

Words on Patience (*Khanti*)

Compiled by Steve Armstrong
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Khanti means forbearance, patience and forgiveness with additional connotations of tolerance, gentleness, docility and tractability. Patience is the ability to let your light shine after your fuse has “blown.” (Steve Armstrong)

Patience leads one to nibbana. (Sayadaw U Pandita)

“...Among ideals and highest goods
None better than patience is found.
For surely he who, being strong,
Forbears the ones who are more weak —
Forever enduring the weak —
That is called the highest patience.”

—from “Vepacitti Sutta: Calm in the Face of Anger” (SN 11.4), translated from the Pali by Andrew Olendzki. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 2 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn11/sn11.004.olen.html>

“Enduring patience is the highest austerity. “Nibbana is supreme,” say the Buddhas. He is not a true monk who harms another, nor a true renunciate who oppresses others.”

—from “Buddhavagga: The Buddha” (Dhp XIV), translated from the Pali by Acharya Buddharakkhita. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/dhp/dhp.14.budd.html> .

Sussusa Sutta: Listening Well

“Endowed with these six qualities, a person is incapable of alighting on the lawfulness, the rightness of skillful mental qualities even when listening to the true Dhamma. Which six?
“When the Doctrine & Discipline declared by the Tathagata is being taught, he does not listen well, does not give ear, does not apply his mind to gnosis, grabs hold of what is worthless, rejects what is worthwhile, and is not endowed with the patience to conform with the teaching.

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—“Sussusa Sutta: Listening Well” (AN 6.88), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 4 July 2010, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an06/an06.088.than.html>

(over)

"Then again, the monk is easy to speak to, endowed with qualities that make him easy to speak to, patient, respectful to instruction. And the fact that he is easy to speak to... respectful to instruction, is a quality creating a protector."

—from "Natha Sutta: Protectors" (AN 10.17), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 4 July 2010, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an10/an10.017.than.html>

"Bhikkhus! What are the āsavas that are to be removed through forbearance?"

"Bhikkhus! In this Teaching, the bhikkhu, reflecting properly, can endure cold, heat, hunger, thirst, gadflies, mosquitoes, wind, heat of the sun, snakes, scorpions and lice. He can endure ill-spoken and unwholesome words. He has the nature of being able to endure severe, cruel, excruciatingly sharp, disagreeable, unpleasant, deadly and painful sensations which arise in the body.

"Bhikkhus! Āsavas and other destructive and burning defilements may arise in the bhikkhu who cannot endure such painful sensations. Those āsavas and other destructive and burning defilements do not arise in the bhikkhu who endures such painful sensations with proper reflection. Bhikkhus! These are called the āsavas that are to be removed through forbearance."

—from "Sabbasava Sutta: Discourse on All Āsavas" (MN 2), translated from the Pali by Burma Piṭaka Association. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.002.bpit.html>

from an introduction to the Dhammapada, by Bhikkhu Bodhi

A large number of verses pertaining to this first level are concerned with the resolution of conflict and hostility. Quarrels are to be avoided by patience and forgiveness, for responding to hatred by further hatred only maintains the cycle of vengeance and retaliation. The true conquest of hatred is achieved by non-hatred, by forbearance, by love (4-6).

4. "He abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me." Those who do not harbor such thoughts still their hatred.

5. Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal.

6. There are those who do not realize that one day we all must die. But those who do realize this settle their quarrels.

—from "The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom", translated from the Pali by Acharya Buddhārakkhita, with an introduction by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/dhp/dhp.intro.budd.html>