, for three years....or more, but beings who say they are mentally healthy for even a moment are rare in the world."

The Buddha was teaching his disciples to discipline their minds as an aid to overcome the effects of physical illness. He was very much aware of the intimate relationship between mind and body. Once an old decrepit man named Nakulapita, came to see the Buddha and asked for some solace in his old age. The Buddha, agreeing with him, said that his physical state was poor

and that he was getting very old and decrepit. He advised him to train his mind in the following way: "May my mind not be ill, though my body is ill."

The mind has a powerful influence on the well being of the individual. Because it is so closely linked with the body, its mental states affect physical health. The Buddha said, "Mind is the forerunner of all mental states. Mind is chief, mind made are they." (Dh.1&2) Modern psychological studies reveal that -

Fear : lowers resistance, leads to a feeling of weakness and exhaustion  
 Anger: results in muscular unco-ordination.

"Mind not only makes sick, it also cures", "One who wishes to succeed in life must treasure good health".

The first task of the doctor is to discover the cause of the patient's sickness. Buddhism too is very much concerned with causation. The Buddhist approach to medicine is entirely in line with the doctrine of Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppada*) i.e. that all happenings are due to a cause or many causes. The attempts of the physician to heal the body is considered in Buddhism as a noble act based on universal love and compassion because it results in the alleviation of suffering. Buddhism, too, is primarily concerned with the alleviation of suffering.

The Ayurvedic approach to life advocates following the very same Noble Eightfold Path as taught by the Buddha. The eight factors of this path are, Right understanding, Right thought, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness and Right concentration.

In one of the discourses known as *Girimananda Sutta*, the Buddha talks about the causes of sickness and disease as originating from an imbalance of bile, phlegm, wind, from conflict of the humours, from changes of weather, from adverse condition (which here means faulty deportment), from devices (practised by others such as black magic, poisoning and so on), from the result of kamma (*kamma-vipaka*); cold, heat, hunger, thirst, excrement, and urine. I believe that Ayurvedic medicine is prepared on the grounds of ill-balance of these constituents in a person.

Both Buddhism and Ayurveda maintain a "holistic" approach to life.

For Buddhists this means the doctrine of the "middle way", an avoidance of all extremes and moderation in all things. Ayurvedic principles fully support this Buddhist doctrine, and both systems teach the same method of ethical life. Buddhists call it the five precepts, which are; Abstaining from taking life, Abstaining from taking what is not given, Abstaining from sensual impropriety, Abstaining from unskilful speech, Abstaining from taking intoxicants.

"Of gains, gain in health is the highest and best" (Dhp.204)

"If one wishes to have a long life, one cannot obtain it by prayers or vows. Instead one should follow a path of life conducive to longevity"

(An. wheel 208 BPS 1975)

**Three types of patients:** (An.1. 120)

(a) There are some patients who do not recover even though they get the best medical attention and nursing. (b) There are some who recover whether or not they get medicine and nursing care. (c) There are some who recover only if they get proper medicine and nursing care.

In the recent past the conviction has steadily grown in the medical profession that very many causes of disease, organic as well as functional, are directly caused by mental states. An optimistic patient has a better chance of getting well than a patient who is worried and unhappy.

At the popular level in Buddhist countries one part of the Buddha's teaching has been cultivated with great devotion and used for remedial purpose by the followers. This is the chanting of *Paritta*. *Paritta* means discourses for protection and are certainly part of teaching of the Buddha himself. Most chanted discourses are not only of philosophical value, but also have a direct psychological effect. This *Paritta* chanting purifies the mental state of the listeners especially of those who are suffering from physical ailments.

It is certain that *paritta* recitation produces mental well-being in those who listen to them with confidence in the *Dhamma* which is truth. Such mental well being can help patients to recover from their illness. The Buddha himself had *paritta* recited for him and he also requested others to recite it for his disciples when they were ill. Unless the illness is caused as a result of

one's own unskilful acts, it is possible to change these mental states to bring about mental and physical healing. But both Buddhism and Ayurveda teach that we live a succession of lives and we bring with us into our present life a karmic inheritance based on our actions in previous lives including some disabilities and diseases.

Some selected sermons of the Buddha are chanted for various reasons such as to recover from illness, to avert danger, to ward off the influence of malignant beings, to obtain protection and deliverance from fear and evil and to promote welfare and well-being. One day Ven. Angulimala came upon a woman in labour and was so moved by compassion for her that he asked the Buddha's advice. The Buddha told him to recite some *Piritta* verses for the woman to hear. When he did so, the woman immediately and painlessly delivered her child. Since then this verse has always been chanted near the time of labour. The Buddha exhorted his disciples to cultivate loving kindness (*metta*) towards listeners while reciting these sermons.

Buddhist meditation acts directly on the mind. It has a significant role to play in improving the mental states. Meditation is of two kinds, calming (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassana*). The *samatha* meditation calms the emotions, worries, tensions, anxieties and all that upsets the balance of mind. The Insight Meditation gives one the ability to see things objectively as they really are. Meditation is a universal method of healing, transcending all boundaries of race, creed, colour and nationality.

Following the teaching of the Buddha, rulers actively promoted healing activities by building hospitals and establishing free dispensaries. The well-known Indian Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, of the 3rd century B. C. carved the following edict on a rock (Girnar text II) "Everywhere in the dominions of King *Priyadarsi* (Asoka), Beloved of Gods, and likewise in the bordering territories ..... has arranged for two kinds of medical treatment viz. medical treatments for people and medical treatments for animals. And wherever there were no medical herbs beneficial to people and beneficial to animals, they have been caused to be imported and planted. On the roads, wells have been caused to be dug and trees have been caused to be planted for the enjoyment of animals and humans".

This is the first record of the establishment of government hospitals not only for human beings but also for animals.

This example was faithfully followed by the kings in Sri Lanka after the introduction of Buddhism. King *Gamini* provided free food and medicine to the sick as prescribed by his physicians. Venerable *Welivita Saranankara* Sangha Raja of Sri Lanka is reported to have composed a book on medicine which is known as *Bhesajja Manjusa*. Thus the well-known Buddhist statement "Health is the highest gain" (*arogya parama labha*) stands established both in theory and practice. In the *Vinaya pitaka* (disciplinary code) monks are allowed to treat medically certain people. The Buddha himself ministered to a suffering monk and declared the following memorable words, "He who tends the sick, respects me". Thus we see the close connection between Buddhism and Ayurvedic medicine.

"Whosoever would wait upon me,  
Whosoever would honour me,  
Whosoever would follow my advice,  
He should attend on the sick"

(Mahavagga Bodhi leaves B 76 , 1977, BPS)

WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> MAY 2000

KINGS FUND SEMINAR-DR SHANTHA GODAGAMA

CHIEF SANGANAYAKA : MOST VEN. DR. VAJIRAGNANA

RABI : JULIA NUEBERGER

DEPT. HIGH COMMISSIONER OF SRI LANKA :

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

GOOD AFTERNOON.

FOR THE NEXT TWENTY MINUTES I WILL GIVE YOU A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO THE HIDDEN WORLD OF AYURVEDA. THE AYURVEDIC MEDICAL SYSTEM IS KNOWN AS THE MOST COMPLETE HEALING SYSTEM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

THE MAGNITUDE OF WHAT THIS MEANS AND THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE IT ENCOMPASSES IS YET UNKNOWN AND NOT SO FULLY UNDERSTOOD IN TODAY'S SOCIETY.

IN SHORT – IT CAN BE DESCRIBED AS ESOTERIC IN ITS NATURE.

AYURVEDA HAS BEEN THE ROOT TO ALMOST ALL MEDICINE DISCIPLINES, PHILOSOPHY AND TREATMENT THROUGHOUT EASTERN CIVILISATION. SINCE ITS BIRTH, SOME 3000 YEARS AGO, AYURVEDA HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN FROM SUCCESSIVE GENERATION TO GENERATION AND SIMPLY BECOME A WAY OF LIFE FOR MILLIONS. THE EASTERN MAN HAS GROWN UP WITH AYURVEDA, TASTED IT AS A CHILD, REAPED ITS BENEFITS AS AN ADULT AND PASSED ON ITS WISDOM TO HIS OWN CHILDREN. AYURVEDA HAS ALMOST BECOME THE EASTERN MAN'S BEST FRIEND, HAVING INTEGRATED IT INTO HIS LIFE, BOTH HAVE LIVED AND CONTINUE TO DO SO IN HARMONIC SYMBIOSIS. WHILST, SIMULTANEOUSLY, OVER HERE IN THE WESTERN CIVILISATIONS, AYURVEDA HAS LAID DORMANT, HER VOICE WITHOUT ENERGY TO BE HEARD. BUT NOW, RECENTLY, SOMETHING WONDERFUL IS HAPPENING, MINDS ARE CHANGING WITHIN THE CIRCLES OF OUR SOCIETIES AS PEOPLE ARE BECOMING MORE SELF AWARE OF THE WAY THEY CHOOSE TO LIVE THEIR LIVES. AND YOU MAY BE ASKING WHO, OR WHAT IS CAUSING ALL THIS NEW STIRR?...MY FRIENDS...IT IS BECAUSE OUR SLEEPING GIANT, IS FINALLY AWAKE.

SO WHY ARE PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT "AYURVEDA"? WHAT HAS DRIVEN THEM TO THIS UNKNOWN SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE... THIS UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY? IT IS MOSTLY BECAUSE PEOPLE ARE NOW BEGINNING TO ASK THEMSELVES QUESTIONS, AND LOOKING WITHIN, TO ASK... WHY AM "I" BECOMING ILL? WHY AM "I" SUFFERING FROM "*THIS PARTICULAR*" ILLNESS? WHAT CAN BE DONE TO TREAT "*ME*"? AND DO MY PAST AND PRESENT THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS PREDISPOSE ME TO CERTAIN DISEASES I MAY SUFFER FROM IN THE COMING FUTURE?

WE ARE BECOMING MORE INTERESTED AND INTRIGUED IN THE MECHANISMS THAT IGNITE, FUEL AND DRIVE OUR MINDS AND HOW THIS, CAN AFFECT OUR

BODIES, MANIFESTING ITS MANY IMPERFECTIONS AND WEAKNESSES THROUGH DISORDER AND IMBALANCE, WHICH MAY EVENTUALLY LEAD TO ILLNESS, DISEASE AND ULTIMATELY SUFFERING AND PREMATURE DEATH. IT IS THESE QUESTIONS WHICH AYURVEDIC MEDICINE ADDRESSES, GOING BEYOND THE SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY, AND TAPS INTO THE REALMS OF OUR CONSCIENCE, OUR SPIRITUAL ENERGY, THE POWER OF OUR MINDS AND THE DIRECTION OF OUR JOURNEY THROUGH LIFE AFTER LIFE. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU ALL HAVE COME HERE AND ARE LISTENING TO A MAN SPEAKING ABOUT AYURVEDIC MEDICINE....NOT BY CHANCE OR COINCIDENCE HAVE YOU MET ME, OR HAVE I MET YOU. EVERY THOUGHT AND ACTION YOU HAVE MADE THROUGHOUT YOUR LIFE UP UNTIL THE MOMENT YOU CHOSE TO WALK THROUGH THOSE DOORS HAVE LED YOU TO THIS PRECISE MOMENT IN TIME, LIKEWISE YOUR EVERY THOUGHT AND YOUR EVERY ACTION DETERMINED THE STATE OF THE BODY WHICH HAD BROUGHT YOU HERE. AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO, IN THE FUTURE, TAKING YOU TO OTHER PLACES, OTHER MEETINGS AND FURTHER CROSSROADS OF DECISION.

SUCH DISCIPLINES AS YOGA AND MEDITATION, HAD GROWN TO BECOME COMMON PRACTICE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, HOWEVER FEW ARE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THEIR ORIGINS LIE IN AYURVEDA, THEY ARE ALL BRANCHES FROM THE SAME TREE.

A GENETICIST MAY TELL YOU WHAT DISEASES YOU MAY SUFFER FROM AND EVEN WHEN YOU MAY RECEIVE THEM, SUCH ADVANCES IN GENETIC SCIENCE CAN BE PRAISED AND ADMIRER, HOWEVER, AYURVEDA GOES FURTHER BACK AND OFFERS US THE TOOLS FROM WHICH WE MAY ANSWER THE MOST UNIVERSALLY ASKED QUESTION.... "WHY?"

TO UNDERSTAND YOUR ILLNESS, IS TO VENTURE INTO THE DEPTHS FROM WHERE IT WAS CONCEIVED, WITHOUT SUCH ANALYSIS YOU MAY BECOME MISLED ONTO THE WRONG PATH. YOU BECOME LOST. EVENTUALLY, RECOVERY MAY LOOK BLEAK, YOUR JOURNEY IS CUT SHORT AND YOU MAY NEVER SEE THE FOREST FROM THE TREES.

THE WORD "AYURVEDA" ORIGINATES FROM THE ANCIENT LANGUAGE OF SANSKRIT, MEANING "LIFE" AND "VEDA" MEANING "SCIENCE", THEREFORE "SCIENCE OF LIFE". IN SANSKRIT, THIS WORD HAS A WIDER MEANING WHICH INCLUDES THE LIFE OF PLANTS, ANIMALS AS WELL AS OTHER LIVING BEINGS.

THE ORIGINS OF AYURVEDA ARE SHROUDED IN INDIAN MYTHOLOGY. "MAHABRAHMA" (THE HINDU GOD OF CREATION) IS SAID TO HAVE COMMUNICATED THIS SYSTEM OF HEALING TO A NUMBER OF ENLIGHTENED AND DISTINGUISHED PERSONALITIES. AMONG THEM ARE 2 INDIVIDUALS KNOWN AS "CHARAKA", WHO FOUNDED INTERNAL MEDICINE AND "SUSHRUTHA", WHO FOUNDED SURGERY. & DHANWANTARI

#### THE AIMS OF AYURVEDA ARE

TO PREVENT DISEASES

TO TREAT AND CURE DISEASES.

BOTH OF WHICH ARE AIMED TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH ON 3 LEVELS:

#### 1. MENTALLY

## 2. PHYSICALLY

### 3. AND SPIRITUALLY

AYURVEDA LOOKS AT DISEASES AS A STATE OF DISHARMONY IN THE BODY AS A WHOLE, AND IS DIVIDED INTO 8 BRANCHES, WHICH ARE:

1. **INTERNAL MEDICINE** – KAYA CHIKITSA
2. **PEADIATRICS** – BALA CHIKITSA
3. **PSCYCOLOGICAL MEDICINE** – GRAHA CHIKITSA
4. **OTO-RHINO-LARYNGOLOGY AND OPHTHALMOLOGY** – SHALAKYA TANTRA
5. **SURGERY** – SHALYA TANTRA
6. **TOXICOLOGY** – AGADATANTRA
7. **SEXOLOGY** – VAJIKARANA
8. **REJUVANATION** - RASAYANA

ACCORDING TO ANCIENT VEDIC SCIENTIFIC THINKING, ALL MATTER IN THE UNIVERSE IS MADE UP FROM NO MATTER TO MATTER WHICH IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING FROM ONE FORM TO ANOTHER. THEY ARE KNOWN AS “PANCHAMAHABHUTA”... THE 5 ELEMENTS.

1. **APPO** – MEANING LIQUID, CREATING THE TASTE SENSATION (RASA), ITS SENSORY ORGAN BEING THE TONGUE.
2. **THEETO** – MEANING HEAT, CREATING THE VISUAL IMPUT OF COLOUR (RUPA), ITS SENSORY ORGAN BEING THE EYES.
3. **VAYU** – MEANING AIR, CREATING THE PHYSICAL SENSATION OF TOUCH (SPARSHA), ITS SENSORY ORGAN BEING SKIN.
4. **PRITHIVI** – MEANING EARTH, CREATING THE SENSATION OF SMELL AND ODOUR (GANDHA) ITS ORGAN BEING THE NOSE.
5. **AKASHA**, MEANING, SPACE, CREATING THE AUDITORY SENSATION OF SOUND, (SHARSDA) ITS ORGAN BEING THE EAR.

WHAT I HAVE DESCRIBED ARE THE BASIC FOUNDATIONS AND PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH AYURVEDA LIES. ALL 5 ELEMENTS HAVING A KEY ROLE IN OUR LIVES, SINCE OUR BODIES ARE COMPOSED OF THESE MAHABUTAS (THE 5 ELEMENTS).

IN ADDITION, LIFE IS CONSIDERED A UNION OF BODY, MIND AND SOUL. THERE ARE THREE BODY TYPES ACCORDING TO INDIVIDUAL DOMINANCY, KNOWN AS THE **THREE DOSHAS**:

1. **VATA** – AIR
2. **PITTA** – BILE
3. **KAPHA** – PHLEGM

DHATUS CONSIST OF 7 DIFFERENT BODY TISSUE TYPES. MALAS ARE THE 3 TYPES OF BODY EXCRETIONS.

1. **VATA**, THIS INITIATES AND PROMOTES BIOLOGICAL ACTIVITY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MOVEMENTS OF THE BODY, THERE ARE 5 TYPES:

**PRANA** (HEAD) THE MAIN LIFE FORCE – BREATHING  
**UDANA** (THROAT) SUPPORTING GLANDULAR FUNCTIONS  
**SAMANA** (STOMACH AND DUODENUM) SUPPORTING GASTRIC FUNCTIONS  
**VYANA** (HEART AND BLOOD VESSELS) SUPPORTING CIRCULATORY FUNCTIONS  
**APANA** (SEMEN/FEACES/URINE) SUPPORTING ELIMINATION.

2. **PITTA** – THIS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GENERATION OF BODY HEAT AND METABOLISM AND CERTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE INDIVIDUAL.



**3. KAPHA** – THE MAIN FUNCTION OF KAPHA, IS TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY BODY TISSUES AND MAINTAIN THE BALANCE OF FAT, WATER, AND OTHER FLUIDS.

SO NOW YOU HAVE HEARD OF VATA, PITTA AND KAPHA – SO WHAT PURPOSE DO THEY HAVE REGARDING OUR HEALTH?  
THESE ELEMENTS MUST EXIST IN DYNAMIC EQUILIBRIUM TO HELP MAINTAIN BODY “**PRAKRITI**”, MEANING THE ORIGINAL BALANCE OF THE INDIVIDUALS DOSHA INHERITENCE. ANY DISTURBANCE TO ANY ONE OF THEM, CAUSES IMBALANCE AND MALFUNCTION, RESULTING IN THE MANIFESTATION OF DISEASE.

**I WILL NOW EXPLAIN TO YOU THE AYURVEDIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISEASE PROCESS:**

THE DOSHAS MAY CHANGE THEIR PROPORTIONAL BALANCE AS A RESULT OF A VARIETY OF FACTORS, SUCH AS, INAPPROPRIATE LIFESTYLE/DIET/ACTIVITIES/TRAUMA, MENTAL AND PHYSICAL, WHICH ARE MAINLY BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR OWN BODIES. WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE TAKING PLACE WITHIN US, WHICH IS PRE-CLINICAL IN ITS DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE, IT MAY TAKE A VERY LONG PERIOD OF TIME FOR SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO APPEAR. VERY OFTEN, WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE TAKING PLACE, DISEASE MAY TAKE A PATH ALONG THE INHERITED WEAK AREAS OF THE INDIVIDUAL (AN ANALOGY OF THIS WOULD BE RUNNING WATER, WHICH WILL TRAVEL ALONG THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE.)

SOMETIMES, IN SOME INDIVIDUALS, DISEASE MAY SET IN THE BODY BEYOND THEIR OWN CONTROL. THEY ARE KNOWN AS “**KARMIC DISEASES**”, DUE TO THE THEORY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT WHICH OUR VEN. DR. VAJIRAGNANA WILL EXPLAIN AND EXPAND UPON.

IF WE TAKE EVERY ONE IN THIS ROOM, RIGHT NOW, WE CAN ARGUE THAT WE ARE ALL THE SAME – HUMAN. WE ALL BREATHE AND THINK, WE ALL ABSORB AND EXCRETE, WE ARE ALL MADE UP OF THE SAME MOLECULES AND ATOMS, SO WHAT MAKES YOU ARE THE SAME AS WHAT MAKES ME. NO DIFFERENCE, HOWEVER, IF THIS WERE ENTIRELY TRUE, WE WOULD BE A VERY MONOTONOUS AND UNINTERESTING RACE. ALTHOUGH OUR ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY ARE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME, WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT BEINGS, EACH OF US HAS OUR OWN SOLAR SYSTEM IF YOU LIKE, WITH DIFFERENT INFLUENCES ON OUR LIVES ORBITING US AND AFFECTING OUR HEALTH. A GREAT INFLUENCE, BEING THE INDIVIDUALITY OF OUR THINKING PROCESSES. THE MIND. HOWEVER AT THE VERY PEAK OF THIS FOUNTAIN OF INFLUENCE LIES ULTIMATELY YOUR INDIVIDUAL KARMA.

AYURVEDIC MEDICATIONS ARE MOSTLY HERBAL PREPARATIONS AND SOME INCLUDE NATURAL MINERAL PREPARATIONS. ALL HERBS OR MINERALS POSSESS THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA:

**RASA** – TASTE

**GUNA** – QUALITY

**VIRYA** – POTENCY (HEATING OR COOLING EFFECTS)

**VIPAKA** <sup>EFFECT</sup> – TASTE AFTER DIGESTION AND METABOLISM

**PRABHAVA** – SPECIFIC POWER OF THE SUBSTANCE

IN GENERAL, ALL HERBS HAVE THE POWER TO INCREASE OR DECREASE THE THREE DOSHAS, VATA, PITTA OR KAPHA. TO DIFFERENT EXTENTS AND IN DIFFERENT COMBINATIONS.

CLASSICAL AYURVEDA, APPLIES THEORY INTO PRACTICE. FIRSTLY, BY DIAGNOSING AN ALTERATION OF DOSHA STATE, THE PHYSICIAN WILL THEN PRESCRIBE SUITABLE HERBS IN SINGLE OR COMBINED FORM, WITH THE APPROPRIATE DOSAGE TO CONTROL AILMENTS.

SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF "PANCHAKARMA", THIS IS A SUB-SECTION OF AYURVEDA WHICH ENTAILS 5 DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES AIMED TOWARDS DETOXIFICATION, MAINLY FOR THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF DISEASES.

THEY ARE:

1. OIL ENEMAS
2. DECOCTION ENEMAS
3. PURGATION
4. INDUCED REGURGITATION
5. INHALATIONS

AND AYURVEDIC MASSAGE WITH HERBAL OILS AND HERBALISED STEAM BATHS.

AYURVEDA RECOMMENDS DETOXIFICATION PROGRAMMES ONCE EVERY SEASON FOR NORMAL INDIVIDUALS AS A WAY OF PREPARING THE BODY FOR THE NEXT SEASON, THUS AIDING THE PREVENTATIVE ASPECT OF THIS HEALING SYSTEM.

I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE YOU A CASE SCENARIO OF HOW I WOULD TREAT A PATIENT. RECENTLY A YOUNG FEMALE PATIENT SUFFERING FROM CHRONIC ECZEMA WANTED TO SEE ME. UPON ARRIVAL OF THE PATIENT FIRSTLY I BEGAN MY DIAGNOSIS THROUGH OBSERVATION. FROM THE VERY MOMENT SHE WALKED THROUGH INTO MY CLINIC AND SAT DOWN. I OBSERVED HER BODY LANGUAGE AND DEMEANOUR, HER BODY TYPE AND THE WAY THAT SHE CARRIED HERSELF, IN ADDITION, I LISTENED TO THE WAY MY PATIENT SPOKE TO ME. AFTER INITIAL CONSULTATION, WHICH INVOLVED HISTORY TAKING, I DETERMINED HER DOSHA TYPE, AND DEvised A ROUTE FOR HER TREATMENT. THIS INVOLVED ALTERING HER DIET AND LIFESTYLE, PANCHAKARMA THERAPY, DETOXIFICATION, AYURVEDIC MASSAGE, MARMA PUNCTURE AND LASTLY EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS. AND AFTER A PERIOD OF TWO MONTHS, MY PATIENT WHO HAD SUFFERED FROM THIS UNCOMFORTABLE ILLNESS THROUGHOUT MOST OF HER LIFE, AFFECTING UP TO 75% OF HER BODY... WAS CLEARED, NOT A SINGLE TRACE OF ECZEMA. IT HAD VANISHED, WITHOUT FURTHER RECURRENCE.

*AND EXAMINATION*

*MEDICATIONS*

AYURVEDA IS A COMMON PRACTICE IN SEVERAL ASIAN COUNTRIES. APART FROM CLASSICAL AYURVEDA, WHICH EXISTS IN INDIA, SRI LANKA HAS ITS OWN SYSTEM BASED ON A SERIES OF PRESCRIPTIONS HANDED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION OVER A PERIOD OF 3000 YEARS. ITS SURVIVAL AND LONGEVITY WAS SUSTAINED BY THE KINGS, WHO WERE ALSO PROMINENT PHYSICIANS AS RECORDED BY HISTORICAL TEXTS. KING BUDDHADASA (398 AD) WAS THE MOST PROMINENT PHYSICIAN, WHO WROTE SARARTHA SANGRAHAYA, WHICH IS BEING VIEWED BY PHYSICIANS TO DATE.

ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS ON ROCK SURFACES REVEAL THE FULL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MEDICAL SERVICES WHICH EXISTED WITHIN THE COUNTRY. AND THESE ANCIENT HOSPITAL SITES WHICH WERE ACTIVE CENTURIES AGO, NOW ATTRACT THE TOURISTS, WHO VIEW AND MARVEL AT THESE BEAUTIFUL RUINS... WHICH HAVE BECOME TO SYMBOLISE A SENSE OF HEALING AND CARE WHICH WAS SO PREVALENT AT THAT TIME.

BECAUSE OF ITS ROYAL PATRONAGE, AYURVEDIC PHYSICIANS ENJOYED NOBLE POSITIONS IN THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY IN THE COUNTRY, AND FROM THIS STEMS A FAMOUS SRI LANKAN SAYING:

**"IF YOU CANNOT BE A KING, BECOME A HEALER"**

THIS INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AYURVEDA AND ROYALTY HAS BROUGHT BUDDHISM AND AYURVEDA INTO A TOP POSITION IN SRI LANKAN POLITICS.

FOUR CENTURIES OF FOREIGN RULE HAD LED TO THE NEGLECT OF MANY ASPECTS OF INDIGENOUS CULTURE, IN PARTICULAR INDIGENOUS MEDICINE. DURING THE PERIOD OF BRITISH RULE, ALOPATHIC MEDICINE WAS GREATLY ENCOURAGED, CONSEQUENTLY RESULTING IN THE DECLINE OF AYURVEDIC EDUCATION AND TREATMENT.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE, IN 1945, THE GOVERNMENT PROMOTED AYURVEDIC MEDICINE IN PARALLEL TO ALOPATHIC MEDICINE. AYURVEDIC STUDENTS RECEIVE A 6-YEAR FULL TIME TRAINING AT UNIVERSITY. TRAINING INCLUDES WESTERN MEDICINE ALONGSIDE AYURVEDIC SUBJECTS. THIS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME IN SRI LANKA HAS GIVEN RISE TO SEVERAL AYURVEDIC HOSPITALS, IN SOME DISTRICTS, WHICH ARE HOUSED ALONGSIDE ALOPATHIC HOSPITAL PREMISES.

TODAY, THE AYURVEDIC MEDICAL COUNCIL MAINTAINS AND CONTROLS THE REGISTRATION OF PHYSICIANS AND CODE OF PRACTICE, ETHICS AND CONDUCT. THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH CONTROLS THE DEPARTMENT OF AYURVEDA, HEADED BY THE COMMISSIONER OF AYURVEDA, THE AYURVEDIC DRUG CORPORATION AND THE AYURVEDIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ADD THAT SRI LANKA IS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD THAT HAS APPOINTED A GOVERNMENT MINISTER FOR AYURVEDA.

TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO THE BRITISH PUBLIC AND OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE FORM OF HEALING, WHICH **"DOES NO HARM"** – EXACTLY THAT WHICH THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH STATES. AND THAT THE LEGITIMACY AND UNDERSTANDING OF THIS DISCIPLINE IS JUST AND ALSO PROVEN TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN ALL ASPECTS IN RESPECT TO HEALING THE DISEASED INDIVIDUAL. THERE IS NO PRE-PACKAGED, BOUND BOOK OF AYURVEDA, AND TODAY THIS IS NOT WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO OFFER. I AM AWARE THAT AYURVEDA WILL BE EXAMINED, BY THE SCEPTIC AND PERHAPS EVEN SCRUTINISED DUE TO THE NEED FOR COMPLETE SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATIONS ON THE SUBJECT, HOWEVER I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU IF THERE IS ANY FORM OF KNOWLEDGE THAT IS UNQUESTIONABLE?..THE ONLY UNQUESTIONABLE ASPECT OF KNOWLEDGE IS THAT IT IS BOUNDLESS, AND WITHOUT LIMITATION, AND IF THIS KNOWLEDGE DOES NO HARM, AND FOR CENTURIES HAS SURVIVED UNTOUCHED AND UNTAINTED, AND IS A FORM OF KNOWLEDGE THAT WILL GIVE US GREATER INSIGHT ABOUT OURSELVES THEN SHOULD WE NOT EMBRACE IT?.....WE SEEM TO KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THE INSIDES OF COMPUTERS AND CAR ENGINES, TECHNOLOGIES WHICH ENABLE YOU TO DO THINGS WITH THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON, BUT SO LITTLE DO WE KNOW OF WHAT DRIVES US...AND OUR JOURNEY'S DESTINATION?

AYURVEDA HAS ITS OWN UNIQUE QUALITY, WHICH EMBODIES AND ENCAPTURES THE WHOLE BEING, TREATING THE DISEASED HOLISTICALLY, AND EXAMINING THE COMPONENTS WHICH CONSTRUCT A PARTICULAR DISEASED PERSON, AND THE FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE ITS DEVELOPMENT OR REGRESSION. THUS IT TREATS THE PERSON, RATHER THAN THE DISEASE.

WE TALK ABOUT "CATCHING A DISEASE"...MOST OF THE TIME WE HAVE NOT CAUGHT ANYTHING AT ALL.....WE HAVE SIMPLY OPENED THE DOOR AND LET IT IN.

WESTERN ORTHODOX MEDICINE HAS ENABLED THE EASTERN MAN TO SURVIVE NUMEROUS FATAL DISEASES AND COMPLICATIONS, THE SCALPEL HAS ALMOST BECOME LIKE THE MAGIC WAND FOR THOSE WHO OTHERWISE WOULD LIVE WITHOUT HOPE FOR RECOVERY, A TOOL WITHOUT WHICH WE WOULD ALL BE AT SUCH A LOSS. HOWEVER, THERE IS SOMETHING WHICH CAN BE OFFERED BACK. A SYSTEM OF HEALING WHICH LOOKS AT DISEASE FROM ANOTHER VIEW-POINT, ONE WHICH LIKE ANY OTHER FORM OF MEDICINE, REQUIRES ONLY A FEW THINGS TO BECOME OF MAXIMUM BENEFIT TO US.....AN UNDERSTANDING, WILLINGNESS TO LEARN AND AN OPEN MIND.

IT IS WITHIN OUR HUMAN NATURE TO STAY WITHIN THE REALMS OF THAT WHICH WE FIND FAMILIAR. MANY OF US RESIST ALTERING THE WAY WE LIVE OUR LIVES AND CHANGE IS LOOKED UPON WITH FEAR, DOUBT AND PESSIMISTIC THOUGHT. YET CHANGE IS INEVITABLE, AND NOTHING EVER CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN THE SAME AND UNTOUCHED. OUR ENVIRONMENT IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING, OUR SOCIETY IS CHANGING, OUR FAMILY UNIT, OUR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, OUR MINDS AND THOUGHT PATTERNS.

TO CHALLENGE A PROPOSED IDEA IS THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE ITS AUTHENTICITY AND VALIDITY. TO QUESTION IS THE ONLY WAY TO REACH AN ANSWER, THIS IS NATURAL. CHILDREN ALWAYS ASK "WHY?", AND THEREFORE SINCE EARLY CHILDHOOD, WE HAVE ALL BEEN SCIENTISTS IN THE QUEST FOR MORE KNOWLEDGE, FOR IMPROVEMENT, BENEFIT, AND EVOLUTION. THE AWAKENING OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINE IN THE WEST IS PART OF THIS EVOLUTIONARY CHANGE WHICH WILL GEAR US TOWARDS, NOT JUST TOWARDS THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST, BUT ALSO, OFFER ADVICE AND A HEALING HAND FOR US ALL TO BETTER OURSELVES PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY. ENCOURAGING US TO TAKE A LOOK INSIDE AND BEGIN HEALING AN CORRECTING THE IMPERFECTIONS AND WEAKNESSES WHICH LIE WITHING THE REFLECTION THAT STARES BACK. IF AYURVEDA CAN HELP US TO UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT OURSELVES, AND CAN FEARLESSLEY VENTURE DEEPER, BEYOND OUR SKIN, AND ORGANS AND PENETRATE INTO OUR SPIRITS. TO UNDERSTAND THAT WHICH MAKES US TICK, AND THAT WHICH MAKE US SICK, TAKING AN INDIVIDUAL PERSONS WHOLE WORLD INTO ACCOUNT..THEN I ENCOURAGE YOU NOT TO ASK WHY?.....BUT WHY NOT?

\*\*\*\*\*

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Book review

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## AN INVITATION TO KING'S FUND STAFF

### A SEMINAR & RECEPTION

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000 3.30 pm – 5 pm in the Restaurant

### *"Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine"*

Ayurveda is very much in the news. According to a recent feature article in the *Evening Standard*, 'Madonna, Demi Moore and Goldie Hawn are already singing its praises. Now Ayurveda, an ancient Indian healing system is the latest alternative health craze.' The Bodyshop for example have already launched a whole range of Ayurveda products, other departmental stores are set to launch their own brands.

The King's Fund will be organising a unique event, a seminar on '*Buddhism and Ayurvedic Medicine*,' on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May from 3.30 pm to 5 pm which includes a reception.

*A panel of distinguished speakers will address the seminar –*

**Most.Ven.Pandith M.Vajirangnana, M.A.,D.Litt**  
Sangha Nayake of Theravada Buddhism

**Dr. Shantha Godagama**  
Director of the Ayurvedic Medical Association of the UK  
Author of the Handbook on Ayurveda

**Paul Holsby**  
Brand Director  
The Bodyshop International



Also present will be the Acting High Commissioner of Sri Lanka His Excellency Jayantha Palipane and diplomatic representatives, members of the media and other guests.

Sri Lankan food will be served after the seminar.

A leading South Asian photographer, Eshan, will be exhibiting his photographs in the RESTAURANT

To mark the event and the Festival of Wesak the Restaurant will have a special Sri Lankan meal at lunchtime

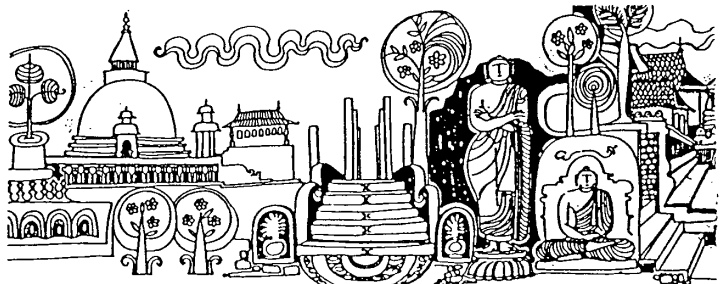
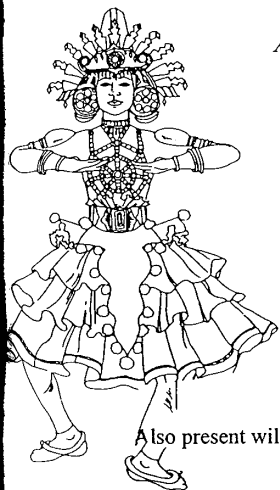
THE BODY SHOP

Free samples of Ayurvedic products



Carla Morris will also be ordering Dr. Shantha Godagama's 'Handbook of Ayurveda' Please contact Carla if you wish to purchase a copy

*All Staff are welcome. Please could you confirm your attendance to Ivan Corea, Development Fellow in Leadership Development via e-mail or on extension 2627.*



# FACETS OF SRI LANKA

A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY TO THE PARADISE ISLE



A SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION  
HELD IN THE KING'S FUND RESTAURANT

BY

***Eshan Goonasekera***

Coinciding with the  
'Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine' Seminar  
marking the Festival of Wesak  
at the King's Fund  
on Wednesday 24th May 2000  
from 3.30 pm - 5.00 pm

*King's Fund*



# Add a little Spice to Life

Whoever it was who first said 'variety is the spice of life', must have been referring to this magical multi-faceted exotic island in the Indian Ocean.....Sri Lanka.

For thousands of years, Sri Lanka's beauty and diversity has enchanted travellers. It is no wonder that Marco Polo, when he first discovered the island of Ceylon, was so touched and moved to say it was '.....undoubtedly the finest island of its size in all the world'.

It is against that background that this journey is set to explore aspects of this island destination with a recorded history of over 2500 years.

Enchanting Sri Lanka, caressed by the warm waters of the Indian Ocean against the palm fringed golden beaches, takes one through a bygone civilisation that has marvelled the world.

Seven of the world heritage sites are located in Sri Lanka, six of them exposes archaeological and cultural aspects. Anuradhapura, the first capital of Sri Lanka, founded around 3rd Century BC, was a model of planning, the frame of which was known as far as the Mediterranean. It is here that the Buddhists pay homage to a sapling of the original 'Bo tree' under which Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. The capital subsequently moved to Polonnaruwa on account of invasions from India. Some of the better-preserved archaeological monuments are found in this one time capital.

The 660 foot granite rock fortress of Sigiriya with its frescoes of the famed Sigiriya maidens overlook the rock temples of Dambulla 10 miles away, containing some of the most beautiful paintings.

The hill capital of Kandy, was the last Sinhala Kingdom until the rule of the British in 1815. Interestingly, the British connection is still a living legend to be discovered. Kandy itself bears testimony to some of the better known British links. Not only that it held the South East Asia command of the allied forces during World war II, under the command of Lord Louis Mountbatten, but also boasts of its Peradeniya University, designed by the English architect Sir Patrick Abercrombie.

Sri Lanka is also at times referred to as the island of festivals. Year round events dot the calendar and among them the most famous being the festival of the 'August Moon' or the Kandy Esala festival, where the ritual of a bygone era comes to life annually during a ten day pageant. The tooth relic of Lord Buddha is paraded through the streets of Kandy, with over a hundred dressed up elephants accompanied by a few hundred dancers from both the Low Country and Up-Country realms to the rhythm of the Kandyan drum. It is indeed a unique

procession, acclaimed as the most spectacular event in the world (July 29th - August 8th 1998).

The British connection cannot be completed without reference to 'Little England' or Nuwara Eliya (city of lights), once the holiday resort of the British tea planter. Fascinating waterfalls cascading the hill slopes reaching altitudes over 6000 feet, from where originates the tea gardens, perhaps producing the world's best cup of tea. A most picturesque golf course through which runs streams and brooks filled with trout, completes the British picture with its colonial buildings and fireplaces. The colonial heritage of Sri Lanka today bears testimony to architectural masterpieces, cuisine and culture. The Portuguese and Dutch also have left their legacies.

The lavish outpouring of nature led to the identification of the Singharaja Rain Forest as the seventh world heritage site, where flora and fauna are at its peak, with some of the species indigenous to Sri Lanka. In addition to the tropical jungles, which offer excellent wildlife safaris, including ones on elephant back, is perhaps the unique feature of the elephant orphanage at Pinnawela, a home to over a hundred elephants.

The unspoilt beaches together with its array of water sports, including diving to explore not only the coral reefs, but also to discover over two hundred ship wrecks, is no doubt a divers paradise.

The city of Ratnapura is home to beautiful jewels, and it is here that the world famous Blue Sapphire emanates. Brass and silverware, traditional handicrafts, batiks, fine china (Norritake), world class ready made garments, make Sri Lanka a place for fine shopping.

The uniqueness of this island destination in the sun is its variety, diversity and value for money.

While many changes have taken place on account of the influences with visits of the Indians, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch and the British, one aspect has remained unchanged, and that's the warm gentle and friendly people of Sri Lanka, where hospitality is a way of life.

Discover Marco Polo's 'finest island of its size in all the world' and add a little spice to life..... after all, variety is the spice of life!



*King's* Fund

**BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR**

**PROGRAMME**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000**

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BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR

PROGRAMME

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2000

3.30pm – 5 pm

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 3.30 pm | Introduction by Ivan Corea<br><br>Chair: Naaz Coker, Director, Race & Diversity |
| 3.35 pm | The Most Ven. Pandith M. Vajiragnana<br><i>Sangha Nayake of the UK</i>          |
| 3.50pm  | Dr. Shantha Godagama<br>President<br><i>Ayurvedic Medical Association UK</i>    |
| 4.05pm  | Paul Holsby<br>Brand Director<br><i>Bodyshop International</i>                  |
| 4.20pm  | Question & Answer Session<br><br>Presentations                                  |
| 4.30pm  | Sri Lankan Buffet and Finish  |
-

# DELEGATES TO THE BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR

24<sup>th</sup> May 2000 from 3.30 pm to 5 pm

Name	Organisation
Naaz Coker	Director of Race & Diversity King's Fund
Susan Elizabeth	Grant's Director King's Fund
Val Martin	Fellow Leadership Development
Pat Brand	Fellow Leadership Development
Andy Kennedy	Fellow Leadership Development
Bernie Brooks	Fellow Leadership Development
John McClenahan	Fellow Leadership Development
Ivan Corea	Development Fellow Leadership Development
John Walsh	Head of Personnel
Lorraine Jones	King's Fund
Olu Afolabi	Chief Executive's Office King's Fund
Madeline Rooke-Ley	Administrator Race & Diversity
Dr. Kristina Staley	King's Fund
Carolyn Bann	King's Fund
Granine Hillery	King's Fund
Sue Churchill	King's Fund
Renne Barton	King's Fund
Sue Lloyd – Evelyn	King's Fund
Andrea Milns	King's Fund
Nick Dalton-Brewer	King's Fund
Lyndsey Unwin	King's Fund
Ruth Tennant	King's Fund
Will Anderson	King's Fund
Lynne Love	King's Fund
Louisa Hernandez	King's Fund
Helen Martin	King's Fund
Kate Raznick	King's Fund
David Bowers	King's Fund
Carla Morris	King's Fund
Pat Tawn	King's Fund
Andy Bell	Acting Head of Press King's Fund
Mike Clapperton	King's Fund
Penny Sills	King's Fund
Susan Hodge	King's Fund
Fazil Kawani	Communications Director Refugee Council
Shyami Vidurupola	
His Excellency Jayantha Palipane	Deputy High Commissioner Sri Lanka High Commission
Sharm Vidurupola	First Secretary Sri Lanka High Commission

Sithara Khan	Press Counsellor Sri Lanka High Commission
Mr. Herath	Trade Commissioner Sri Lanka High Commission
Mr. Pujitha	Information Officer Sri Lanka High Commission
Vernon Aluvihare	
Sepala Munasinghe	
Dr.S.K.Devaraj	The Medical Centre Twickenham
Professor Lakshman Perera	Executive Committee Member Council for Education in the Commonwealth
Professor Anuradha Seneviratne	
Marlene Perera	Theatre Nurse St.Bartholomew's Hospital
N.Sivasambu	Managing-Director Ceylon Books (UK)
Most.Ven.Pandith M.Vajiragnana	Sangha Nayaka of Great Britain
Dr.Shantha Godagama	President Ayurvedic Medical Association (UK)
Paul Holsby	Brand Director Bodyshop International
Eshan Goonasekera	Chairman Paradise Isle Publications
Sanath Nanayakkara	Managing-Director Colour Box Swallow Group
Shevanthi Goonasekera	Paradise Isle Publications
Dr. Shamil Wanigaratne	Consultant and Head of Clinical Psychology Maudsley Hospital
N.C.B. Ekanayake	Country Manager Bank of Ceylon
Judith Tank	Commonwealth Institute
Christine Barry	Research Fellow Centre for the Study of Health,Sickness & Disablement Brunel University
Lois Rogers	Sunday Times
Sarah Neath	Director Marketing Prices Candles Company
Tania Moseley	NPD Manager Prices Candles Company
Ally Bryant	Design Manager Prices Candles Company
Richard Higgins	Chief Executive Parkside Health Royal London Homeopathic Hospital Great Ormond Street
David Miller	Manager Royal London Homeopathic Hospital Great Ormond Stree
John Green	
Ninette Green	
Mr.M.B.Mohideen	
Mrs.Gillian Mohideen	
Rumi Mohideen	
Kate Mohideen	
Hugh Ure	Former Managing Director Reckitt & Colman of Ceylon Ltd

Elizabeth Ure	Vice-Chair Association for the Restoration Of the Cultural Heritage in Sri Lanka
Dr.Pathma Smarawickrema	Sri Lanka Doctors Association (UK)
Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne	Maitre de conferences of Sinhala National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales Paris
Dr. Rita Das	Senior HSO Homerton Hospital
Dr.Domink Wujastyk	Associate Curator, South Asia Collections The Wellcome Trust
Michael Ondaatje	
Dr.Robinder Grewal	Senior Teacher Mulberry School for Girls Tower Hamlets
Councillor Abdus Shukur	Lead Councillor-Environment Tower Hamlets Council
Rajpal De Silva	
Dr.Gavin Yamey	Reviews Editor BMJ
Vidyani Hettigoda	Director The Hettigoda Group Sri Lanka
Ms. L.Hettigoda	Director The Hettigoda Group Sri Lanka
Judi Mallalieu	Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health
Dr. Lilyana Stringer	Chief Executive Ibis International Corporation
Dayanthi Pallewella	Consultant
Sushila Patel	CRE Commissioner Non-Executive Board Member Redbridge & Waltham Forest HA
Dr.Kingsley Ranasinha	Consultant Physician Epsom General Hospital
Tony Lingiah	Professional Development Advisor Broadmoor Hospital Authority
Anjum Fareed	Chair London Ethnic Health Network Directorate of Public Health
Muthitha Karunaratne	Consultant
Dr.Palitha De Silva	
Angela Laxton	Headteacher
Minal Vohra	
Sandeep Garg	Director Himalaya Drugs Company
Lawrence Fernando	Ayurvedic Drugs Corporation Sri Lanka
Miss.V.Alhadeef	Journalist
Diana Pearson	
Mr.Read	
Ranji Godagama	The Hale Clinic
Sujith Godagama	The Hale Clinic
Sumudu Godagama	The Hale Clinic
S.Godagama	The Hale Clinic
Stuart Brand	
Charika Corea	

## BUDDHISM & AYURVEDIC MEDICINE SEMINAR

May I welcome you all to the '*Buddhism & Ayurvedic Seminar*' held at the King's Fund. Ayurveda is certainly a very topical subject – it is receiving a great deal of coverage in the media. The King's Fund has been promoting cultural diversity as one of its four key themes/values – this means all of our work involves encouraging the health system to respond positively to diversity and provide services that reflect the needs of a multi-cultural society

Society is increasingly less trusting of Western medicine and patients are increasingly demanding a choice in the kind of care available to them (especially but not exclusively in mental health). The King's Fund believes in informed patient choice, and that means widening the range of medical systems open to NHS patients.

Recent work at the King's Fund includes funding the Foundation for Integrated Medicine to develop an evidence base for complementary therapies; organising a well attended breakfast discussion on how to integrate non-western medicine into the NHS; promoting health advocacy for minority ethnic communities, especially refugee groups in London; The BEL Programme, developing black leaders for the NHS from staff currently working in London and organising a series of seminars for King's Fund staff on diversity awareness.

We hope you will find the seminar informative, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Most.Ven. Pandith M.Vajiragnana, Sangha Nayake of the UK for gracing this occasion, to Dr. Shantha Godagama, President of the Ayurvedic Medical Association in the UK and Paul Holsby, Brand Director of the Bodyshop International for addressing this seminar. I would like to add a very special thank you to Deshabandu Victor Hettigoda and the Hettigoda Group in Sri Lanka and Dr. Lilyana Stringer, Chief Executive of the Ibis International Corporation for their support for this event. Finally, we hope you will enjoy the 'Facets of Sri Lanka' photographic exhibition organised by the leading South Asian photographer, Eshan Goonesekera.

Ivan Corea (*Development Fellow*)

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# Ayurvedic Medicine

Ayurveda literally means 'the science of life.' It is the oldest existing medical system; it began in India over 5,000 years ago. Ayurvedic Medicine is recognised by the World Health Organisation and is widely practised around the world.

The human body, like the universe is composed of five elements called Panchamahabuta, they are: Apot(Water), Thejo(Fire), Vayo(Air), Patavi(Earth) and Akasa (Space or ether).

The ayurvedic concept of creation focuses on four factors – the Body, the Mind, the Consciousness (or soul) and the panchamahabhata – the five elements.

Ayurveda in Sri Lanka has been in existence for over 2,000 years, Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne in his book 'Buddhism and Traditional Medicine in Sri Lanka' noted that Ayurveda in Sri Lanka does not differ much from Ayurveda in India although it has 'certain peculiarities of its own to therapeutics, medicinal compositions and medicinal plants.

Buddhist monks in Sri Lanka taught and trained ayurvedic medicine, they also wrote books on traditional medicines.



# FACETS OF SRI LANKA

A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY TO THE PARADISE ISLE



A SPECIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION  
HELD IN THE KING'S FUND RESTAURANT

BY

*Eshan Goonesekera*

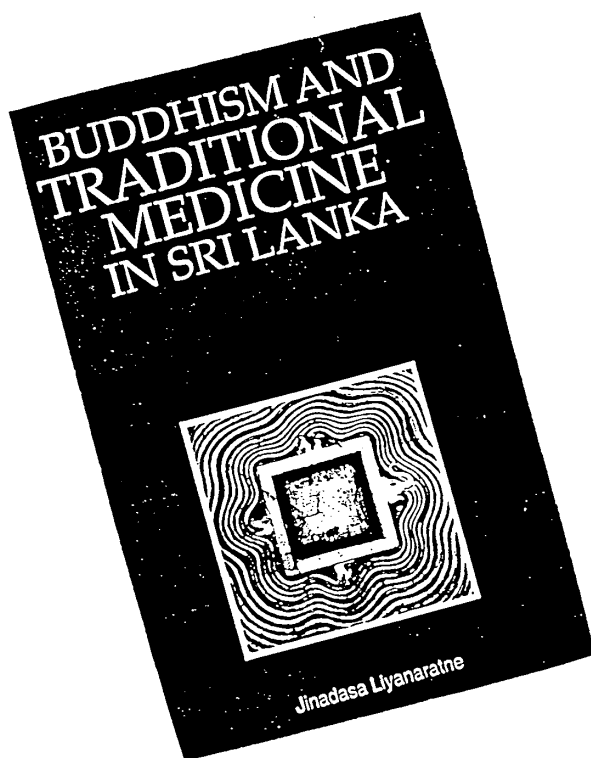
Coinciding with the  
'Buddhism & Ayurvedic Medicine' Seminar  
marking the Festival of Wesak  
at the King's Fund  
on Wednesday 24th May 2000  
from 3.30 pm - 5.00 pm

*King's Fund*





BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE BOOKSHOP



A few copies of Professor Jinadasa Liyanaratne's book on '*Buddhism and Traditional Medicine in Sri Lanka*' and a '*Handbook of Ayurveda*' by Dr. Shantha Godagama are now on sale in the King's Fund bookshop.

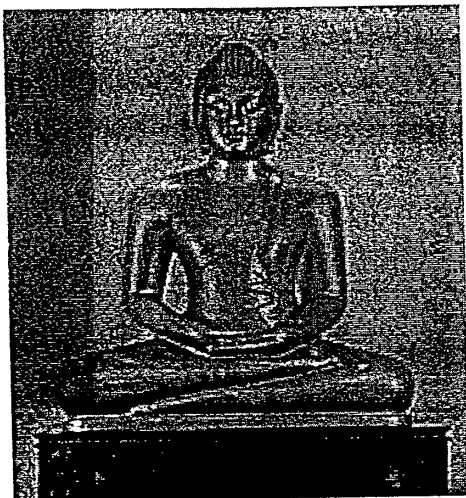
Please contact Carla Morris in the bookshop if you wish to order these publications or the book by Dr. Dominik Wujastyk, '*The Roots of Ayurveda*' published by Penguin.

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NAMOTASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA SAMBUDDHASSA  
**THE LONDON BUDDHIST VIHARA**

THE AVENUE, CHISWICK,  
LONDON W4 1UD, UK

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*Aggamaha Saddhamma Jothikadhja*  
Most Ven. Pandith M. Vajiragnana Nayaka Mahathera, M.A. D.Litt  
Chief Sangha Nayaka of Great Britain,  
HEAD OF VIHARA (*VIHARADHIPATHI*)

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The London Buddhist Vihara is a leading centre for Theravada Buddhism. Formed in 1926 by Anagarika Dharmapala, the Vihara was the first Buddhist monastery to be established outside the continent of Asia. It has continued its missionary activities with resident bhikkhus (monks) from Sri Lanka throughout this period, with the exception of the 1940s due to World War II. The Vihara moved to Chiswick during 1964 when the Anagarika Dharmapala Trust of Sri Lanka purchased the freehold property at Heathfield Gardens. In 1994 the Vihara moved to new spacious premises in The Avenue, Chiswick. The Vihara is managed by the Anagarika Dharmapala Trust who also appoints the resident Dhammatura Bhikkhus.

#### THE VIHARA

The Vihara is open daily to all devotees and visitors from 9.00am-9.00pm. Details regarding the Vihara's activities are displayed on the notice boards in the main hall. A monk or lay person will usually be present to give any additional information and/or assistance to new comers and devotees.

**Shrine Room:** This tranquil room is reserved for private devotion and meditation. Sunday service and Pith chanting takes place here.

**The main Hall and lecture Hall:** The main public meetings and study classes are held in this hall.

#### THE LIBRARY

The Vihara library is housed in the lecture hall. This library comprises sets of the Buddhist Canon in English and Asian Languages, ola leaf manuscripts, bound sets of Buddhist periodicals, general works on Buddhism and related subjects in English, European and Asian languages - over 2600 volumes in all. The library is open to students and friends of the London Buddhist Vihara. If any other members of the public would like to have access to the Vihara's books and periodicals, please feel free to contact the Vihara on (020) 8995 9496 to arrange an appointment.

#### MEDITATION

# *Buddhism in a Nutshell*

## *by Narada Thera*

### Is it a religion?

It is neither a religion in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, for it is not "a system of faith and worship owing any allegiance to a supernatural being."

Buddhism does not demand blind faith from its adherents. Here mere belief is dethroned and is substituted by confidence based on knowledge, which, in Pali, is known as *saddha*. The confidence placed by a follower on the Buddha is like that of a sick person in a noted physician, or a student in his teacher. A Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha because it was he who discovered the path of deliverance.

A Buddhist does not seek refuge in the Buddha with the hope that he will be saved by his (i.e. the Buddha's own) personal purification. The Buddha gives no such guarantee. It is not within the power of a Buddha to wash away the impurities of others. One could neither purify nor defile another. The Buddha, as teacher, instructs us, but we ourselves are directly responsible for our purification. Although a Buddhist seeks refuge in the Buddha, he does not make any self-surrender. Nor does a Buddhist sacrifice his freedom of thought by becoming a follower of the Buddha. He can exercise his own free will and develop his knowledge even to the extent of becoming a Buddha himself.

The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding, or, in the Pali words, *sammasammutti*.

To the seekers of truth the Buddha says:

"Do not accept anything on (mere) hearsay -- (i.e., thinking that thus have we heard it for a long time). Do not accept anything by mere tradition -- (i.e., thinking that it has thus been handed down through many generations). Do not accept anything on account of mere rumors -- (i.e., by believing what others say without any investigation). Do not accept anything just because it accords with your scriptures. Do not accept anything by mere suppositions. Do not accept anything by mere inference. Do not accept anything by merely considering the reasons. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your pre-conceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable -- (i.e., thinking that as the speaker seems to be a good person his words should be accepted). Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic is respected by us (therefore it is right to accept his word).

"But when you know for yourselves -- these things are immoral, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken conduce to ruin and sorrow -- then indeed do you reject them.

"When you know for yourselves -- these things are moral, these things are blameless, these things are praised by the wise, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness -- then do you live acting accordingly."

These inspiring words of the Buddha still retain their original force and freshness.

Though there is no blind faith, one might argue whether there is no worshiping of images etc., in Buddhism.

Buddhists do not worship an image expecting worldly or spiritual favors, but pay their reverence to what it represents.

An understanding Buddhist, in offering flowers and incense to an image, designedly makes himself feel that he is in the presence of the living Buddha and thereby gains inspiration from his noble personality and breathes deep his boundless compassion.

He tries to follow the Buddha's noble example.

The Bo-tree is also a symbol of Enlightenment. These external objects of reverence are not absolutely necessary, but they are useful as they tend to concentrate one's attention. An intellectual person could dispense with them as he could easily focus his attention and visualize the Buddha. For our own good, and out of gratitude, we pay such external respect but what the Buddha expects from his disciple is not so much obeisance as the actual observance of his Teachings. The Buddha says -- "He honors me best who practices my teaching best." "He who sees the Dhamma sees me."

With regard to images, however, Count Kevserling remarks -- "I see nothing more grand in this world than the image of the Buddha. It is an absolutely perfect embodiment of spirituality in the visible domain."

Furthermore, it must be mentioned that there are no petitional or intercessory prayers in Buddhism. However much we may pray to the Buddha we cannot be saved. The Buddha does not grant favors to those who pray to him. Instead of petitional prayers there is meditation that leads to self-control, purification and enlightenment. Meditation is neither a silent reverie nor keeping the mind blank. It is an active striving. It serves as a tonic both to the heart and the mind. The Buddha not only speaks of the futility of offering prayers but also disparages a slave mentality. A Buddhist should not pray to be saved, but should rely on himself and win his freedom.

"Prayers take the character of private communications, selfish bargaining with God. It seeks for objects of earthly ambitions and inflames the sense of self. Meditation on the other hand is self-change." -- Sri Radhakrishnan.

In Buddhism there is not, as in most other religions, an Almighty God to be obeyed and feared. The Buddha does not believe in a cosmic potentate, omniscient and omnipresent. In Buddhism there are no divine revelations or divine messengers. A Buddhist is, therefore, not subservient to any higher supernatural power which controls his destinies and which arbitrarily rewards and punishes. Since Buddhists do not believe in revelations of a divine being Buddhism does not claim the monopoly of truth and does not condemn any other religion. But Buddhism recognizes the infinite latent possibilities of man and teaches that man can gain deliverance from suffering by his own efforts independent of divine help or mediating priests.

Buddhism cannot, therefore, strictly be called a religion because it is neither a system of faith and worship, nor "the outward act or form by which men indicate their recognition of the existence of a God or gods having power over their own destiny to whom obedience, service, and honor are due."

If, by religion, is meant "a teaching which takes a view of life that is more than superficial, a teaching which looks into life and not merely at it, a teaching which furnishes men with a guide to conduct that is in accord with this its in-look, a teaching which enables those who give it heed to face life with fortitude and death with serenity,"[6] or a system to get rid of the ills of life, then it is certainly a religion of religions.



# *Buddhism in a Nutshell*

## *by Narada Thera*

*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-Sambuddhassa*

### The Buddha

On the fullmoon day of May, in the year 623 B.C., there was born in the district of Nepal an Indian Sakya Prince named Siddhattha Gotama, who was destined to be the greatest religious teacher in the world. Brought up in the lap of luxury, receiving an education befitting a prince, he married and had a son.

His contemplative nature and boundless compassion did not permit him to enjoy the fleeting material pleasures of a royal household. He knew no woe, but he felt a deep pity for sorrowing humanity. Amidst comfort and prosperity, he realized the universality of sorrow. The palace, with all its worldly amusements, was no longer a congenial place for the compassionate prince. The time was ripe for him to depart. Realizing the vanity of sensual enjoyments, in his twenty-ninth year, he renounced all worldly pleasures and donning the simple yellow garb of an ascetic, alone, penniless, wandered forth in search of Truth and Peace.

It was an unprecedented historic renunciation; for he renounced not in his old age but in the prime of manhood, not in poverty but in plenty. As it was the belief in the ancient days that no deliverance could be gained unless one leads a life of strict asceticism, he strenuously practiced all forms of severe austerities. "Adding vigil after vigil, and penance after penance," he made a superhuman effort for six long years.

His body was reduced to almost a skeleton. The more he tormented his body, the farther his goal receded from him. The painful, unsuccessful austerities which he strenuously practiced proved absolutely futile. He was now fully convinced, through personal experience, of the utter futility of self-mortification which weakened his body and resulted in lassitude of spirit.

Benefiting by this invaluable experience of his, he finally decided to follow an independent course, avoiding the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. The former retards one's spiritual progress, and the latter weakens one's intellect. The new way which he himself discovered was the Middle Path, *Majjhima Patipada*, which subsequently became one of the salient characteristics of his teaching.

One happy morning, while he was deeply absorbed in meditation, unaided and unguided by any supernatural power and solely relying on his efforts and wisdom, he eradicated all defilements, purified himself, and, realizing things as they truly are, attained Enlightenment (Buddhahood) at the age of 35. He was not born a Buddha,<sup>[1]</sup> but he became a Buddha by his own striving. As the perfect embodiment of all the virtues he preached, endowed with deep wisdom commensurate with his boundless compassion. He devoted the remainder of his precious life to serve humanity both by example and precept, dominated by no personal motive whatever.

After a very successful ministry of 45 long years the Buddha, as every other human being, succumbed to the inexorable law of change, and finally passed away in his 80th year, exhorting his disciples to regard his doctrine as their teacher.

The Buddha was a human being. As a man he was born, as a man he lived, and as a man his life came to an end. Though a human being, he became an extraordinary man (*acchariya manussa*), but he never arrogated to himself divinity. The Buddha laid stress on this important point and left no room whatever for anyone to fall into the error of thinking that he was an immortal divine being. Fortunately there is no deification in the case of the Buddha. It should, however, be remarked that there

was no Teacher, "ever so godless as the Buddha, yet none so god-like."

The Buddha is neither an incarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu, as is believed by some, nor is he a savior who freely saves others by his personal salvation. The Buddha exhorts his disciples to depend on themselves for their deliverance, for both purity and defilement depend on oneself. Clarifying his relationship with his followers and emphasizing the importance of self-reliance and individual striving, the Buddha plainly states: "You should exert yourselves, the Tathagatas[2] are only teachers." The Buddhas point out the path, and it is left for us to follow that path to obtain our purification.

"To depend on others for salvation is negative, but to depend on oneself is positive." Dependence on others means a surrender of one's effort. In exhorting his disciples to be self-dependent the Buddha says in the *Parinibbana Sutta*: "Be ye islands unto yourselves, be ye a refuge unto yourselves, seek not for refuge in others." These significant words are self-elevating. They reveal how vital is self-exertion to accomplish one's object and, how superficial and futile it is to seek redemption through benignant saviors and to crave for illusory happiness in an after life through the propitiation of imaginary Gods or by irresponsible prayers and meaningless sacrifices.

Furthermore, the Buddha does not claim the monopoly of Buddhahood which, as a matter of fact, is not the prerogative of any specially graced person. He reached the highest possible state of perfection any person could aspire to, and without the close-fist of a teacher he revealed the only straight path that leads thereto. According to the Teaching of the Buddha anybody may aspire to that supreme state of perfection if he makes the necessary exertion. The Buddha does not condemn men by calling them wretched sinners, but, on the contrary, he gladdens them by saying that they are pure in heart at conception. In his opinion the world is not wicked but is deluded by ignorance. Instead of disheartening his followers and reserving that exalted state only to himself, he encourages and induces them to emulate him, for Buddhahood is latent in all. In one sense all are potential Buddhas.

One who aspires to become a Buddha is called a Bodhisatta, which, literally, means a wisdom-being. This Bodhisatta ideal is the most beautiful and the most refined course of life that has ever been presented to this ego-centric world, for what is nobler than a life of service and purity?

As a Man he attained Buddhahood and proclaimed to the world the latent inconceivable possibilities and the creative power of man. Instead of placing an unseen Almighty God over man who arbitrarily controls the destinies of mankind, and making him subservient to a supreme power, he raised the worth of mankind. It was he who taught that man can gain his deliverance and purification by his own exertion without depending on an external God or mediating priests. It was he who taught the ego-centric world the noble ideal of selfless service. It was he who revolted against the degrading caste system and taught equality of mankind and gave equal opportunities for all to distinguish themselves in every walk of life.

He declared that the gates of success and prosperity were open to all in every condition of life, high or low, saint or criminal, who would care to turn a new leaf and aspire to perfection.

Irrespective of caste, color or rank he established for both deserving men and women a democratically constituted celibate Order. He did not force his followers to be slaves either to his teachings or to himself but granted complete freedom of thought.

He comforted the bereaved by his consoling words. He ministered to the sick that were deserted. He helped the poor that were neglected. He ennobled the lives of the deluded, purified the corrupted lives of criminals. He encouraged the feeble, united the divided, enlightened the ignorant, clarified the mystic, guided the benighted, elevated the base, dignified the noble. Both rich and poor, saints and criminals loved him alike. Despotism and righteous kings, famous and obscure princes and nobles, generous and stingy millionaires, haughty and humble scholars,

destitute paupers, down-trodden scavengers, wicked murderers, despised courtesans -- all benefited by his words of wisdom and compassion.

His noble example was a source of inspiration to all. His serene and peaceful countenance was a soothing sight to the pious eyes. His message of peace and tolerance was welcomed by all with indescribable joy and was of eternal benefit to every one who had the fortune to hear and practice it.

Wherever his teachings penetrated it left an indelible impression upon the character of the respective peoples. The cultural advancement of all the Buddhist nations was mainly due to his sublime teachings. In fact all Buddhist countries like Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Nepal, Tibet, China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, etc., grew up in the cradle of Buddhism. Though more than 2500 years have elapsed since the passing away of this greatest Teacher, yet his unique personality exerts a great influence on all who come to know him.

His iron will, profound wisdom, universal love, boundless compassion, selfless service, historic renunciation, perfect purity, magnetic personality, exemplary methods employed to propagate the teachings, and his final success -- all these factors have compelled about one-fifth of the population of the world today to hail the Buddha as their supreme Teacher.

Paying a glowing tribute to the Buddha Sri Radhakrishnan states: "In Gautama the Buddha we have a master-mind from the East second to none so far as the influence on the thought and life of the human race is concerned, and, sacred to all as the founder of a religious tradition whose hold is hardly less wide and deep than any other. He belongs to the history of the world's thought, to the general inheritance of all cultivated men, for, judged by intellectual integrity, moral earnestness, and spiritual insight, he is undoubtedly one of the greatest figures in history."

In *The Three Greatest Men in History* H.G. Wells writes: "In the Buddha you see clearly a man, simple, devout, lonely, battling for light -- a vivid human personality, not a myth. He too gave a message to mankind universal in character. Many of our best modern ideas are in closest harmony with it. All the miseries and discontents are due, he taught, to selfishness. Before a man can become serene he must cease to live for his senses or himself. Then he merges into a great being. Buddha in different language called men to self-forgetfulness 500 years before Christ. In some ways he is nearer to us and our needs. He was more lucid upon our individual importance and service than Christ and less ambiguous upon the question of personal immortality."

St. Hilare remarks "The perfect model of all the virtues he preaches, his life has not a stain upon it."

Fausboll says -- "The more I know of him, the more I love him."

A humble follower of his would say -- "The more I know him, the more I love him; the more I love him, the more I know him."



# *Buddhism in a Nutshell*

## *by Narada Thera*

### Some salient features of Buddhism

The foundations of Buddhism are the four Noble Truths -- namely, Suffering (the *raison d'être* of Buddhism), its cause (i.e., Craving), its end (i.e., Nibbana, the Summum Bonum of Buddhism), and the Middle Way.

What is the Noble Truth of Suffering?

"Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to receive what one craves for is suffering, in brief the five Aggregates of Attachment are suffering."

What is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering?

"It is the craving which leads from rebirth to rebirth accompanied by lust or passion, which delights now here now there; it is the craving for sensual pleasures (*Kamatanha*), for existence (*Bhavatanha*)[7] and for annihilation (*Vibhavatanha*)."[8]

What is the Noble Truth of the Annihilation of Suffering?

"It is the remainderless, total annihilation of this very craving, the forsaking of it, the breaking loose, fleeing, deliverance from it."

What is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Annihilation of Suffering?

"It is the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of right understanding, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right endeavor, right mindfulness, and right concentration."

Whether the Buddhas arise or not these four Truths exist in the universe. The Buddhas only reveal these Truths which lay hidden in the dark abyss of time.

Scientifically interpreted, the Dhamma may be called the law of cause and effect. These two embrace the entire body of the Buddha's Teachings.

The first three truths represent the philosophy of Buddhism; the fourth represents the ethics of Buddhism, based on that philosophy. All these four truths are dependent on this body itself. The Buddha states: "In this very one-fathom long body along with perceptions and thoughts, do I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the end of the world and the path leading to the end of the world." Here the term world is applied to suffering.

Buddhism rests on the pivot of sorrow. But it does not thereby follow that Buddhism is pessimistic. It is neither totally pessimistic nor totally optimistic, but, on the contrary, it teaches a truth that lies midway between them. One would be justified in calling the Buddha a pessimist if he had only enunciated the truth of suffering without suggesting a means to put an end to it. The Buddha perceived the universality of sorrow and did prescribe a panacea for this universal sickness of humanity. The highest conceivable happiness, according to the Buddha, is Nibbana, which is the total extinction of suffering.

The author of the article on Pessimism in the Encyclopedia Britannica writes: "Pessimism denotes an attitude of hopelessness towards life, a vague general opinion that pain and evil predominate in human affairs. The original doctrine of the Buddha is in fact as optimistic as any optimism of the West. To call it pessimism is

merely to apply to it a characteristically Western principle to which happiness is impossible without personality. The true Buddhist looks forward with enthusiasm to absorption into eternal bliss."

Ordinarily the enjoyment of sensual pleasures is the highest and only happiness of the average man. There is no doubt a kind of momentary happiness in the anticipation, gratification and retrospection of such fleeting material pleasures, but they are illusive and temporary. According to the Buddha non-attachment is a greater bliss.

The Buddha does not expect his followers to be constantly pondering on suffering and lead a miserable unhappy life. He exhorts them to be always happy and cheerful, for zest (*piti*) is one of the factors of Enlightenment.

Real happiness is found within, and is not to be defined in terms of wealth, children, honor or fame. If such possessions are misdirected, forcibly or unjustly obtained, misappropriated or even viewed with attachment, they will be a source of pain and sorrow to the possessors.

Instead of trying to rationalize suffering, Buddhism takes suffering for granted and seeks the cause to eradicate it. Suffering exists as long as there is craving. It can only be annihilated by treading the Noble Eightfold Path and attaining the supreme bliss of Nibbana.

These four truths can be verified by experience. Hence the Buddha Dhamma is not based on the fear of the unknown, but is founded on the bedrock of facts which can be tested by ourselves and verified by experience. Buddhism is, therefore, rational and intensely practical.

Such a rational and practical system cannot contain mysteries or esoteric doctrines. Blind faith, therefore, is foreign to Buddhism. Where there is no blind faith there cannot be any coercion or persecution or fanaticism. To the unique credit of Buddhism it must be said that throughout its peaceful march of 2500 years no drop of blood was shed in the name of the Buddha, no mighty monarch wielded his powerful sword to propagate the Dhamma, and no conversion was made either by force or by repulsive methods. Yet, the Buddha was the first and the greatest missionary that lived on earth.

Aldous Huxley writes: "Alone of all the great world religions Buddhism made its way without persecution, censorship or inquisition."

Lord Russell remarks: "Of the great religions of history, I prefer Buddhism, especially in its earliest forms; because it has had the smallest element of persecution."

In the name of Buddhism no altar was reddened with the blood of a Hypatia, no Bruno was burnt alive. Buddhism appeals more to the intellect than to the emotion. It is concerned more with the character of the devotees than with their numerical strength.

On one occasion Upali, a follower of Nigantha Nataputta, approached the Buddha and was so pleased with the Buddha's exposition of the Dhamma that he instantly expressed his desire to become a follower of the Buddha. But the Buddha cautioned him, saying:

"Of a verity, O householder, make a thorough investigation. It is well for a distinguished man like you to make (first) a thorough investigation."

Upali, who was overjoyed at this unexpected remark of the Buddha, said: "Lord, had I been a follower of another religion, its adherents would have taken me round the streets in a procession proclaiming that such and such a millionaire had renounced his former faith and embraced theirs. But, Lord, Your Reverence advises me to investigate further. The more pleased am I with this remark of yours. For the second

time, Lord, I seek refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha."

Buddhism is saturated with this spirit of free enquiry and complete tolerance. It is the teaching of the open mind and the sympathetic heart, which, lighting and warming the whole universe with its twin rays of wisdom and compassion, sheds its genial glow on every being struggling in the ocean of birth and death.

The Buddha was so tolerant that he did not even exercise his power to give commandments to his lay followers. Instead of using the imperative, he said: "It behooves you to do this -- It behooves you not to do this." He commands not but does exhort.

This tolerance the Buddha extended to men, women and all living beings.

It was the Buddha who first attempted to abolish slavery and vehemently protested against the degrading caste system which was firmly rooted in the soil of India. In the Word of the Buddha it is not by mere birth one becomes an outcast or a noble, but by one's actions. Caste or colour does not preclude one from becoming a Buddhist or from entering the Order. Fishermen, scavengers, courtesans, together with warriors and Brahmins, were freely admitted to the Order and enjoyed equal privileges and were also given positions of rank. Upali, the barber, for instance, was made, in preference to all others, the chief in matters pertaining to Vinaya discipline. The timid Sunita, the scavenger, who attained arahatship was admitted by the Buddha himself into the Order. Angulimala, the robber and criminal, was converted to a compassionate saint. The fierce Alavaka sought refuge in the Buddha and became a saint. The courtesan Ambapali entered the Order and attained arahatship. Such instances could easily be multiplied from the Tipitaka to show that the portals of Buddhism were wide open to all, irrespective of caste, colour or rank.

It was also the Buddha who raised the status of downtrodden women and not only brought them to a realization of their importance to society but also founded the first celibate religious order for women with rules and regulations.

The Buddha did not humiliate women, but only regarded them as feeble by nature. He saw the innate good of both men and women and assigned to them their due places in his teaching. Sex is no barrier to attaining sainthood.

Sometimes the Pali term used to denote women is *matugama*, which means "mother-folk" or "society of mothers." As a mother, woman holds an honorable place in Buddhism. Even the wife is regarded as "best friend" (*parama sakha*) of the husband.

Hasty critics are only making *ex parte* statements when they reproach Buddhism with being inimical to women. Although at first the Buddha refused to admit women into the Order on reasonable grounds, yet later he yielded to the entreaties of his foster-mother, Pajapati Gotami, and founded the Bhikkhuni Order. Just as the Arahats Sariputta and Moggallana were made the two chief disciples in the Order of monks, even so he appointed Arahats Khema and Uppalavanna as the two chief female disciples. Many other female disciples too were named by the Buddha himself as his distinguished and pious followers.

On one occasion the Buddha said to King Kosala who was displeased on hearing that a daughter was born to him: "A woman child, O Lord of men; may prove even a better offspring than a male."

Many women, who otherwise would have fallen into oblivion, distinguished themselves in various ways, and gained their emancipation by following the Dhamma and entering the Order. In this new Order, which later proved to be a great blessing to many women, queens, princesses, daughters of noble families, widows, bereaved mothers, destitute women, pitiable courtesans -- all, despite their caste or rank, met on a common platform, enjoyed perfect consolation and peace, and breathed that free atmosphere which is denied to those cloistered in cottages and palatial mansions.

# *Buddhism in a Nutshell*

## *by Narada Thera*

### Notes

1. An Awakened or Enlightened One.
2. Lit., Thus who hath come.
3. Lit., the Worthy Ones. They are the enlightened disciples who have destroyed all passions.
4. The Teaching.
5. The Discipline.
6. Bhikkhu Silacara
7. Craving associated with "Eternalism" (*sassataditthi*) (Commentary)
8. Craving associated with "Nihilism" (*ucchedaditthi*) (Comy)
9. Culakamma Vibhanga Sutta -- Majjhima Nikaya, No. 135.
10. See "Many Mansions and The World Within" by Gina Cerminara.
11. C.E.M. Joad, The Meaning of Life
12. See Compendium of Philosophy, Tr. by Shwe Zan Aung (Pali Text Society, London) -- Introduction p. 12.
13. Compare the cinematograph film where the individual photographs give rise to a notion of movement.
14. Evidently the writer is referring to the state of an arahat after death.
15. This introductory part may be omitted by non-Buddhists.
16. Here the term "I" is used in a conventional sense.

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edition has an advertisement. A picture of the Abhagiriya stupa as it was, is included in both editions, a black and white of a seated Buddha in the larger edition. The designs of frescoes, a moonlit dagoba, the hansapootuwa, a stylized bo leaf at the end of each article are eye catching and pleasing. Poems being presented on coloured pages makes for visual impact.

Not so pleasing to me were the advertisements, a necessity, I suppose and the In Memoriam action carrying photographs too. Isn't this a new innovation? I did not like this intrusion, but perhaps one had better take it as a reminder of how transient life is.

While thanking Rajah Kuruppu and the Publications Committee of the Government Services Buddhist Association and its Hony Secretary, P B Weragoda for this Dhamma Dane to us Buddhists in Sri Lanka and those abroad, we wish them continued strength of purpose and endeavour.

We ordinary people could help by contributing financial assistance to the publication of the next annual. Your name will appear in the list of contributors. If however you prefer anonymity, you have only to indicate this fact.

The appearance of the commercial in the way of advertisements and lists of contributors and well-wishing donors is jarring, yet inevitable, I presume. It does in no way detract from the worth and value of the two publications.

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## **Buddhism and Ayurvedic medicine**

**Ven. Pandit Medagama Vajiragnana,  
Sangha Nayake of Great Britain**

Buddhism and Ayurvedic medicine originated in India and both aim at eliminating suffering. Buddhism primarily concerns with the well-being of the mind and Ayurveda deals with the well-being of the body. While treating one aspect of a person, one cannot neglect the other because both are inseparably linked together. Both systems regard the body and the mind as interdependent and inter — linked. This relationship has been illustrated with a picture of a boat and a boatman. Body is the boat, mind is the boatman. The boat cannot go anywhere without direction from the boatman, but the boatman relies on the boat in order to make his journey. Similarly, with body and mind, both are interdependent and rely on each other. Let us look at the relationship between the medical profession and teaching of Buddhism. Both have healed the ailing mind and body throughout their history and will continue to do so in the future.

The Buddha said that his main concern was the problem of human suffering and how it could be eliminated. The term the Buddha used to convey the concept of suffering in Pali is "Dukkha". His whole effort was directed towards finding a way out of dukkha. It is very difficult to find a single English word which conveys the meaning of dukkha, but it has variously been translated as suffering, pain, sickness, unsatisfactoriness, imperfection and so on. It includes all ills of the mind and the body.

The Buddha said, "Monks, there are two kinds of disease. What are they? Bodily disease and mental disease. People are seen who say they have been physically healthy for a year, for two years, for three years....or more, but beings who say they are mentally healthy for even a moment are rare in the world."

The Buddha was teaching his disciples to discipline their minds as an aid to overcome the effects of physical illness. He was very much aware of the

intimate relationship between mind and body. Once an old decrepit man named Nakulapita, came to see the Buddha and asked for some solace in his old age. The Buddha, agreeing with him, said that his physical state was poor and that he was getting very old and decrepit. He advised him to train his mind in the following way: "May my mind not be ill, though my body is ill."

The mind has a powerful influence on the well being of the individual. Because it is so closely linked with the body, its mental states affect physical health. The Buddha said, "Mind is the forerunner of all mental states. Mind is chief, mind made are they." (Dh. 1 & 2) Modern psychological studies reveal that -

Fear: lowers resistance, leads to a feeling of weakness and exhaustion

Anger: results in muscular unco-ordination.

"Mind not only makes sick, it also cures", "One who wishes to succeed in life must treasure good health".

The first task of the doctor is to discover the cause of the patient's sickness. Buddhism too is very much concerned with causation. The Buddhist approach to medicine is entirely in line with the doctrine of Dependent Origination (Paticcasamuppada) i.e. that all happenings are due to a cause or many causes. The attempts of the physician to heal the body is considered in Buddhism as a noble act based on universal love and compassion because it results in the alleviation of suffering. Buddhism, too, is primarily concerned with the alleviation of suffering.

The Ayurvedic approach to life advocates following the very same Noble Eightfold Path as taught by the Buddha. The eight factors of this path are, Right understanding, Right thought, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right mindfulness and Right concentration.

In one of the discourses known as Girimananda Sutta, the Buddha talks about the causes of sickness and disease as originating from an imbalance of bile, phlegm, wind, from conflict of the humours, from changes of weather, from adverse condition (which here means faulty deportment), from devices (practiced by others such as black magic, poisoning and so on), from the result of kamma (kamma-vipaka); cold, heat, hunger, thirst, excrement, and urine. I believe that Ayurvedic medicine is prepared on the grounds of ill-balance of these constituents in a person.

Both Buddhism and Ayurveda maintain a "holistic" approach to life.

For Buddhists this means the doctrine of the "middle way", an avoidance of all extremes and moderation in all things. Ayurvedic principles fully support this Buddhist doctrine, and both systems teach the same method of ethical life. Buddhists call it the five precepts, which are; Abstaining from taking life, Abstaining from taking what is not given, Abstaining from sensual impropriety, Abstaining from unskillful speech, Abstaining from taking intoxicants.

"Of gains, gain in health is the highest and best" (Dhp. 204)

"If one wishes to have long life, one cannot obtain it by prayers or vows.

Instead one should follow a path of life conducive to longevity"

(An. wheel 208 BPS 1975)

Three types of patients: (An. 1. 120)

(a) There are some patients who do not recover even though they get the best medical attention and nursing. (b) There are some who recover whether or not they get medicine and nursing care. (c) There are some who recover only if they get proper medicine and nursing care.

In the recent past the conviction has steadily grown in the medical profession that very many causes of disease, organic as well as functional, are directly caused by mental states. An optimistic patient has a better chance of getting well than a patient who is worried and unhappy.

At the popular level in Buddhist countries one part of the Buddha's teaching has been cultivated with great devotion and used for remedial purpose by the followers. This is the chanting of Paritta. Paritta means discourses for protection and are certainly part of teaching of the Buddha himself. Most chanted discourses are not only of philosophical value, but also have a direct psychological effect. This Paritta chanting purifies the mental state of the listeners especially of those who are suffering from physical ailments.

It is certain that paritta recitation produces mental well-being in those who listen to them with confidence in the Dhamma which is truth. Such mental well being can help patients to recover from their illness. The Buddha himself had paritta recited for him and he also requested others to recite it for his disciples when they were ill. Unless the illness is caused as a result of one's own unskillful acts, it is possible to change these mental states to bring about mental and physical healing. But both Buddhism and Ayurveda teach that we live a succession of lives and we bring with us into our present life a karmic inheritance based on our actions in previous lives including some disabilities and diseases.

Some selected sermons of the Buddha are chanted for various reasons such as to recover from illness, to avert danger, to ward off the influence of malignant beings, to obtain protection and deliverance from fear and evil and to promote welfare and well-being. One day Ven. Angulimala came upon a woman in labour and was so moved by compassion for her that he asked the Buddha's advice. The Buddha told him to recite some Paritta verses for the woman to hear. When he did so, the woman immediately and painlessly delivered her child. Since then this verse has always been chanted near the time of labour. The Buddha exhorted his disciples to cultivate loving kindness (metta) towards listeners while reciting these sermons.

Buddhist meditation acts directly on the mind. It has a significant role to play in improving the mental states. Meditation is of two kinds, calming (samatha) and insight (vipassana). The samatha meditation calms the emotions, worries, tensions, anxieties and all that upsets the balance of mind. The Insight Meditation gives one the ability to see things objectively as they really are. Meditation is a universal method of healing, transcending all boundaries of race, creed, colour and nationality.

Following the teaching of the Buddha, rulers actively promoted healing activities by building hospitals and establishing free dispensaries. The well-known Indian Buddhist Emperor, Asoka, of the 3rd century B. C. carved the following edict on a rock (Girnar text 11) "Everywhere in the dominions of King Priyadarsi (Asoka), Beloved of Gods, and likewise in the bordering territories has arranged for two kinds of medical treatment viz. medical treatments for people and medical treatments for animals. And wherever there were no medical herbs beneficial to people and beneficial to animals, they have been caused to be imported and planted. On the roads,

wells have been caused to be dug and trees have been caused to be planted for the enjoyment of animals and humans". This is the first record of the establishment of government hospitals not only for human beings but also for animals.

This example was faithfully followed by the kings in Sri Lanka after the introduction of Buddhism. King Gamini provided free food and medicine to the sick as prescribed by his physicians. Venerable Welivita Saranankara Sangha Raja of Sri Lanka is reported to have composed a book on medicine which is known as Bhesajja Manjusa. Thus the well-known Buddhist statement "Health is the highest gain" (arogya parama labha) stands established both in theory and practice. In the Vinaya pitaka (disciplinary code) monks are allowed to treat medically certain people. The Buddha himself ministered to a suffering monk and declared the following memorable words, "He who tends the sick, respects me". Thus we see the close connection between Buddhism and Ayurvedic medicine.

"Whosoever would wait upon me,  
Whosoever would honour me,  
Whosoever would follow my advice,  
He should attend on the sick"

(Mahavagga Bodhi leaves B 76, 1977, BPS)

Notes of a life time

## An arrogant assumption

by Gerald Cooray

The date of our final degree examination was drawing closer and closer. But yet the Ceylon University authorities continued to schedule lectures as usual. This was frustrating for all of us. Because at this stage, we would have preferred to study in the library than attend lectures.

I decided to cut a lecture and instead spend my time usefully revising in the University library. The lecturer concerned, however hard he tried, was always boring. He was in the habit of frequently quoting authority. But seldom voiced his own opinion. Nor did he critically evaluate those authorities that he quoted.

I decided to cut his lecture. I genuinely felt at this particular moment, because of my impending finals, that I could spend my time more usefully revising in the library. No offence was meant to the lecturer concerned whom I respected.

Believe it or not, the rest of the students in the class, with one exception, independently made the same decision to cut this particular lecture and study in the library, so that when the lecturer went to the classroom he found only one student awaiting him. He shouted and said, "How come you did not join the boycott?" Although she assured him there was no collusion, he took this as a personal insult. And without calling for an explanation from us, reported us all to the Departmental Head.

The Professor fined us all ten rupees. In those days, before the advent of massive inflation, this was a large sum. And one that we just could not afford with our meagre allowances. Apart from this, we all felt the fine was unjust and undeserved. As we meant no offence and were given no chance to explain before judgement was delivered. At a time when we all were under stress with our finals looming ahead, this was indeed a bitter blow.

We all met and decided to appeal to the Professor and assure him that this was not an organised boycott and no insult whatever was intended. I was





