

the groups
Pali Terms
from Dharma discourses

**Note to readers. Dhamma is the Pali spelling.
Dharma is the Sanskrit spelling**

The Buddha often formulated his teachings into groups for ease to remember. The groups also show the depth and expanse addressed of human issues. The major groups are:

- Two kinds of meditation
- Three Jewels
- Three Characteristics of Existence
- Four Noble Truths (Four Truths for the Noble Ones)
- Four Applications of Mindfulness,
- Four Divine Abidings
- Five Aggregates
- Five Hindrances
- Noble Eightfold Path
- 12 Links of dependent arising (of issues involving suffering)

1. Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa
(Full Respect to the Blessed One, Accomplished And Fully Awakened)

2 . Two Kinds of Meditation

Dhammapada – note to verse 384 – page 660

1. samatha	meditative concentration
2. vipassanā	insight

3 Characteristics of Existence (ti-lakkhaṇa)

1. anicca	impermanence, impermanent, transiency, unstable
2. dukkha	unsatisfactoriness, problems, suffering
3. anattā	not-self, non-ego, egolessness, impersonality, not I, not mine, soullessness

3 Non attachments (viveka)

1. kāya-viveka	bodily non attachment
2. citta-viveka	mental non-attachment
3. upadhi-viveka	non-attachment to a substrata of existence

3 fold Training

1. sīla	ethics
2. samādhi	concentration
3. paññā	wisdom

3 Kinds of clear Knowledge (or: The Three True Knowledges) (tevijjā)

(MN 6.17, MN 4.27-33, MN 12.17-19, MN 39.19-21, MN 51.24-26, MN 73.22, MN 77.34, MN 101.42-44, MN 108.21)

1. knowledge of recollecting past lives
2. knowledge of the passing away and reappearing of beings (the divine eye)
3. knowledge of the destruction of the taints (also: cankers or corruptions)

3 Kinds of Craving (taṇhā)

(The Dhammapada - page 416, notes to verse 334, page 584)

1. kāmataṇhā	the sensual craving, attachment to sensual pleasures
2. bhavataṇhā	the craving for existence (eternalism), attachment to existence, attachment to life, attachment to Realms of Form
3. vibhavataṇhā	the craving for non-existence (nihilism), attachment to non-existence, attachment to annihilation, attachment to Formless Realms

This craving is a powerful mental force latent in all, and is the chief cause of most of the ills in life. It is this craving, gross or subtle, that leads to repeated births in Samsara and that which makes one cling to all forms of life.

3 Kinds of Knowledge (paññā)

Dhammapada – footnote – page 472

1. sutamaya paññā	knowledge aquired orally
2. cintāmaya paññā	knowledge aquired by thought (i.e. scientific knowledge)
3. bhāvanāmaya paññā	superior kind of knowledge aquired by meditation and contemplation

3 Unwholesome Roots

1. lobha	greed, attachment (also rāga = lust)
2. dosa	hate, hatred, anger
3. moha	delusion, ignorance

3 Tripple Gem

1. Buddha	2. Dharma	3. Sangha
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4 Absorptions

(MN 4.23-26, MN 8.4-7 / MN 25.12-15, MN 26.34-37, MN 31.10-13, MN 36.34-37, MN 66.22-29, MN 76.43-46, MN 79.37-40, MN 101.38-41)

(These are the first four absorptions or jhānas.)

1. jhāna	applied and sustained thought	rapture and pleasure born of seclusion	inner happiness
2. jhāna	without applied and sustained thought	rapture and pleasure born of concentration, self-confidence and singleness of mind	sublime joy
3. jhāna	equanimity, mindful and fully aware	fading away as well of rapture, still feeling pleasure with the body	equanimity
4. jhāna	purity of mindfulness due to equanimity	disappearance of joy and grief, abandoning of pleasure and pain	neither pleasure nor pain

4 Bases for spiritual Power (iddhipāda) (MN 77.17, MN 16.26)

(also: Bases Of Successful Accomplishment; Four Bases Of Supernormal Power; Four Roads To Power)

1. zeal	2. energy	3. (purity of) mind	4. investigation
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A bhikkhu (practitioner) develops the basis for spiritual power consisting in concentration due to zeal (energy, purity of mind, investigation) and determined striving.

Nyanatiloka translates: 1. intention 2. energy 3. consciousness 4. investigation

4 Bonds or Yokes (yoga)

(- also under the name of 'floods' or ogha; see under 4 Taints)

4 Brahma-Vihāras (Divine Abidings)

1. mettā	love, loving kindness, deep friendship
2. karuṇā	compassion
3. muditā	appreciative joy
4. upekkhā	equanimity

4 Formless Absorptions (Four Formless Realms or Four Immaterial Attainments)

(MN 8.8-11 / MN 25.16-19, MN 26.38-41, MN 31.14-17, MN 66.30-33)

(āyatana or 'spheres' is a name for the four immaterial absorptions. These are the 'higher' jhānas.)

1. realm of infinite space
2. realm of infinite consciousness
3. realm of no-thingness
4. realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception

4 Foundations

(MN 140.11)

1. foundation of wisdom
2. foundation of truth
3. foundation of letting go, relinquishment
4. foundation of peace

4 Applications (Foundations of Mindfulness) (satipaṭṭhāna)

(also: 4 Applications of Mindfulness (or Awareness))

1. kāya	body
2. vedanā	sensations and feelings, conventional and spiritual
3. citta	states of mind (mind, mental states)
4. dhamma	Dharma, truth, inner and outer

4 Kinds of analytical Knowledge (patisambhidā)

Dhammapada – notes to verse 352 – page 584

1. attha	meaning
2. dhamma	text
3. nirutti	etymology
4. paṭibhāna	understanding

4 Kinds of clinging or attachment (MN 9.34 and n.125)

1. clinging to sensual pleasures
2. clinging to views (clinging to all other types of views except the 2 mentioned)
3. clinging to rules and observances (the view that purification can be achieved by adopting external rules or following certain observances; like ascetic self-discipline)
4. clinging to a doctrine of self (personality view in one or another of its 20 forms)

4 Kinds of Defilements

Dhammapada - verse 418 - page 655, note 418/3 - page 661
Digha Nikaya 14 - Sutta Nipata: verse 33, 364, 546, 728

1. khandha	the five aggregates, the five groups
2. kilesa	mental defilements, passions
3. abhisamkhāra	karma, volitional activities
4. kāma	sensuous desire, sense desire

4 Noble Ones, Noble Persons (ariya)

(MN 6.11-13, MN 22.42-45)

1. sotāpanna	Stream-winner, stream-enterer	Fetters 1 to 3 are abandoned
2. sakadāgāmī	Once-returner	Fetters 4 and 5 are weakened
3. anāgāmī	Non-returner	Fetters 4 and 5 are abandoned
4. arahant	Araha(n)t, Worthy One, Holy One	Fetters 6 to 10 are abandoned

There are 4 noble individuals and 8 stages of holiness:

(4 supermundane paths (magga) and 4 supermundane fruits (phala)).

4 Noble Truths (ariya-sacca) Precise translation is Four Truths of the Noble Ones.

1. dukkha	suffering
2. samudaya	causes and conditions of suffering
3. nirodha	the cessation or resolution of suffering (nibbāna)
4. magga	the way to the cessation of suffering (the Noble Eightfold Path)

The first truth is to be fully understood or comprehended (pariññeyya).

The second truth is to be abandoned or eradicated (pahātabba).

The third truth is to be realised (sacchikātabbam).

The fourth truth is to be cultivated or developed (bhāvetabbam)

(From the view of a physician: The first truth is the analysis. - The second truth is the diagnosis. - The third truth is the cure. - The fourth truth is the medicine.)

4 Nutriments (āhāra)

(MN 9.11 and Buddhist Dictionary)

1. material food	feeds the body
2. (sensorial and mental) impression	feeds the three kinds of feeling
3. mental volition (karma)	feeds formations
4. consciousness	feeds mind and body

(Craving is called the origin of nutriment. With the arising of craving there is the arising of nutriment.)

4 Requisites

(Dhammapada - footnote verse 217)

1. food	2. clothes	3. shelter	4. medicine
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4 Taints (āsavas), namely that which stains the inner life

1. kāmāsava	the taint of sensual desire, sense desire, sensual pleasure
2. bhavāsava	the taint of (desiring eternal) existence, desire for the process of life the taint of (desire for) being, desire for becoming
3. diṭṭhāsava	the taint of (unconducive) views or (wrong or false) views and opinions
4. avijjāsava	the taint of ignorance or lack of higher knowledge

5 Aggregates (khandhas)

(This is a description of what we think 'our' personality is.)

1. rūpa-kkhandha	aggregate of body, matter, material form
2. vedanā- kkhandha	aggregate of sensations, feelings in body and mind
3. saññā- kkhandha	aggregate of perceptions
4. sankhāra- kkhandha	aggregate of mental formations (activities), thoughts
5. viññāṇa- kkhandha	aggregate of consciousness

5 Faculties (or: Five Spiritual Faculties) (indriya)

(MN 77.18)

1. saddhā	faculty of trust, confidence
2. viriya	faculty of energy and effort
3. sati	faculty of mindfulness
4. samādhi	faculty of concentration
5. paññā	faculty of wisdom

(The development of the faculties leads to peace and enlightenment.)

5 Fetters (orambhāgiya saṃyojana)

Dhammapda – note to verse 370 – page 602

1. sakkayaditṭhi	self-illusion, personality belief
2. vicikicchā	doubt
3. silabbataparāmāsa	attachment to (wrongful) rites and rituals (ceremonies)
4. kāmarāga	sense-desire
5. paṭigha	hatred

5 Fetters (uddhambhāgiya saṃyojana) (pertaining to the farther shore)

Dhammapda – note to verse 370 – page 602

1. rūparāga	attachment to the Realms of Form
2. arūparāga	attachment to the Formless Realms
3. māna	conceit
4. uddhacca	restlessness
5. avijjā	ignorance

5 Hindrances (nīvaraṇa)

1. kāmacchanda	sensuous desire, sense desire, sensuality, lustful desire
2. vyāpāda or byāpāda	anger, ill-will, hate, hatred
3. thīna-middha	physical and mental laziness, lethargy, boredom, apathy
4. uddhacca-kukkucca	restlessness, worry, anxiety
5. vicikicchā	doubt, scepticism, fear

5 Kinds of Māra (see also 10. Māra's army)

(Māra: the killer, bringer of death, the evil one. His attributes: anger, passion, temptation, evil)

1. The five aggregates	2. kammic activities	3. death	4. mental defilements	5. a deity
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5 Powers (bala)

(MN 77.19)

1. power of faith (trust, confidence)
2. power of energy
3. power of mindfulness
4. power of concentration (samādhi)
5. power of wisdom

(The development of the powers leads to peace, leads to enlightenment. What distinguishes them from the corresponding 5 Faculties or 5 Spiritual Faculties is that they are unshakable by their opposites - e.g. faith is unshakable by faithlessness, energy is unshakable by laziness etc. They represent, therefore, the aspect of firmness in the Spiritual Faculties.)

5 Precepts

1. - not killing
2. - not stealing
3. - not engaging in sexual harm or unwholesome sexual behaviour
4. - not lying
5. - not getting intoxicated, not heedlessly engaging in drugs or alcohol

6 Heavenly Realms

(Dhammapada, page 407 - MN, Introduction, page 46)

(The good destinations in the sense-sphere-realm are the human world and the six heavenly planes.)

1. catummahārājika	The gods under the Four Great Kings
2. Tāvātimsa	The gods of the Thirty-three
3. Yāma	The Yāma gods
4. Tusita	The gods of the Tusita heaven
5. nimmānarati	The gods who delight in creating
6. paranimitta vasatti	The gods who wield power over others' creations

Sakka is the ruler of the gods of the Thirty-three. He is often depicted as a faithful devotee of the Buddha. It is a traditional belief among Buddhists that Sakka has undertaken to protect Buddhism. Metamorphosis of Indra.

Tusita: the abode of the Bodhisattva before his final birth. (MN 123)

The gods who wield power over others' creations: said to be the abode of Māra, the tempter, a symbol for desire and death.

6 Outer or External Bases (āyatana - bāhira)

1. form or visible object	2. sound or audible object
3. odour or olfactive object	4. taste or gustative object
5. body-impression or tactile object or touch	6. mind- object

- mind-base or consciousness (manāyatana) is a collective term for all consciousness.

6 Crimes

1. matricide	2. patricide
3. killing a saint	4. causing a schism in the sangha
5. wounding a Buddha (spilling his blood)	6. upholding wrong views

6 Kinds of direct Knowledge (or 6 Super Knowledges) (abhiññā)

(MN 6.14-16, MN 12.6-8 und 17-19, MN 73.19, MN 77.31, MN 108.18)

1. knowledge of the modes of psychic power
2. divine ear - element
3. penetration of other minds, ability to read the minds of others
4.- 6. three kinds of clear knowledge (see also there)

(Only the knowledge of the destruction of the taints (Nr. 6) is supramundane, the other five are mundane, products of the

extraordinarily powerful degree of mental concentration achieved in the fourth jhāna.)

7 Factors of Enlightenment (bojjhanga) (MN 10.42 und 118.29-40)

1. sati	mindfulness, awareness with clear comprehension
2. dhamma-vicaya	investigation and research, investigation of states, dhamma inquiry
3. viriya	energy, right effort
4. pīti	joy, delight, rapture (it is a mental 'feeling'), bliss, enthused interest
5. passaddhi	tranquillity
6. samādhi	concentration
7. upekkhā	equanimity

8 Attainments (aṭṭhasamāpatti)

Dhammapada – footnote to verse 373 – page 602

1. four Rūpa Jhānas	2. four Arūpa Jhānas
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8 Kinds of Knowledge

The Dhammapada - page 297

1. iddhi-vidha	psychic powers
2. dibba-sota	divine ear
3. ceto-pariya-ñāna	penetration of the minds of others
4. dibbacakkhu	divine eye
5. pubbenivāsa-nussati	remembrance of former births
6. asavakkhaya	extinction of corruptions
7. vipassanā	insight
8. manomayiddhi	creation of mental images

8 Noble Eightfold Path (ariya aṭṭhangika magga)

1. sammā-dīṭṭhi	conducive, fulfilling understanding or view
2. sammā-sankappa	conducive fulfilling attitude or thought or intention
3. sammā-vācā	conducive fulfilling speech
4. sammā-kammanta	conducive fulfilling action
5. sammā-ājīva	conducive livelihood
6. sammā-vāyāma	conducive effort or exertion
7. sammā-sati	conducive awareness or mindfulness or meditation
8. sammā-samādhi	conducive samadhi or concentration

(sammā literally means: 'conducive to the path'; sometimes translators use 'right' or 'skilful' instead of 'conducive')

Steps 1 and 2 belong to wisdom (paññā).

Steps 3, 4 and 5 belong to ethics (sīla).

Steps 6, 7 and 8 belong to concentration (samādhi).

1: is the understanding of the "Four Noble Truths".

2: thoughts free from sensuous desire, ill-will and cruelty

3: abstaining from lying, harsh language and gossip

4: abstaining from killing, stealing and unwholesome or harmful sexual behaviour

5: abstaining from a livelihood that brings harm to other beings, such as trading in arms, drugs, poison, alcohol, slaughtering, fishing, deceit, trickery etc ...

6: the effort to avoid evil and to overcome evil and unwholesome things; the effort to develop and maintain wholesome things

7: awareness in contemplating body, feelings, mind and mind-objects

8: concentration of mind associated with wholesome consciousness, which eventually may reach the absorptions

8 Wordly Conditions (loka-dhamma)

1. gain (or profit) and loss
2. success and defeat (or failure)
3. praise and blame
4. pleasure and pain

10 Defilements (kilesa)

(defilements are mind-defiling, unwholesome qualities - see also: hindrances)

1. lobha	greed, attachment
2. dosa	hate
3. moha	delusion
4. māna	conceit
5. diṭṭhi	(unconducive) view, (speculative) view etc.
6. vicikicchā	sceptical doubt
7. thīna	mental torpor
8. uddhacca	restlessness
9. ahirika	shamelessness
10. anottappa	lack of moral dread or unconscientiousness

10 Fetters (saṃyojana)

1. sakkāya-diṭṭhi	self-delusion, personality view, personality belief
2. vicikicchā	doubt, sceptical doubt
3. sīlabbata-parāmāsa	attachment to rites and rituals or clinging to external observances
4. kāma-rāga	sensual lust, greed, craving, sense-desire
5. vyāpāda	anger, ill-will, hate, hatred, aversion
6. rūpa-rāga	greed for material existence, craving for form, craving for fine-material existence, craving for being
7. arūpa-rāga	greed or craving for immaterial existence, craving for formless existence, craving for non-being
8. māna	conceit („I am”), pride
9. uddhacca	restlessness
10. avijjā	ignorance

10 Kinds of dead Bodies

(Comment on the Dhammapada, verse 149, page 321)

1. uddhumātaka	bloated
2. vinilaka	discoloured
3. vipubbaka	festering
4. vicchiddaka	dissected
5. vikkhāyitaka	gnawed-to-pieces
6. vikkhittaka	scattered-in-pieces
7. hata-vikkhittaka	mutilated and scattered-in-pieces
8. lohitaka	bloody
9. pulavaka	worm-infested
10. aṭṭhika	skeleton

During the time of the Buddha these ten kinds of dead bodies were found in cemeteries and charnel places. In these times dead

bodies were sometimes not buried or cremated and flesh-eating animals (like vultures and dogs etc.) were eating the corpses.

10 Meritorious Deeds (kusala)

(Comment on the Dhammapada, verse 43, page 112)

1. generosity	2. morality
3. meditation	4. reverence
5. service	6. transference of merit
7. rejoicing in other's merit	8. hearing the doctrine
9. expounding the doctrine	10. straightening one's views

10 Noble Qualities (pāramīs)

1. giving	2. virtue
3. renunciation	4. wisdom
5. energy	6. patience
7. truthfulness	8. resolution, determination
9. loving-kindness	10. equanimity

10 Powers of a Tathāgata

(MN 12.10 - 19)

1	He understands the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible.
2	He understands the results of actions undertaken with possibilities and with causes.
3	He understands the ways leading to all destinations.
4	He understands the world with its many and different elements.
5	He understands how beings have different inclinations.
6	He understands the disposition of the faculties of other beings.
7	He understands the defilement, the cleansing, and the emergence in regard to the jhānas, liberations, concentrations, and attainments.
8	He recollects his manifold past lives.
9	He sees with the 'divine eye' beings passing away and reappearing.
10	He enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

Points 8 to 10 are the '3 Kinds Of Clear Knowledge' which are part of the '6 Kinds Of Direct Knowledge'.

10 Wholesome Actions (kamma-patha)

(MN 9.6; MN 41.12-14; Buddhist dictionary)

3 bodily actions	1. avoidance of killing , 2. stealing and 3. unwholesome sexual behaviour
4 verbal actions	1. avoidance of lying, 2. slandering, 3. rude speech and 4. foolish babble
3 mental actions	1. unselfishness, 2. good-will and 3. conducive views

12 Dependent Arising (paṭicca samuppāda)

(also: Dependent Origination)

1. avijjā	ignorance, ways of ignoring, ways of not seeing, unknowing
2. saṅkhārā	formations: whole- and unwholesome volitions, kammic actions
3. viññāṇa	consciousness (six kinds: eye-c., ear-c. ... mind-c.)
4. nāmarūpa	name and form, mentality and materiality, mind and matter mentality: feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention (MN 9.54) materiality: the four great elements and the material form derived from the four great elements (solidity, cohesion, heat, distension)
5. saḷāyatana	six sense-bases, the sixfold base (eye-base, ear-base ... mind-base)
6. phassa	contact, sense-impression (six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact ... mind-contact)
7. vedanā	feeling (six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact ... feeling born of mind-contact)
8. taṇhā	craving (six classes: craving for forms, sounds, odours ... mind-objects) (desire, wanting)
9. upādāna	clinging (holding unto, attached to)
10. bhava	becoming, being, process of becoming (renewal of existence)
11. jāti	birth (coming into existence)
12. jarā-maraṇa	ageing and death (old age and death)

37 Requisites of Enlightenment (bodhipakkhiyā dhammā)

(MN - introduction page 33 and 34)

1. satipaṭṭhāna	the four foundations of mindfulness
2. sammappadhāna	the four right kinds of striving
3. iddhipāda	the four bases for spiritual power
4. indriya	the five faculties
5. bala	the five powers
6. bojjhanga	the seven enlightenment factors
7. ariya aṭṭhangika magga	the Noble Eightfold Path

Sources

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- These pages are written in Gandhari Unicode for the Pali letters.

May all beings live with clarity and wisdom