

***BUDDHISM AS A  
PHILOSOPHICAL  
FOUNDATION OF  
EDUCATION***



***BUDDHISTIC  
EDUCATION***

## INTRODUCTION :

The monasteries were the centers of education during the Buddhist period. Besides monasteries, there were no other organizations for imparting education. Only the Buddhist could receive religious and other types of education. Other persons were deprived of this facility. There was no place for 'Yajna' in the Buddhist system.

Buddhist period in Indian education roughly starts from 600 B.C and last for about 1200 years till 600A.D. during Vedic period education was mostly individualistic effort whereas during Buddhist period institutional organization is one of the chief characteristics of education.

*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
Buddha's Life*

Buddha lived at around 400 B.C. He belongs to the royal family of Nepal, but decided to be a beggar during his adulthood. While wandering on different places, he taught about the 4 Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.



## ***AIMS OF EDUCATION***

The chief aims of Buddhist education had been the following:-

- (1) Development of Education:-** The chief aim of Buddhist education was all round development of child's personality. This included his physical , mental, moral and intellectual development.
- (2) Formation of character:-** During this period, in the organization of education, special emphasis was laid on the formation of character of the students. Student life was hard and rigorous. They observed celibacy.
- (3) Religious education:-** In the Buddhist era, religion was given top priority and education was imparted through it. The chief aim of education was propagation of religion and inculcation of religious feelings and education served as a mean to achieve salvation or nirvana.

- (4) Preparation for life:-** In this system of education, there was a provision for imparting wordily and practical knowledge along with religious education so that when the students entered normal life they may be able to earn their livelihood.
- (5) To developing among student peace and then External peace non-violence, truth essential qualities.
- (6) The desire can only be removed by following the Eight Nobel fold path or the “Arya Asthanga Marga”.

# Buddhism as a Philosophical Foundation of Education: The 4 Noble Truths

1. Life is full of suffering.
2. Suffering is caused by our worldly desires.
3. Our suffering can be brought to an end.
4. Our suffering can be ended by following the Eightfold Path (Dharma).



*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
The Eightfold Path*

**1. Sammadithi (Right View).** A teacher must not only look at the outward appearance. He/she must understand deeper why students behave in a certain way in order to avoid prejudice and ill treatment.



*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
The Eightfold Path*

**2. Sammavaca (Right Speech).** A teacher must avoid gossiping, lying and uttering vulgar & harsh languages. These are roots of hatred, conflict and misunderstanding. Our tongue is sometimes sharper than the sword.





# Buddhism as a Philosophical Foundation of Education: The Eightfold Path

**3. Sammavayama (Right Effort).** A teacher must think thoroughly before he/she does an action. Being an organized person is a characteristic of a good teacher who is regarded as a role model. Like teaching in classroom, his/her life must have a lesson plan too!



# Buddhism as a Philosophical Foundation of Education: The Eightfold Path

4. Samma-ajivo (Right Livelihood). A teacher must conduct a proper way of earning a living by not engaging in illegal activities and syndicates. Teaching is a noble profession. It is not a matter of income. It is a matter of (good) outcome!



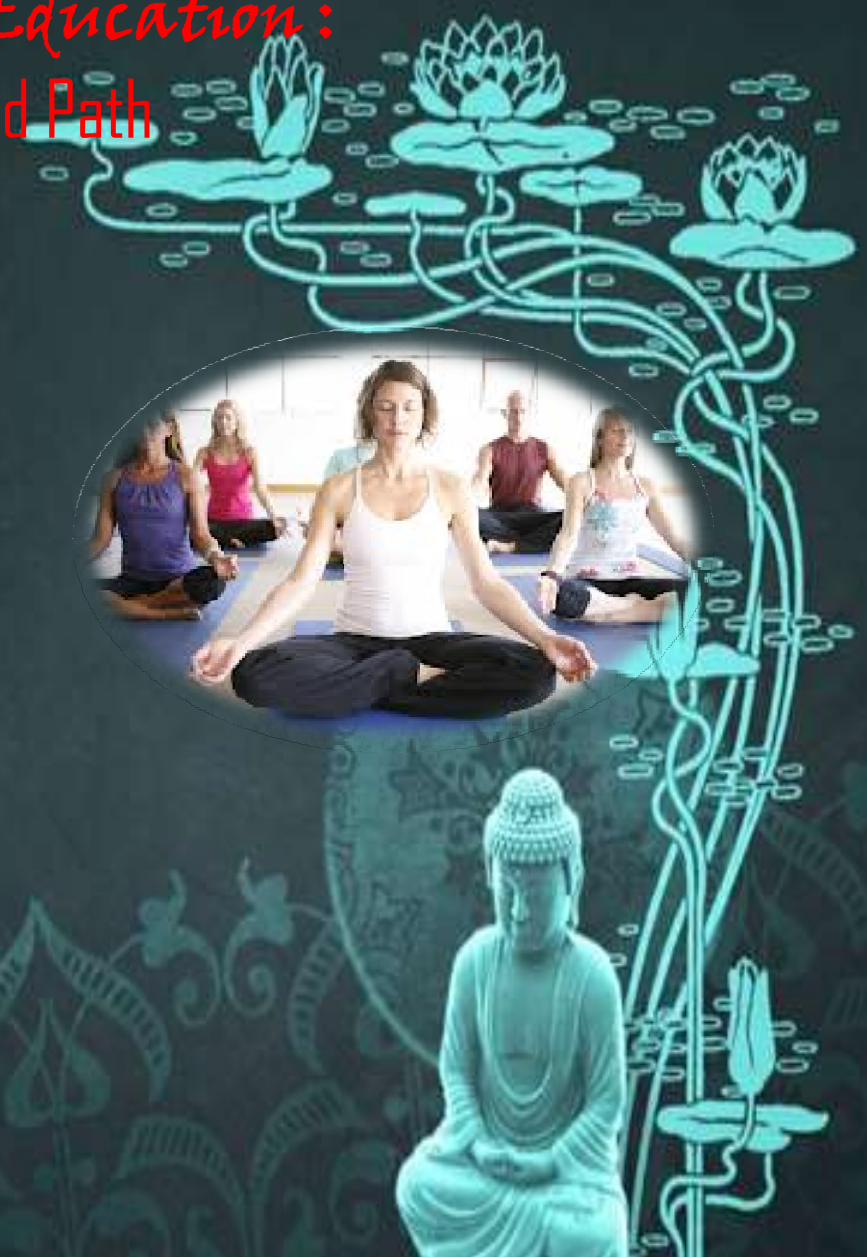
*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
The Eightfold Path*

5. Sammasati (Right Mindfulness). A teacher must avoid dirty thoughts. Unclean thinking sometimes provokes us to speak ill of others or do unpleasant things to our fellow. Purifying our minds is a helpful way to decent living.



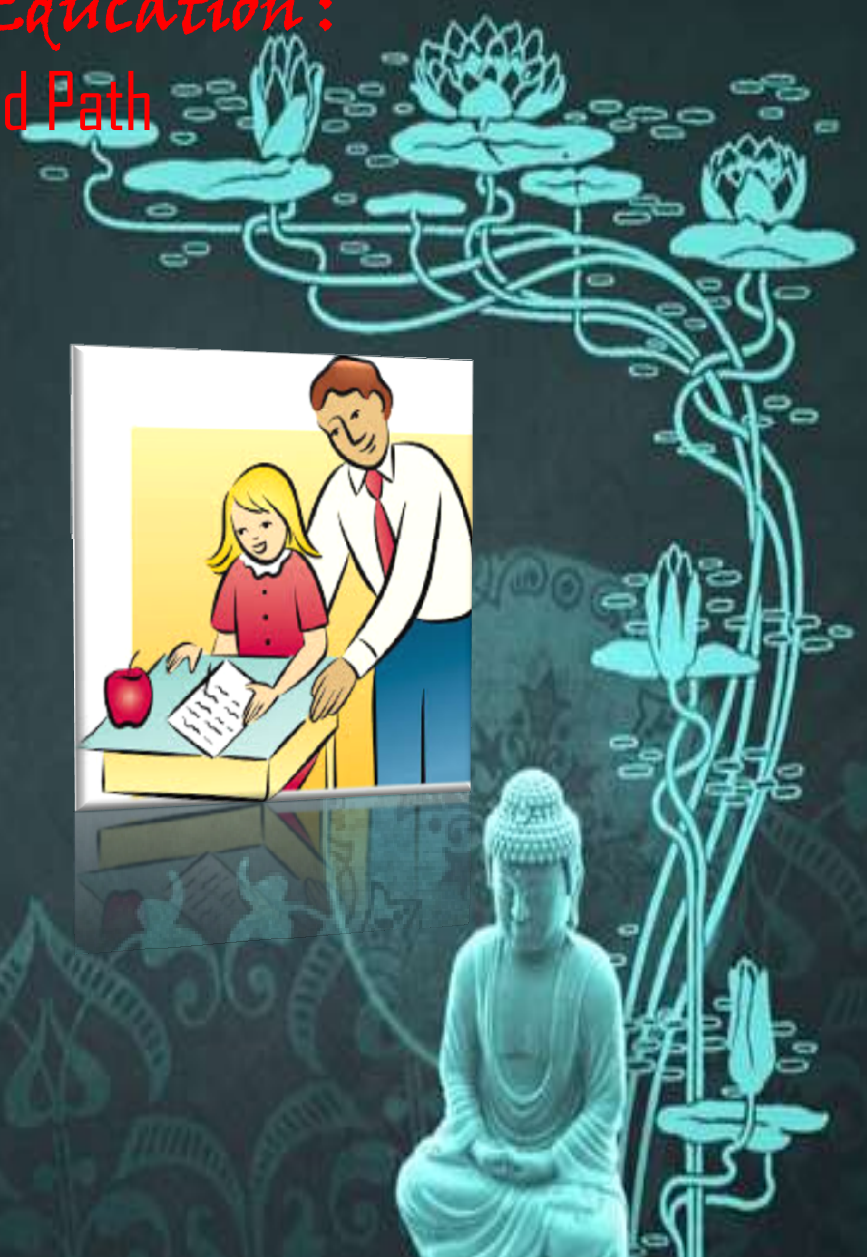
*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
The Eightfold Path*

**6. Sammasamadhi (Right Concentration).** A teacher must find time to relax by finding a peaceful place, sitting in lotus position and doing a meditation. It can help him/her attain mental, emotional, physical and even spiritual comfort & happiness.



*Buddhism as a Philosophical  
Foundation of Education:  
The Eightfold Path*

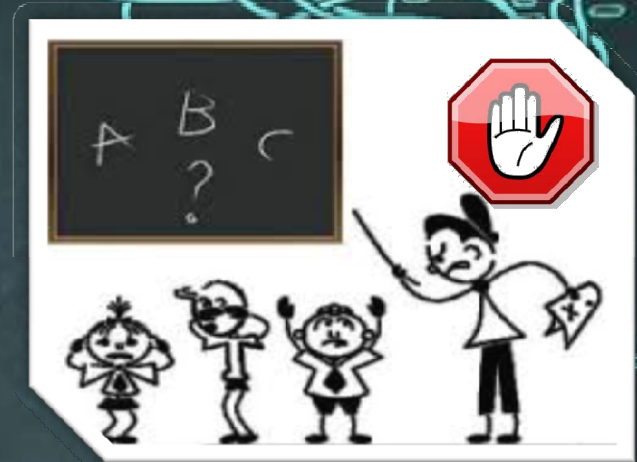
**7. Sammasankapo (Right Intention).** A teacher must free himself/herself of selfish attachments, hate & vengeance. The moment he/she gives up negative motives, he/she can attain peace of mind and become altruistic towards his/her students.



# *Buddhism as a Philosophical Foundation of Education:*

## The Eightfold Path

**8. Sammakammanto (Right Action).** A teacher must not do physical violence & immoralities like murder, theft, gluttony, laziness, suicide, drunkenness, drug addiction and adultery. He/she should avoid corporal punishment to students.



## *PABBAJA CEREMONY*

Pabbaja was an accepted ceremony of the Buddhist monasteries. Pabbaja means going out . According to this ceremony the students after being admitted to a monastery had to renounce all his worldly and family relationship. An individual belonging to any caste could be admitted to a monastery and after being admitted he did not belong to any caste.

For pabbaja ceremony the individual had to get his head fully shaved and put on yellow clothes. In this shape he was presented before the presiding Bhikshu. On presentation this individual would pray for admission to the monastery.

On his prayer the head Bikshu would administer three basic advices:

- (1) I take refuge with Buddha.
- (2) I take refuge with religion.
- (3) I take refuge with the order.

The aspirant for admission used to pronounce these advices very distinctly. Then his admission was permitted. On being admitted the individual was called a **“Sharman” (Shravana)**.



## *UPASAMPADA CEREMONY*

After **Pabbaja** the Buddhist monk had to undergo the Upasampada ceremony. This ceremony was different from pabbaja ceremony. It was after receiving education for **twelve** years, that it is at the age of **twenty** years, **Upasampada** ceremony was performed. The Sharman has to present himself in front before all other monks of the monastery.

One could be admitted for this ceremony only when the majority of the monks voted in favour of the same. After this ceremony the Sharman was regarded as full- fledge member of the monastery. On this occasion all his worldly and family relationships ended.

## *DAILY ROUTINE WORKS OF STUDENTS*

1. The student was expected to serve his teacher with all devotion. On rising in the morning the student will arrange everything for the daily routine of the teacher.
2. He will cook his food and clean his clothes and utensils. Whatever he acquired through begging alms, he would place before teacher. The student had to prepare himself to receive education at any time whenever the teacher required him.
3. The pupils is to rise early in morning from the bed and give his teacher teeth-cleanser and water to rinse his mouth.

4. Then, preparing a seat for him, serve him rice- milk in rinse his mouth with; then, preparing as seat for him, serve him rice milk in rinsed jug, and after his drinking it, wash the vessel and sweep the place.
5. He is not to interrupt his teacher in speaking, even if he makes a mistake. There were also rules for the expulsion of a pupil by his teacher.
6. In five cases a Saddhiviharika ought to be turned away; when he does not feel great affection for his Upajjhaya, nor great inclination towards him, nor much shame, nor great reverence, nor great devotion.

## *ROLE OF TEACHER IN BUDHIST SYSTEM*

Budhist philosophy admit the possible of attaining peace here and now, though, it start with a pessimistic note. Teacher, therefore, need not have any cry of despair. Bhikshus were the teacher. Budhist vihar as or monasteries have their methods of Imitation and training for the apprentices.

The preceptor must give his disciple, all possible intellectual and spiritual help and guidance. There was mutual esteem between the teacher and the pupil. There relations were like father and son. The teacher was regarded as spiritual father or intellectual father of the student.

There were the categories of teachers – **Acharyas** and **Upadhayas**. According to Sutras Literature **Acharya** may admit according to his unfettered discretion, a number of pupils, who would have to live with him at this house, for a minimum period of twelve years.

He would not accept any fees from the pupils under this instruction. The progress shown by pupil was the only factor that determined the continuance of his apprenticeship.

## *CURRICULUM*

The curriculum was chiefly spiritual in nature. It was because the chief aim of education was to attain salvation. So the study of the religious books was most important. This type of curriculum was meant only for the monks.

Besides these **spinning, weaving, printing of the clothes, tailoring, sketching, accountancy, medicines, surgery and coinage** were the other subjects of Buddhist education.

## *METHOD 'S OF TEACHING*

Budhist education aimed at purity of character. Like Vedic education it was training for moral character rather than psychological development of the students. One has to attain the stage of **Bodhisattva**. Mental and moral development was emphasized.

- 1. Verbal education:** The teacher used to give lessons to the novices who learnt them by heart. The teacher used to put questions on the learning the lesson by heart.
- 2. Discussion :** This was also needed to satisfy the critics and opposing groups and establish ones own cult. Thus, rules were framed for discussion.
- 3. Prominence of logic:** The controversial matters could not be decided without logical argument. Logic was also useful in the development of the mental power and knowledge.

**4. Tours:** Hence some **Acharyas** like **Sariputta, Mahayaggalva, Aniruddha, Rahula**, etc gave the importance to tours for educating people.

**5. Conference:** Conferences were arranged on every full moon and 1<sup>st</sup> day of month in the **Budhist sanghs**. The monks of different sanghs assembled and put forward their doubts freely. The attendance of every monk was compulsory in such conference.

### **6. Meditation in solitude:**

Some Buddhist monks were more interested in isolated spiritual meditation in lonely forests and caves. Only those monks were considered fit for lonely meditation who had fully renounced the worldly attraction and had spent enough time in the sanghs and had gained the efficiency for solitary medications.



## *WOMEN EDUCATION*

Women education during the Buddhist period was at its lowest ebb, as the women folk were despised in the sense that lord Buddha had regarded them as the source of all evils. So he had advised during his life time not to admit women in monasteries. But after some time due to the insistence of his dear pupil Anand, Buddha had permitted about 500 women along with his stepmother for admission in vihars with many restriction and reservation.

## *MERIT / IMPORTANT OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION*

1. To developed Buddha Viharas.
2. They give more important Boudda Bikshu.
3. The More preference to Spiritual Education.
4. Religious and Self Education.
5. They give more Practical Knowledge.
6. Closed Relationship between Student and Teacher.
7. Give Free Education.
8. Establishment of Curriculum were Excellent.
9. Methodology also very beautiful.

## *DEMERIT OF BUDDHIST EDUCATION*

1. Decline of Buddhism.
2. Weakness of country.
3. Hatred for handwork.
4. Neglect of women education.
5. Neglect of worldly life.

"No matter how hard the past,  
you can always begin again."

~Buddha



**THANKING YOU**