

# Buddhist healing research paper example

[Religion](#), [Buddhism](#)



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## **Introduction**

According to Khantipalo (1977), Buddhism cannot be explained without explain the 4 Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path. The basics of Buddhism lie in these two philosophies by Buddha. The noble truths are that life means suffering, the suffering is due to attachment, suffering can be eliminated, and there is a specific path to cessation of suffering which lies in self improvement. Moreover, the Noble Eightfold Path consists of having right view, having right thought, having right speech, doing right actions, following right livelihood, doing right effort, having right mindfulness, and maintaining right concentration.

According to Paonil and Sringernyuang (2002), Buddhist philosophies believe that no being exists on its own. This means that all beings exist in terms of integrated factors. These beings are governed by the natural law which the Buddhists call the Three Characteristics. The ultimate goal of every being should be a state of Nirvana. This state consists of completeness. The completeness is in the form of mental, physical, and psychological

completeness. A being is free from emotional, physical and even psychological distresses when a being achieves this state. This is what Buddhists constantly crave to achieve. The paper that follows will explain how a being can integrate emotional, physical and psychological well being using the principals of Buddhist Healing. Explanation regarding integration with others and finally the society and our world as a whole would also be given.

## **Achieving Psychological, Emotional and Physical Well Being**

The problem arises when we want our life to proceed in some given way.

That is not possible. People tend to think that their lives will go according to plans but when their lives do not go according to their plans, frustration is the outcome. This frustration results in distress for all enlightened beings and to reduce this suffering, our emotional, physical, and psychological aspects must be integrated and in line with the concepts of Buddhism.

There are two types of diseases; diseases of the body and diseases of the mind. Buddhist healing works in different ways to achieve escape from both these types of diseases. Buddhists put more importance on mental diseases rather than physical diseases. The mental diseases include emotional and psychological problems like distress. Physical diseases include the general diseases which are easily identified by science as well. These diseases include all physical diseases that have physical characteristics like pain in body, tumors, and cuts.

How to heal and cure these diseases? Buddhist Healing provides us with ways to free ourselves from these, emotional, physical, and psychological distresses. Buddhists provide us with the Noble Eightfold Path that will help

us rid ourselves from the diseases of the body as well as diseases of the mind. Middle Path, when practiced, would rid us from the mental problems like cravings, sufferings and emotional distresses. This means that we would become emotionally and psychologically stable. Buddhism then states that ridding ourselves from mental distress will help us rid ourselves from physical distress as well. This implies that the body and the mind are a single identity and not two different things. The body and mind are closely integrated and if one suffers, the other would suffer automatically (Paonil and Sringernyuang, 2002).

Physical fitness can be achieved by taking care of our bodies in an appropriate way. Taking care of our bodies must be in line with the Noble Eightfold Path and we must also harmonize our practices with the laws of nature as well. For example, Buddha would never kill any being to attain satisfaction on his part. Buddha's followers live a healthy life if they are monitored closely. They wake up early in the morning and go for long walks to obtain food offerings. They also do strenuous exercises like sweeping the yards and keeping their monasteries clean and green. This makes the monks healthy and the monks do not go against the laws of nature as well. Buddha himself made many rules that must be followed by the monks at all times. This kept the monks in perfect shape and free from the two types of diseases mentioned earlier. Moreover, Buddhists acknowledge the teachings medicinal practices of the modern world as well. However, the general practices of the modern world must not go against the teachings of Buddhism in any way (Paonil and Sringernyuang, 2002).

McWilliams (2010) also explains that we must liberate ourselves from

thoughts that solely focus on pleasuring ourselves. One must understand the true nature of life by building proper perceptions and by opting for a clearer perception of life and others according to the principles of Buddhist healing. Wallace and Shapiro (2006) take this concept further and state specifically how mental illnesses cause physical illnesses. They have focused on achieving a balanced mind. Buddhism according to them believes that a balanced mind will stand in the face of hardships and will be free from any psychological distresses that come its way. Therefore, individuals must look to develop balanced minds for balanced bodies and a balanced self. 4 ways are mentioned by the authors that will let us achieve a balanced mind according to the teachings of Buddhist Healing.

The first teaching is the teaching about Conative Balance. Intention and volition come under this thought. Conative balance states that one must want things that are in line with the benefit of others as well as him. This would lead to a balanced individual and thus would not result in any emotional, psychological or physical distress.

The second teaching is about attentional balance. This principle simply states that one must at all times develop sustained and voluntary attention. Buddha claims that all of us are victims of attentional deficit, hyperactivity, and dysfunction. According to this principle we must at all times focus on the task at hand. This means that if we are doing something, we must think about and act on doing that thing only. Thus would again lead to a balanced mind.

The third teaching is about cognitive balance. This teaching tells us to calmly experience the events in our lives and enjoy and take in these experiences

whether good or bad. This also implies that we must not misunderstand or make general assumptions about such experiences beforehand.

Finally, the fourth teaching talks about affective balance. According to this teaching, a person would achieve affective balance when he/she does not depend too much on emotional vacillations, emotional apathy, and improper emotions. This balance is achieved when achieves all the 4 teachings mentioned above. Therefore, through these 4 teachings we will achieve balance in ourselves and our physical, emotional and psychological aspects. The achievement of self-balance was discussed. These teachings are not for us alone. We must use these teachings to achieve balance in our relationships and in our experiences with others. Then we must move on to create balance in our relationship with the society and the world as a whole. The article that follows, discusses these aspects.

## **Balancing Ourselves with Others**

Sakurai (2010) explains that Buddhism preaches that we must not live for ourselves alone. The whole community is important as we are integrated with others, the community, and the world as a whole. Therefore, to achieve balance in our lives, we must try to do things that do not go against others, this world, and the laws of nature.

The concept of dependant originality is mentioned by Sakurai (2010). This concept discusses the relationship and dependence of ourselves, on other, on the community, on earth, and on the cosmos. The Earth Charter is a very good example of the teachings of Buddhism. The Earth Charter has resulted in many programs that have provided education, food and other basic necessities of life to people who need it throughout the globe. Therefore, this

effort has integrated us. This effort shows us that we are integrated and that we cannot survive without keeping each other and this earth healthy.

Phan (2006) highlights how we can work for the benefit of ourselves and others. Reconciliation is the concept that reconciles us with the others.

Reconciliation is one by some steps that are mentioned here. He says that we must know the truth, do justice, forgive, and also be socially constructive. Knowing the truth means that one must know who is at wrong, who is being wronged, and how he/she is being wronged. Secondly there is the concept of doing justice. One must do justice at all times with others and oneself. This means that knowing the truth does not end anything. One must know the truth and then one must act accordingly to do justice according to the situation. Then we must be able to forgive. This is one of the most important levels of reconciliations. Reconciliation is not possible without forgiveness. It is not about forgiving and forgetting. It is about remembering and forgiving. This reconciles us with ourselves as well. We do not forget what was done with us, but we accept it, forgive the individual and move on. Finally, the ultimate objective of forgiveness, knowing the truth, and doing justice is to rebuild the society. One must do this in order to build a society that fosters the integration of individuals, the community and the Earth as a whole. This is the final objective of the teaching of social reconstruction; to build a better society for the benefit of everybody.

## **Integrating and Balancing Ourselves Globally**

Buddhist teachings tend to help us integrate at a global level. This level is preached by Buddhists at all times. According to Walsh (2007), Buddhist Spatiality is crucial in explaining this concept. Temple spaces do not exist in

social vacuums. The monasteries and temples have specific practices that integrate the monks with the global world and others. This is how the monks make their temples places of healing and we can follow the same principles to make our world places of healing for the benefit of all mankind.

Cowhey (2008) further explained this concept. Cowhey researched on religiosity and how different cultures respect and perceive different phenomenon. The research focused on maintain and respecting life as a whole. The example of black ants was given. In America, it is quite normal to kill black ants. However, this is not acceptable in religions. Thus, a conflict appears. We have to bridge this gap and develop a most basic skill that is respecting life to achieve harmony at a global level as life is all around us: in plants, in animal, and in human beings.

Phan (2006) further explained that global healing and world peace can be maintained by following the teachings of Buddha. The first way is to know and act on the truth. If one knows the truth and acts accordingly there will be no regrets and conflicts from others. Everyone would be happy and there would be no distress due to others. One must also live justly and do just. This would again result in zero conflicts and integration would be improved at a global level. Forgiving the enemy is also crucial. This would reduce hatred and a sense of peace would prevail. The point lies in remembering what wrong one suffered, yet forgiving the enemy. Social reconstruction would again be done when all these things are accomplished. The society would be reformed and conflicts would be reduced. We would all be integrated at a global level.



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