

The Dhammic Life which is Still a Secret

by Ajahn Buddhādāsa

Interpreted into English by Santikaro Bhikkhu

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhādāsa gave regular lectures during the monthly international retreats held at Suan Mokkh and then Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage. Usually, Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. Audio recordings are now available from www.suanmokkh.org and www.bia.or.th. The following is a transcription generously made by a Dhamma volunteer. If you noticed possible improvements to the text and would like to contribute, please kindly contact the Buddhādāsa Indapañño Archives in Bangkok (suanmokkhbkk@gmail.com)

The very first thing I'd like to express is my delight that all of you have come here for the purpose of discovering knowledge about the Dhamma in order to use that understanding in living one's life, so that one can receive the highest benefits.

When speaking about Dhamma we must deal with many profound matters. We therefore need to find a time that is appropriate for considering profound things. This is why we have chosen this time.

This time of day is fitting for Dhamma which is profound.

And thus we need a time when the mind is fresh, calm, and peaceful. At this time the mind is also active, it has a readiness or activeness with which it can investigate and understand the Dhamma.

So please don't think that asking you to come here at this time is just to give you a rough time, it is rather just an old tradition in Buddhism that Buddhists will use this time of day in order to learn, think about, and practice Dhamma.

In terms of nature this is the time of day when many flowers begin to open, bloom, and spread their fragrances about the world. It too, is the time of day when animals wake up, for example, the roosters crowing and starting to go about their duties. Most importantly this is the time of day in which the Buddha awakened, so therefore it is appropriate to study that which the Buddha discovered and taught, namely the Dhamma.

Most of you are quite familiar with the word 'Dharma' or 'Dhamma.' Many

of you have heard this word before and are quite familiar with it. There is though another word that few of you are aware of or know much about and this is the word *Dhammika* or *Dharmika*. So we'd like to spend this morning's talk on trying to develop the best understanding of this word.

Some of you may have come across it in the Anglicized form, which is 'Dharmic.' This is from the Sanskrit form *Dharmika* which is very close to the word *Dhammika*.

The word *Dhammika* or *Dharmika* means to be made up with or made up through by Dhamma. This is very important. It means that the Dhamma is with us and within us in our flesh, blood, and bones. This is the meaning of *Dhammika*. The 'dhamma' is in the Dhamma itself [??], but if it isn't *Dhammika*, 'of the Dhamma,' then of what use is the Dhamma to us?

We all talk a lot about life. By life we mean this body and mind, the body-mind integration or process. However, we often don't stop to notice whether this life is composed of dhamma or integrated with and through Dhamma. When life is integrated with Dhamma, composed of Dhamma we call it *jīvitadhammika* or 'Dharmic life.'

Now this Dharmic life*¹ is hidden and doesn't express itself so obviously in our lives, especially in the lives of ordinary people where one sees little of Dhammic life. It's kind of hidden or you could say that God has made it a mystery or a secret and hasn't yet revealed the Dhammic life to us. So we need to act in such a way or do whatever is necessary to express this dharmic life, so that in our ordinary lives, in all of our actions, words and thoughts there is the expression of Dharmic life.

We can say that this kind of life has been hidden until the Buddha discovered it and upon discovering the Dhammic life, he revealed it and made it available to others. So through the Buddha the Dhammic life was no longer hidden. It became something open and realizable by us.

Now ordinarily the word *dhamma* means 'everything,' means 'thing' or 'things', including all things. However here when we speak of *Dhammika*, Dhamma means the 'correctness of everything that we need.' This is what we mean by *Dhammika* or Dhamma in this case. Now when we speak of 'everything,' we mean everything connected to nature and part of nature. When we speak of Dhamma in terms of nature there are four basic meanings to the word. Please listen carefully so that you can get some understanding from this.

The first meaning of Dhamma is 'nature' itself, all the phenomena which makes up nature, what we could call the body of nature. This is the first

¹ * words spoken in English by Ajahn Buddhadasa

meaning.

The second meaning is the ‘law of nature,’ the law that governs the natural things, the natural phenomena that govern how they come together, how they function, how they operate. This law that governs or controls the way all things happen is called the law of nature.

The third meaning of Dhamma is the correct duty or the duty which is correct in accordance with that law of nature.

The fourth meaning is the ‘fruits or effects that come from doing that duty.’

So therefore when we speak of correctness we mean in accordance with nature, correct in line with the law of nature, correct according to the duty of nature, and correct in terms of the fruits that come from doing that duty. This is what we mean by correctness.

Therefore, for something to be correct in terms of Dhamma, it must be correct in terms of these four meanings of Dhamma; correct in terms of nature, correct in terms of the law of nature, correct in terms of the duty that must be done in line with the law of nature, and correct in terms of the natural fruits and results of doing that duty as stipulated by the law of nature or as required by the law of nature. To understand what is correct – correctness or rightness, we must understand these four meanings of Dhamma.

In the Pāli language we don’t have the word *dhamma-jāti* or *thamma-chaat* which is the Thai word for ‘nature.’ This word doesn’t exist in the Pāli language. There’s just the word ‘Dhamma.’ When it is *dhamma-jāti* or ‘born from Dhamma’ then it must also be Dhamma and something is truly Dhamma or *Dhammika* when it is correct or perfect in line with these four meanings of Dhamma.

So Dhamma is about being correct and *Dhammika* is this correctness in accordance with Dhamma. To use the term *Dhammika* we must have correctness in terms of the four meanings of nature that we have been discussing.

I’d like to take the opportunity now to discuss how this fits with the religions that have a God, the theistic religions. How does this discussion of Dhamma and nature fit with the ways of speaking of God in the theistic religions?

Nature is the same as that which God has created, namely the creation of God, or you could say that nature is the physical body of God. Nature is the body of God on the physical level.

And the law of nature is the spiritual aspect of God. God in the spiritual terms is the law of nature or if we put it a little more clearly we can speak of it

as being the will of God. The will or the hope of God is the same as the law of nature.

Third is that which we must do, perform or practice according to the will of God can be called prayer. The prayer of God is the wholehearted response for the will of God. This corresponds to the duty that is required by the law of nature.

The last one is the grace* of God which God bestows upon us. The grace of God corresponds with the natural fruits of doing the duty required by the law of nature.

Now there are two aspects to this fruit. The first fruit is the kind of grace that nobody calls grace, but it is a kind of grace for when we act incorrectly regarding the duty required by the natural law, the very first way God punishes us is with *dukkha*. Now since nobody likes *dukkha* they don't speak of it as grace. The other kind of fruit arises when one correctly performs the duty according to the will of God. Here the fruits are satisfying and so we recognize them readily as being grace.

So one can see that these four natural principles can be used with both the theistic and non-theistic religions. Whether religions speak in terms of God or in terms of nature and natural law, we can find that the same four principles are prominent and central in any religion. Therefore we can say that all religions have God although modern scholars consider Buddhism as being atheistic – as not having a God. The scholars who categorize things in this way do so out of ignorance, their eyes are shut as they don't know what Buddhism is about. It's not a matter of Buddhism not having a God, it's just that some people don't understand that there are two kinds of God. There's the personal and impersonal God. The so called theistic religions have a personal God and then the so called natural religions or atheistic religions have an impersonal God. So if we look more carefully we see that all religions have God especially when we view them in terms of these four natural principles. We then see that it's pretty much the same God. This being the case, there's no more need for religions to compete, argue, or convert each other in wasteful struggles. Since all religions have the same God they ought to accept this fact and learn to work together for their own good and for the good of life.

The impersonal God* cannot be understood by those people of weak intelligence, or whose wisdom is poorly developed or immature. One must have a well-developed mature wisdom faculty – what used to be called the intellect – if one is to understand the impersonal God. For those whose intellect or wisdom is still weak and underdeveloped there is the personal God, which is in very personal terms and consequently easy for children to understand. Therefore when we speak about God and religious matters we have two ways of speaking;

the language of Dhamma which doesn't speak in personal terms but rather in impersonal natural terms; and then there's the personal language, the people language that speaks of God in personal or humanistic anthropomorphic terms. One has to be careful to distinguish between these two ways of speaking if one is to have a true understanding of God.

It's rather amusing that in the age of science there are still many people whose intellect and wisdom are quite weak and immature. If one has a correct understanding of science or is a real scientist, it's easy to understand the impersonal God. Those who don't really understand science, although living in the scientific age, still have this problem of not understanding the impersonal God. So it's rather amusing that in scientific times many people's intellect or wisdom are weak or even retarded.

If one has a genuine understanding of Dhamma it's quite simple to explain and understand the four meanings of Dhamma. If one understands these four meanings then one will have a correct understanding of science. In terms of religion one would understand a religious or spiritual side of science. So therefore if we are to have a mature and thorough understanding of science we must not overlook the spiritual aspect or the science of religion. To do so we need to understand the four meanings of the nature of Dhamma.

Let us look at the word *Dhammika* once again. This word has in fact quite a few meanings. Dhammika means first of all to know and understand the Dhamma in all four of its meanings. This involves practicing correctly according to nature and living correctly towards and regarding nature.

The second meaning is to practice the Dhamma correctly. When one knows and understands the Dhamma, then one knows how to practice it correctly and thus respond correctly to nature. When one practices the Dhamma correctly, then one is Dhammika on an even higher level. Just to know the Dhamma but not practicing it is not enough.

The third meaning is to 'have Dhamma,' to 'possess Dhamma.' That means that the Dhamma is in one's flesh and blood, one's body and soul. There's Dhamma in one's body and one's mind. One has the spirit of Dhamma when one has Dhamma thoroughly in all aspects. This is an even higher meaning of Dhammika.

In the Pāli language there's a phrase which conveys the meaning of this quite well. It can be translated as to 'bathe in the flavor of Dhamma,' to 'bathe in the flavor of Dhamma until one is wet through and through, soaked or permeated by Dhamma.' This is the third meaning of *Dhammika*.

Even higher than that is to drink the Dhamma. To drink or imbibe the Dhamma, to eat or to partake of the Dhamma one deeply experiences the

Dhamma physically and mentally. When we experience the Dhamma on all levels deeply there's an even higher meaning of *Dhammika*.

Now because the Dhamma is something mental or spiritual it's experienced by mind. A phrase in the Pāli scriptures describes this as 'to drink the flavor of Dhamma through the *nāma-kāya*.' *Kāya* means 'group,' 'collection,' or 'body.' *Nāma* means 'immaterial' or 'mental.' So this means the collection of all mental things or all the mind's functions or activities. So the mind in all its aspects, in all its functions, drinks the Dhamma.

So we have the Dhamma, we bathe in the flavor of Dhamma, and we drink or imbibe the Dhamma with the *nāma-kāya*. This is the fullest meaning of *Dhammika*, the perfection of *Dhammika*.

Life that is *Dhammika* as we have described is what we call 'Dhammic life'* but life that doesn't have anything to do with Dhamma is called 'non-Dhammic life.' We ought to be careful to understand the difference between the two kinds of life.

So you should look at yourselves and ask whether you have a Dhammic or non-Dhammic life. Is this life of ours right here dhammic or non-Dhammic?

Now all of you have come here in search of what we call Dhamma although that may not be true for a few of you. Once you've got some Dhamma the question is what do you intend to do with it? Some of you may intend to take the Dhamma merely to teach others. That is, you're here just to learn some things that you can pass onto others. However, we would like to recommend that you have the fullest meaning of *Dhammika*, that you not just learn the Dhamma to pass onto others, but that you practice it until it's in your blood and in your bones, not to mention your brain. Then again when one has thoroughly integrated the Dhamma within oneself there wouldn't be any more problems and so you wouldn't have to worry about what to teach others.

If you understand these four meanings or principles of Dhamma then it really isn't necessary for you to come here. If you understand these four principles then you can study and practice the Dhamma anywhere. You can study it in the science classroom or the scientific laboratory, for you'll know how to investigate and practice Dhamma according to these four principles. You can practice Dhamma in any religion because every religion contains these four principles.

Now some people ask why you should come here, why you ought to come here, and our response is to learn the method or the way for realizing the Dhamma. Once you know how to do it you can do it anywhere. However, the problem here is that you don't know how to go about discovering, investigating, and realizing the Dhamma. So you ought to come here because we can help you

to understand the way or the method for realizing the Dhamma. If this is what interests you then this is the place to come. Let us emphasize once again that once you know the method or way you can put it into practice anywhere. You wouldn't have to stay here for the rest of your life. Let us remind you that if you understand the four meanings of Dhamma, if you really understand them, you'll know how to practice and discover the Dhamma for yourself.

We might as well take the time to deal with a difficulty and question that some people have. Which way should we follow – Theravāda Buddhism or Mahāyāna Buddhism? One needs to recognize in order to solve this question that there are many kinds of people in the world – the people with the weak or retarded intellect and those with a well-developed vigorous intellect. For those with weak or immature understanding or wisdom there needs to be developed many ways to interest them and help them along. This is what Mahāyāna Buddhism has done. Mahāyāna has figured out all kinds of rituals, ceremonies, chants, and practices for all the different varieties of people in the world whose intellects or wisdom faculties are not highly developed. Now for those whose wisdom faculty is already vigorous and daring then Theravāda Buddhism is sufficient. It contains the essentials without any complications or proliferations.

Now also please don't waste any time trying to work out if you should study Indian, Sri Lankan, Burmese, Japanese, Thai, or Tibetan Buddhism or what have you. Don't waste your time in getting lost in unimportant distinctions. Look carefully and see that there is only one Buddhism. The reality is that there is only one Buddhism which is the truth of the four meanings of Dhamma. Once you see that these four meanings in Buddhism is the one Buddhism, then you won't have the problem of whether to be a Thai, Japanese, or Burmese Buddhist.

If you wanted to learn about all these different forms of Buddhism it would cost you a lot of time and money. You would have to spend a lot of money buying all kinds of books from these different traditions. In the end you would have a warehouse of books but you wouldn't know beans about Dhamma. You would have read all these books and probably would be more confused than when you began. In the end, even if you fly off to all these countries, all you know is a lot of miscellaneous details about Buddhism, the different forms of practices, ceremonies, and things that have been developed for the weak-minded people or people of weakly developed wisdom faculties or you will have learnt details that will have been of specific application of the Dhamma in different times and places. That would be the most you would get out of it, the certain specific applications which probably aren't relevant or applicable to you anyway and you won't have got to the real heart or the light of Dhamma.

If you really want to realize the Dhamma then study these four meanings of Dhamma. Sit yourself down somewhere, it doesn't have to be here it can be at

home, and study these four meanings of Dhamma. Study these four principles within yourself, within these two meter long bodies more or less, and together with consciousness and experience study the Dhamma there. Study all the four meanings of Dhamma in your own living conscious bodies, that's all you have to do. You need not clutter yourself up with all the little details and miscellaneous techniques that have been created to help those who are of weak intellect. If you have sufficient understanding then all you have to do is sit down and study these four meanings of Dhamma within one's living body.

Nature is these bodies, every cell in these bodies group together to form organs and the different parts of the body. Nature is all of these cells, organs, and parts of the body as well as the mind. All the thoughts, feelings, experiences – this mind-body is what we mean by nature. This is what we study in the first meaning of Dhamma.

The second meaning of Dhamma is the law of nature. In every cell one can discover the law of nature, every cell is created and governed by the law of nature. The functioning of each cell and the way the cells cooperate and work together to form organs is under the power of the law of nature. The way these organs function, that is, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body, the brain are totally under the law of nature. So one can study the law of nature in all these things. The law of nature governs all the physical and mental things within our living bodies. One can ask oneself whether there is anything above the power of the law of nature until one finds that which is above the law of nature. In this way one can study the second meaning of Dhamma.

The third meaning is the duty that is required by the natural law. There is the natural law in every cell governing every function of every cell in every part of the body. It is then inevitable that each cell has the duty or function to perform according to natural law. When the cells form organs then each organ has its function or duty that must be performed according to the law of nature. The breathing of the lungs, the pumping of blood by the heart, the work of the liver, kidneys, and brain, as well as all the other parts of our body have their duty or function. So we can study this meaning of Dhamma in all the parts of our bodies by seeing the functions that they must perform because of the law of nature. Then there are the functions and duties that we must do. We need to feed, bathe, and exercise these bodies. Then there are duties that we have for example, of going to school to learn skills and gain knowledge in order that we get a job and earn a living to take care of ourselves. There are all these different kinds of duties and all of them come from the law of nature. So we can study this third principle in all the necessary functions and duties of these living bodies and minds.

The fourth meaning of Dhamma is the fruits or results of performing that duty which needs to be done according to the natural law. The results are

always happening – sometimes they are excessive while other times they are deficient. It all depends on how we do the duties. So we can discover and investigate the results or the fruits of the various duties. We can see in some ways that they are too much and in other ways they are not enough because this comes from how we perform the duties. Nowadays there are quite a few excesses in our lives rather than living in a way that is sufficient or good enough and thus correct. We tend to indulge in excess, it's a very excessive world – we tend to eat too much, too much in a way that's not very good for us. Because of this we often lack good health, well-being, comfort, and joy because so much in our life is excessive. We dress up too much many of us have far too many clothing, and we have all the kinds of stuff that we don't need. We have houses that are too big, too big to use and take care of properly. We have to work too hard to care for them and pay for them. In the modern world excess tends to be the way of life. It's quite easy to be excessive in life because of technology. We're so highly developed that it's easy to be excessive in what we wear, where we live, even our medical industries are quite excessive, and so from this we can see one aspect of the results of doing the duties. That is, when we go too far one way we can see the results that we get and they tend to be not very peaceful, not very happy, not very satisfying, and not very healthy.

Nowadays it's very difficult for us to understand the Dhamma because we're so deceived and tricked by advertising. We live in the industrial age and in this age of industry a lot of skill and talent is used to trick us and deceive us because we're still so stupid to believe all that we hear and read in advertising – we buy it all. So because of the power of industry and advertising in the modern world it's very hard for us to understand the Dhamma. It used to be good enough to drive a little Volkswagen beetle but now they don't even make them anymore. In some countries you have to buy expensive Volkswagens with air-conditioning, stereo radios, and fancy headrests and all the rest, but more and more people aren't even satisfied with that, they have to get a Mercedes or Jaguar or whatever. People are no longer satisfied with just a house that protects them from the weather or that gives them a safe place to sleep at night. Nowadays people have to build houses that cost one hundred thousand, two hundred thousand, three hundred thousand dollars to a million dollars. Nowadays there are many of us whose bathrooms cost more than an entire house used to cost. Just on a bathroom people will spend ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred thousand dollars for a toilet. This is the way things are because we're so stupid and we can't discriminate between the lies of advertising and the truth and so we buy all things excessively. This just goes to show that we don't understand, that we don't have the intelligence regarding the truths of the duties to be done according to the law of nature. If we understood the duty and the fruits of the duties according to the natural law then we wouldn't have all these problems. We would know what is enough to have a truly peaceful, healthy, and

satisfying spiritual life. Since we don't understand any of these things, excuse us for saying so, but because of our foolishness or stupidity we don't know what is right, what is correct, what is enough, what is healthy and so we over and over again experience the fruits of doing the duties wrongly. The consequences of this is stress, tension, poor health, anxiety, nervousness, anger, and all the rest. This is the sad result of us being stupid about the duty according to the natural law and the fruits of that duty.

In correctness there is neither lack nor excess or to put it in other words there's neither positive or negative. When things are correct, when life is correct there's neither positive nor negative. This is to be divine, to be God-like because God is neither positive nor negative in any way. Nowadays we like the positive, we worship it even more than God. You will find very few people who worship God. Most of them are head over heels in love with the positive, and that is incorrect, wrong, and out of shelter[?]. But this is the way things are these days, everybody is infatuated with the positive and couldn't care less about what is right, what is correct. With God, what is correct? It is to neither attach to the positive nor to swing in the other direction and attach to the negative, to no longer be a slave to positive and negative, to be above the positive and the negative. This is what it means to be correct.

Nowadays we worship the positive so much that we can no longer worship God. When we're worshipping the positive we can't worship God because God is beyond positive and negative. In worshipping the positive we aren't worshipping God, and we don't know how to pray to God because we only pray to the positive. Whether this is true or not, please take a good look at your own life and see.

Since we're so infatuated and caught up with the positive and the negative we can't live and practice according to the four principles of Dhamma. When we can't live along these lines and in harmony with these four principles, then our lives are disconnected with Dhamma, thus our lives are non-Dhammic. Living out of harmony with these principles results in lives that are full of problems. This is something no intelligent person can deny because all around us are these signs of the incorrectness of our lives. The way we dress, the way we treat each other, the way we destroy the environment, the way we oppress other people, the violence of our society, our lifestyles -the imbalance and over-consumption, the forms of mental illness, the strange diseases, the crime, and the list goes on. Our lives are not correct and the evidence of this is quite obvious if anyone would stop to examine this intelligently. Unfortunately no one does because we're so infatuated with the positive that we keep on heedlessly living these very incorrect destructive lives. So we can't understand these four principles of Dhamma and we can't live according to them. This problem, this situation goes on and on.

So when conditions are the way they are, when our ways of living are so drastically incorrect, and our lives are so non- Dhammic, then the Dhammic or correct life is deeply hidden. The Dhammic life is such a mystery to us because the way we live is so incorrect. The Dhammic life is so profound, so difficult for us to understand simply because of the incorrectness of our way of living and consequently our ways of thinking. The result is that we go on living incorrectly often without even thinking of doing anything about it.

When we speak of being correct or right we mean correct in line with the four principles of Dhamma. It's very simple that when we're correct, when our way of living is correct in line with these four principles, then life is correct – it's Dhammic. This means that we must know these principles, understand them, and practice them. Now we don't even care about these principles. All we care about is the positive, our pleasures and our fun. Rather than care about these four principles we ignore them. We therefore don't understand them and so have no way of putting them into practice. When we fail to practice these principles then our lives are non- Dhammic and when our lives are thus then the grace of God turns out to be pain and suffering. This is totally just, this is just the way things are according to nature and the law of nature. For when we live in ways that are incorrect the results will be nothing but *dukkha* – pain, misery, stress, and suffering. This pain and suffering is the grace of God. It's the result of a non- Dhammic life.

Nowadays it isn't enough to be incorrect in terms of the four principles of Dhamma, that just doesn't satisfy people, for they must rebel, pervert, and even blackmail these four principles. This is something we should look at.

What we're talking about is the arising of me & mine, of the misconception of the ego and self. The rebellion of ego, of self that takes everything to be me & mine has taken over everything from nature. When it's all just nature, when it belongs to nature ego rebels very corruptly, dishonestly, and takes it all as me & my. This is our rebellion against nature, against Dhamma.

When the nervous system is functioning and the eye sees a form, we think 'I see' ego sees. When the ear hears a sound, we think 'I hear' it's me hearing. When the nose smells fragrances we take it to be 'I smell,' when the tongue tastes flavors it's 'I taste,' when the skin experiences touches we take it to be 'I touch,' when the mind thinks, feels or experiences it's 'I think,' 'I feel' 'I experience.' This is how we rebel against nature, against Dhamma. Everything is taken to be 'I' to be 'me.' This is due to our ignorance of Dhamma, of nature, of the law of nature. We rebel and we very dishonestly, very crookedly take everything to be me & mine & self.

I don't think that the English words 'I & mine'* can fully convey the Thai words *tuagoo* & *khonggoo*. *Goo* is a word that literally means 'I' but it has very

crude, arrogant* low connotations. So when we say *tuagoo* one has a very arrogant and crude kind of ego. To translate this into English is difficult. The way many of us use the word ‘ego’ is close to *tuagoo*, to that real strong, crude, arrogant, assertive ‘me.’ So we must call it an arrogant ‘I,’ the stupid ‘I.’ Then *khonggoo* means ‘belonging to *goo*,’ the equivalent of ego. So maybe we could say there’s stupid ‘I,’ there’s stupid ‘mine,’ there’s arrogant ‘mine.’ This is closer to the Thai words *tuagoo* & *khonggoo*.

In the Pāli language there are two pairs of words on two levels. The first pair is the words *attā* & *attaniya*. *Attā* means ‘self’ and *attaniya* means ‘connected with’ or ‘having to do with self.’ *Attā* & *attaniya* are the ordinary level of I & mine. When it becomes more intense, kind of hot and boiling, more anxious, then the Pāli words are *ahaṅkāra* & *mamaṅkāra* which literally means something like ‘I-making & my-making.’ So when it becomes very egoistic, the egoistic ‘I’ and the egoistic ‘mine’ or what some of us call ‘I-go & my-go,’ this crude, more intense, more anxious level of I & mine is designated in Pāli by *ahaṅkāra* & *mamaṅkāra*. So notice the ordinary not-so-bad I & mine and the really crude, really dangerous egoistic I & egoistic mine.

When life is on the level of this egoistic me & mine and the ‘I-go’ making & ‘my-go’ making, then life is totally non-Dharmic, totally out of harmony, out of line with Dharma. At first in life we take things to be self’ & belonging to self. Later this intensifies, it gets worse, it becomes very strong arrogance and pride. Then it’s no longer simply ‘self’ or ‘belonging to self,’ it becomes ego, this arrogant, crude, very destructive ego and the egoistic mind. This is when life has totally rebelled against Dhamma. On the one level it’s non-Dharmic, in harmony but it hasn’t gone completely overboard, whereas on the ego and egoistic mine level, life is in total rebellion against nature and Dhamma, thus we end up with the very disastrous results that we experience nowadays.

The way to deal with these low, harmful, and destructive things that we have been talking about is to understand Dhamma in all four of its meanings because to understand all of those meanings thoroughly will include the knowledge of how to live, how to live in a way that is free of crude, ugly, evil things such as ego, egoism, and egotism. So we request and advise that you study *idappaccayatā* (the law of interconnectedness, interdependency, inter-conditionality) that governs all of nature, or what is also called the law of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). Please study this thoroughly until you understand it profoundly. Then you will need to have mindfulness, wisdom – wisdom that can be applied or wisdom in action, and a strong, clear, stable mind to do so. In order to develop these mental qualities and abilities, we encourage you to practice *ānāpānasati* firstly to learn how to practice it, secondly, to use your time here to practice it and understand it more deeply by trying it out as you will at the meditation center. So in order to deal with all

these evil and disastrous effects of ego and egoism, we encourage you to do your best to understand dependent origination and to dedicate yourselves to the practice of mindfulness with breathing so you will have the ability to deal wisely and correctly with dependent origination.

So do your best to study the laws of *idappaccayatā* (interdependency) and *paṭiccasamuppāda* (dependent origination), as well as *ānāpānasati* (mindfulness of breathing in and out). Please do your best to study these and practice them so that you will be able to find the life which is truly dhammic and then life will be totally open instead being hidden away like a secret or mystery. It will then become something totally obvious and will manifest itself, so we encourage you to thoroughly study dependent origination and to dedicatedly practice *ānāpānasati* in order to have a thoroughly open and blossomed Dharmic life.

It is then when you will be able to master the stream of life so that it will always be correct in all aspects. Then all your problems will be over, your search will be finished.

Last of all we would like to thank you all for being very good listeners. We've spoken for just over two hours and you've listened very well, very attentively. We thank you for your patience and we hope it bears fruit in very successful study and practice, and that your time here and the rest of your life helps you to discover the best thing that there is to get in life.

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Transcribed by Anonymous (3408-1.kkk). Reformatted in 2014
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