Lecture 30: The Pattern of Buddhist Life and Work

Today's talk, as I think you were warned the week before last, is the last of a small group of three talks on the Sangha, that is to say the spiritual community, the third of the three jewels of Buddhism. And it also happens to be the end of our whole series that started at the beginning of the year, entitled `Introducing Buddhism'. Today that whole series at last comes to an end. As I've said, the series is called `Introducing Buddhism', so today it's as though the introductions were all over. By this time, as it were, we should have made the acquaintance of Buddhism; in fact by this time we should almost be on very good terms with it indeed.

No doubt for some of you this course of lectures or talks has been more of the nature of a re-introduction than an introduction; and sometimes I must admit that in the case of some people at least I was introducing them to someone they already knew. You probably know how embarrassing it is sometimes on social occasions when you say `Mr So-and-so, meet Miss So-and so' and they say `Oh, we know each other quite well.' So in some cases, I'm sure, it has been rather like that; I've been giving an introduction to Buddhism in some cases to people who already were acquainted with Buddhism. But for others no doubt it has constituted a real introduction; and in the case of others, therefore, I hope that through this series of talks they have been able to make the acquaintance of Buddhism at least, and perhaps even to come into closer contact with it than that.

Now today's talk, I may say frankly, is more or less or the nature of a sort of winding up. It's rather like, one might say, the talk, the little talk, the headmaster gives on the last day of term before holidays. Now some I can see haven't even waited for the headmaster's talk. They've already gone on holiday and left their empty chairs behind them. But never mind, no doubt they're remembering us wherever they may happen to be.

Now we're winding up today with a talk, as you probably already know, dealing with the pattern of Buddhist life and work. And I must ask you not to take this title too literally. Probably you've noticed in the course of the whole series some titles were not to be taken too literally. So today's title is also of this sort. It's more or less just a hook on which to hang certain ideas.

Now to begin with, you'll notice, no doubt, that one speaks of Buddhist life. And this draws our attention to a very important fact indeed: that Buddhism is concerned with life - or one might even say that Buddhism itself is life, that it's spiritual life, spiritual life in the sense of the higher evolution, about which we spoke quite a number of weeks ago. So if Buddhism is life, especially spiritual life, the higher evolution, one expects that a Buddhist is one who is at least alive, one who is at least spiritually alive, or one who is participating in the higher evolution. I don't want to be very personal, but in some cases one finds as one goes about from place to place looking at Buddhists, some of them at least, one would hardly think that a Buddhist was one who was alive. Sometimes one gets the feeling at meetings that people are just there; they may be physically there but not mentally, not spiritually there. They're not really alive to the meeting, not really alive to what is being said, not even alive to one another - and one might even say not even alive to themselves.

But this is really the most important thing of all, the most necessary thing, that to begin with someone who calls himself or herself a Buddhist should be alive, should vibrate, as it were, with life of a more spiritual quality. Everything else, one might say, is completely secondary. I might say by way of a little reminiscence in passing that this is one of the reasons why, when I was in India, I was so much attracted to the movement of conversion to Buddhism among the ex-Untouchables, and why I became so deeply involved in it. It's quite true that they were very poor - in fact are very poor; true that their economic condition is miserable, that they're largely illiterate, and that they have been repressed for centuries. But at least one thing one finds amongst them, and that is, they have plenty of enthusiasm, they're completely alive. When you go to a meeting of these people, or go to a village of these people, you find that they're very much alive, and that their involvement with Buddhism means a sort of enhancement, a refinement, of that life which they do already have.

I can remember, as I think I've often said, scores of occasions on which I've been to villages where the ex-Untouchables converted to Buddhism live. Sometimes one has gone by train and then by bus or by bullock-cart, then you go on foot, perhaps, and eventually you get to the village. But before you get to the village, what happens? You are two miles away, very often, and you're received by a party of people, and the tradition is in those parts they dance you into the village - they're so enthusiastic, they're so pleased that you've come, that they sound a long brass trumpet and you get a party of twenty, thirty, forty young men - and older men too, no women, all men, with castanets, and they dance you into the village with a very energetic sort of dance with lots of stamping and banging of tambourines and rattling of castanets and all that sort of thing; and you really do get the impression that they're very glad to see you, that your coming amongst them really means something. They put flags out, especially the five-coloured Buddhist flag; some of them decorate their houses; and some of them make all sorts of chalk designs in front of their doors - all that sort of thing.

And when they finally come together for the meeting, very late at night usually, everyone is interested, everyone is keen. Even the small children feel that, well, we're going to hear something about Buddhism, and this is a special occasion, and they're very enthusiastic and very alive.

But when one comes back to this country - I know we have our own traditions here, our own customs and our own way of doing things - but still one can't help feeling a very great contrast. You're certainly not welcomed with tambourines and castanets, at least I wasn't. When I arrived at the airport there were just two or three people to meet me and I was taken in a car through the streets of London and arrived here, and that was that - and sooner or later I started giving my lectures and taking classes and so on.

And one does sometimes feel, even though one admits that the Buddhist movement in this country is very small, one might even say microscopic, one does sometimes feel that it could be just a little bit more alive, that those who call themselves Buddhists or who are interested in Buddhism could be perhaps just a little bit more enthusiastic. We've noticed this, as I've mentioned before, on the occasion of Vaishaka - certainly we noticed it last year, not so much this year, at public meeting - not here but elsewhere - we noticed that there wasn't perhaps quite enough enthusiasm or joy or real spirit of the occasion.

Now we know that conditions in this country, conditions in the West generally, are very difficult. It's not easy to be enthusiastic. It's not easy to bubble, as it were, with spiritual life. There are all sorts of factors which militate against that sort of thing. Not least, we may say, most people are in the grip, one might say the deadly grip, of routine. I wonder if you've ever thought how much of your lives, how large a part of your lives, is really dominated, even dictated, just by the pattern of routine.

Now today's Sunday, so you're a bit free. Tomorrow's Whit Monday, so you really are off the leash this week, as it were. But Tuesday, what happens on Tuesday? Most of you go back to the office, back to your household chores - Tuesday you do this, Wednesday you do that, Thursday you do something else, Friday you go to see somebody, Saturday you do your shopping, Sunday you rest, and two weeks every year you have your little holiday, and that goes on year after year. Then when you reach the age of 60 or 65, whatever it is nowadays, you retire, start drawing your old age pension, or senior citizen's pension, as they call it nowadays. In that way the whole of life goes on, just one long apparently everlasting routine. You're just doing the same sort of thing over and over and over again, and that is your life, a continual pattern of repetition. And one is in the grip of this, one can't break out of it. Even if one wanted to, there's all sorts of commitments, all sorts of responsibilities, all sorts of things you have to do on certain dates, places you have to be on certain dates, even thoughts you have to think on certain dates, or even emotions you have to feel on certain dates, or even certain hours.

So your whole life is sort of gripped by this rather deadly routine. So in circumstances like this, how is it possible to be spontaneous, to bubble with spiritual life? Routine, one might say, kills spontaneity, and without spontaneity there is very little life indeed. One might even goes so far

as to say that life in fact is spontaneity, spontaneity is life. However, grave as the problem may be, difficult as it may be to solve, the awareness of the problem is always the first step towards its actual solution, so we won't say anything more about that this afternoon.

Now we know that every living thing, whether vegetable or animal or human, every living thing belongs to a certain level of development. Every living thing, from the highest to the lowest, from the humblest to the most exalted, has its own place in the scale of evolution, whether lower evolution or higher evolution. And every living thing, every living being, is organised to function on its own particular level. It functions through various senses which enable it as it were to operate on that particular level, its own particular level. And in Pali and Sanskrit the senses are called the indriyas.

Now this word indriyas is a very interesting one, etymologically speaking; the etymology throws a great deal of light upon the meaning. Indriya, in Pali and in Sanskrit, denotes that which belongs to Indra. Now who is Indra? Indra is the chief of the gods, the ruler of the gods, one might even say the governor of the gods. So the indriyas are those things which pertain to Indra, the ruler. So therefore indriyas mean `governing or controlling principles'. And this is the Indian word, the Indo-Aryan word, for the senses. And the senses are called indriyas - these governing or controlling or dominating principles - because the whole of human life as we normally live it, is governed and controlled, is dominated, by the senses, by the five physical senses.

Now we don't usually realise this. We like to think that we're highly intellectual beings. We like to think that we act according to the dictates of reason and the higher emotions, and all that sort of thing. But it isn't usually like that; in fact it's very rarely like that. Usually most of the time we are in fact controlled, dominated, governed completely by these five senses.

Now what happens in the morning? We wake up. We've been asleep. During sleep the five senses have been as it were suspended; they've been in abeyance. But we wake up, we open our eyes, sleepily turn over, start becoming aware of the external world. So after we've sort of lain there or dozed there for a few minutes, what is our first thought? In the case of some people, first thought is: get up and make some tea; or have a cigarette. Why? Because the tongue wants to taste something. Or somebody else - what might they do? They might stretch out their hand and switch on the radio. Why? The ear wants to hear something. Or they might decide to have another five minutes in bed. Why? Because touch, another sense, wants to go on experiencing the softness and the warmth of the bed.

So this goes on all through the day. All through the day we're dominated, controlled, governed by the senses to a very large extent. We're walking down the street, we look into a shop window, see something attractive. At once the eye goes after that, is interested. And after the eye, of course, goes the mind. So this is happening all the time. All the time we're pulled, as it were, by the senses, and we identify ourselves therefore with the senses, with the physical body to which they belong, and function therefore most of the time largely on the purely physical plane. So this is the lot, this is the condition, of most people.

Now the word indriya is also used, in Buddhism at least, in another sense. It doesn't cover only the five physical senses which dominate and control us on the physical plane, or from the physical plane, but denotes also the five spiritual senses, five spiritual indriyas; these are also called, incidentally, in Pali and Sanskrit, just indriyas. And these five spiritual senses or spiritual indriyas are called sraddha - faith; prajna - wisdom; virya - energy or vigour; samadhi - concentration; smriti - mindfulness. Usually this set of five is referred to as the five spiritual faculties. Dr Conze translates it as the five cardinal virtues, which I think is a bit unfortunate, because it's really the same word as indriya meaning `sense' - so the five senses - except that they're not the five physical senses but the five spiritual sense or faculties.

And the fact that the same word is used for both sets, the physical and the spiritual, is very interesting, because it indicates, it suggests, that the two perform - the two sets perform - an analogous function. Just as the five physical senses govern and control and dominate physical life, in the same way the five spiritual senses govern and control and dominate spiritual life. Just

as with the physical senses we find our way about the physical world, the world of matter as it were, with the five spiritual senses we find our way about the spiritual world - that is to say the world of mind, or the world of spirit.

Now we've got five fully developed physical senses. I don't think there's anyone here who's blind or dumb or deaf or anything of that sort - we've all got the five senses, physical senses, complete. But what about the spiritual senses? The spiritual senses, we might say, are present but in an embryonic condition, are just little buds, you see, not even little foetuses, just little embryos, no bigger than that. So these must be developed; these five spiritual senses or faculties must be developed.

And it is this development of these five spiritual senses or faculties which corresponds to what we've spoken about earlier in this series of talks as the higher evolution. And it is also the development of these five spiritual senses or faculties which make up the pattern - here we come back to the title of today's talk - which make up the pattern of Buddhist life.

Now let's deal with each of them individually, one by one, the five spiritual faculties, or five spiritual senses, the development of which enables us to live spiritually, on the spiritual plane, to participate in the higher evolution.

First of all, sraddha or faith. Now some people, of course, are very surprised to find that there is any such thing at all as faith in Buddhism. They're very surprised indeed. Some people come into Buddhism, or come into contact with Buddhism, under the initial impression that Buddhism is all logic, all reason, all intellect. There's no feeling, as it were, no emotion, as it were, involved in Buddhism. So they're very surprised, as I say, to find in Buddhism such a thing as faith, sraddha. And this is perhaps, in the case of some at least, because they tend to confuse faith with belief.

Belief is usually defined as `accepting as true on authority something which one can never verify, or something which is even inherently absurd'. This is what belief is. But faith isn't like that, at least not in Buddhism. In Buddhism, we may say, sraddha, faith, covers the whole or the entire devotional or feeling aspect of the Buddhist teaching and the Buddhist life. In Buddhism we wouldn't say that faith was contrary to reason. We wouldn't even say that faith went beyond reason. Faith, we would say, is the emotional counterpart of reason. What you understand with your intelligence you must feel also with your emotions. So faith is that feeling with the emotions what you also understand with your intelligence; the two go together, you can't really separate them.

Specifically in Buddhism faith is faith in the Buddha, the Enlightened one; faith in the Dharma, the teaching of the Buddha, the way to Enlightened; and faith in the Sangha, the community, the spiritual community, of disciples treading that path, treading that way and trying to gain thereby Enlightenment. But faith in Buddhism is especially faith directed towards the Buddha himself. The Buddha is in a sense fundamental to the other two jewels. The Sangha is the community of those practising the Dharma. But who taught the Dharma? The Buddha taught the Dharma. So you can reduce Sangha to Dharma and Dharma to Buddha. So faith in Buddhism is essentially faith in the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, himself - though it's not just belief, it's not even just feeling. We may say that faith, sraddha, in the Buddha, is the sort of emotional response which we have when we are confronted by the embodiment of Enlightenment.

One can be confronted in various ways. One can be confronted personally by some living person who is the embodiment of Enlightenment. One can be confronted through literature, by reading about someone who was such an embodiment. One can even be confronted in terms of art when one sees a picture or a statue, an image, of someone who was Enlightened.

This reminds me of a case, a story, which I think I have referred to before, but a long time ago; and this was of a Frenchwoman who was converted to Buddhism and who eventually even became a nun. Apparently it was in her student days. She was in France, she was in Paris, and she used to be very fond of visiting museums, art galleries and so on. And one day she happened

to go along to a very famous museum in Paris of far Eastern art. And she told me one day that she was walking along the galleries and she just happened to turn and she saw an image of the Buddha. Now from her description I gather that it was a Khmer image of the Buddha, an image from the period of ancient Cambodian art, which is very famous indeed. You've got the Khmer Buddha's smile, there's a special type of smile which you see on these Khmer images. All the images of the Buddha have this faint and delicate, rather withdrawn smile, but the Khmer Buddha images are particularly famous for this very special type of smile, which is quite distinctive and quite peculiar.

So this woman said, this nun as she was then said, told me, that as soon as she saw this image - and she hadn't studied anything about Buddhism up till then - as soon as she saw this image, she was very strongly and very deeply impressed. And she asked herself, as it were on the spot, `Well, what is it which gives its expression to this image? What is it, as it were, that this image is trying to tell me? What depth, as it were, of spiritual experience does this image come from? What could the artist have experienced, what could the sculptor have experienced, to be able to express something like this?

So she came across this, or she was confronted by this embodiment of Enlightenment in this form. And she was very deeply affected by it; in fact, the whole course of her subsequent life was changed. So there was an emotional response, as it were, at once, to this embodiment of Enlightenment, in this case in the image. But you can get the same sort of thing by reading - not even the life of the Buddha, suppose you read the life of Milarepa, or suppose you read the life of Wei Lang, the great first Chinese patriarch of Ch'an or Zen. Or suppose you read the life of any other great master or teacher - there's an emotional response at once. And it isn't just a feeling. Of course, some people do read these things and have feelings in a sentimental sort way, but that isn't what one is talking about. One is talking about something far deeper: what one calls, for want of a better expression, an emotional response.

And what does that emotional response really mean? What is it really, in fact? We can say that in this case, when we're confronted by some embodiment of Enlightenment, either in the form of the image, or the literary description, or even the living person, or most of all by the living person, then the response, what we call the emotional response, is really the response of our potential to his actual Enlightenment. There's something deep down within us which has a sort of affinity with what is fully realised, fully expressed, fully achieved, in that embodiment of Enlightenment. There's a sort of kinship. It's rather like two musical instruments: you strike one, and at once the other musical instrument by its side starts vibrating in unison, as it were. So when we are confronted by this sort of embodiment of Enlightenment, we respond, because deep down in us there is that capacity, that potentiality for Enlightenment, so we respond in that way.

Now this response it is which gives rise to devotion. And devotion expresses itself in many different ways. There are certain set ways or certain traditional ways. Devotion expresses itself in terms of prostration or in terms of worship, offering of flowers, lighting of candles, and all that sort of thing. Some people, especially in this country, are a little shy of the Buddhist devotional practices. Some of them have come into Buddhism by way of a sort of reaction from some forms of Christianity, perhaps from Roman Catholicism or perhaps from the Church of England; and they like sometimes to think that Buddhism is all intellectual or highly spiritual, right up in the clouds, away from the earth, away from anything concrete, away from anything simple or easy or elementary. So they feel a little bit shy about practices of this sort. They feel, well, these are practices even children can do, and we're grownup people. We don't want to play about with flowers and candles and incense and things like that.

But these things are important as expressions, and especially as expressions of devotion; and devotion is necessary for a balanced religious life inasmuch as emotion also is necessary for a balanced psychological life. Of course, devotion can go to extremes, faith or sraddha can go to extremes. It then becomes what we usually call superstition or fanaticism or intolerance.

So therefore in Buddhism sraddha, or faith, or the whole emotional and devotional side of the religious life, the spiritual life, should be balanced by what we call prajna or wisdom, the second

of the five spiritual senses or five spiritual faculties. This represents, we may say, the whole intellectual and doctrinal side of Buddhism - prajna or wisdom. And prajna or wisdom is of three kinds, technically: what we call the sruta-maya-prajna; what we called the cinta-maya; and what we call the bhavana-maya. I'll just say a few words about each of these in turn. Sruta-maya means wisdom or knowledge or understanding which comes by hearing. Suppose you all come here. Suppose you listen to the talk, listen to the lecture, and you understand something by hearing. You get it from somebody else. You haven't thought it out for yourself - you're receptive, you're passive. But when it's handed to you, when it's explained to you, you understand. So this is wisdom or knowledge based on hearing.

Then there's cinta-maya. Cinta-maya means `based on thinking' - your own individual thinking. You don't hear anything from anybody; you just start thinking in your own mind. You start understanding certain things as a result of your own mental processes, your own cogitation. So this is understanding based on original thinking, as we may call it. Then bhavana-maya. Bhavana means meditation, meditation in the sense of experience of higher states or stages of consciousness or superconsciousness. And bhavana-prajna is that wisdom, that knowledge, that understanding, which grows out of meditation, out of one's own spiritual experience - not what one has heard, not what one has excogitated on the intellectual level, but what one sees, understands, or intuits, if you like, as a result of meditation, as a result of one's own spiritual, especially transcendental experience.

Now it's very important, one might say, to distinguish between these three. We've all of us got some experience of all three kinds of wisdom. We've all understood as a result of hearing, which includes reading - we've all understood certain things as a result of independent thought. And we've all, or perhaps most or many of us at least, had some little glimpse of the truth through our spiritual experience, especially through our meditation. But we should be able to distinguish. Sometimes people talk as though they've experienced, or experienced in meditation, when they've only thought, or only heard. So we should, as it were, take a great survey of all our knowledge, all the things we understand or think we understand, all the things we know, and just ask ourselves honestly, `Now, into which category do they all belong?' How much have we merely heard, how much have we thought out for ourselves, how much have we actually realized?

Of course, if we're honest we'll realise that the first category is by far the largest. Most of what we know comes by hearing, or comes by reading. Practically everything, ninety-nine per cent, practically, we may say, we get at second hand. There's nothing wrong with that. That's how we have to start. Very few of us have got just a few original thoughts, we may say - something we've really thought out for ourselves from beginning to end without any help at all. There are very few people who think originally. I might even like to, say, ask you, or ask you to ask yourselves: in the course of your whole lives, how many original thoughts have you had? How many thoughts have you had which you've never come across in your reading, which you've never heard anyone else express, and which as far as you know are completely original? - no-one has ever thought that thought before. Even if you allow for say a slight nuance, a slight shade of difference, even taking that into consideration, giving a very large latitude, how many people have even been able to excogitate something new in that way? - very few. So that shows how rare original thought is.

Then bhavana-maya, from experience - well, that's very little again. Even less of our knowledge comes from that source - perhaps point one of point one percent, something like that. There's something there, no doubt, but very tiny, microscopic, infinitesimal, hardly perceptible. So it's very important to distinguish. Sometimes people speak as though they'd experienced everything, or at least as though they'd thought out everything for themselves, but when they come down to rock bottom, it's only what they've heard, it's only what they've read.

So we have to sort out these three categories, and be quite clear in our own minds what of our knowledge we've gathered from other sources - our hearing or our reading; what we've thought out for ourselves; and what we have actually experienced - these three kinds of prajna, wisdom, understanding or knowledge.

Now broadly speaking we may say prajna or wisdom or knowledge in Buddhism is conterminous

with the Dharma, with the Buddha's teaching, or with the understanding of that teaching. More specifically, prajna or wisdom consists in seeing things as they really are, not as they appear to be - seeing them as conditioned, unsatisfactory, impermanent, devoid of selfhood, seeing these three characteristics of all conditioned existence, all worldly existence, as we explained in one of the previous talks; and seeing in the same way the Unconditioned as being the opposite of all of this, as being free from unsatisfactoriness, as blissful; free from all impermanence, as permanent; and not only devoid of self, but even devoid of any substantial individuality.

The Mahayana form of Buddhism goes even further than this and says that prajna or wisdom consists in the seeing or the knowing or the realization of the non-difference between the conditioned and the Unconditioned. In other words, it consists in the realization of the great sunyata or voidness - but we're not going into that this afternoon.

Now the second of these two kinds - or, sorry, the third of these three kinds of wisdom - there's sruta-maya, cinta-maya, and bhavana-maya - now the third of these, strictly speaking, is neither intellectual in a narrow sense, nor emotional either. It represents a sort of fusion of the two. But the other two, we may say - that is to say, knowledge or wisdom which comes by hearing, or learning, and knowledge or wisdom which comes by way of independent thought; these two are definitely intellectual, as opposed to being emotional. And they therefore can go to extremes. And in this sense we may say prajna or wisdom - that is, what is derived from hearing, what is derived from independent thought - can be sometimes a merely scholarly, academic sort of knowledge.

I remember some years ago a friend of mine writing to me in Kalimpong from London, was dwelling upon the writings of a certain Buddhist scholar, a very learned scholar, knowing the Buddhist languages very well. And this friend wrote that these writings are to me the last dance of dust in desiccation. That was her rather caustic description. Because that is sometimes what we do find. We sometimes turn to these translations and books on Buddhism by scholars, looking for some inspiration and some spiritual guidance, and what do we get? Well, you get a long dissertation on the root of some technical term, and then in the end perhaps the statement is made, perhaps we don't really know what it means after all.

I remember my friend Lama Govinda was talking about this once after a visit to Europe, and he was saying to me - this is just by the way - he said `These German Buddhists are quite different from the English ones.' I asked `What do you mean by that?' He said `Well, the German Buddhists, their idea of a good lecture on Buddhism is this. You take one word and you give all the meanings of the word according to the dictionary. Then you give its meaning according to Buddhism, according to what Professor so and so says and Doctor so and so says and Herr Doctor so and so says - about twenty or thirty of them, you go through one after another - and then you conclude that they're all wrong.' And he said German Buddhists are absolutely fascinated by this sort of lecture. They love it. But, he said, the English Buddhists are rather different. Now this is quite in passing, but let me tell you what he said about the English Buddhists too. That might be rather interesting - because he's a German and his view is presumably objective. He said, `What I've found about the English Buddhists is this. They want in a lecture a view of the whole picture. They're not satisfied with a bit or a piece. They want to try to have a complete picture of the whole thing just in one lecture. They like to see it all in perspective. So he said, `Though I'm a German, I really felt much happier in England than I felt in Germany. I wasn't at all happy about giving lectures on the meanings of words.'

So one may say that wisdom, knowledge, in this sense is really going to extremes. And so we find in Buddhism wisdom has to be balanced by faith, or sraddha, just as faith has to be balanced by wisdom. So faith and wisdom are a pair. The intellectual and the emotional aspects of the spiritual life, they must be balanced, they must be in harmony. Neither must be allowed to preponderate over the other.

Now thirdly we come to virya, which means vigour or energy. And it's technically defined by Shantideva in the Bodhicaryavatara as `energy in pursuit of the good' - not just any old energy, any old vigour, but energy in pursuit of the good in the sense of Nirvana; that is real energy or

real vigour. Now energy or vigour can be of two kinds. It can be either subjective or objective. Now as subjective it corresponds to samyak vyama, right effort, which is the sixth step of the Noble Eightfold Path. Right effort, as you probably know, consists in the effort to eradicate unskilful states of mind which have arisen, to prevent the arising of unskilful states which haven't arisen, to cultivate skilful states which have arisen, and to bring forth skilful states which have not yet arisen in one's mind. This is the fourfold right effort: the effort to eliminate all unskilful states and cultivate all skilful states of mind - the unskilful of course being those states which are rooted in greed and anger and bewilderment or delusion, and the skilful those which are rooted in generosity, in love and in understanding. So this is the subjective side of right effort, right effort as applied to one's own mental content.

Then the objective side of right effort, or the objective side or virya or vigour rather, consists in the doing of good works, doing something to help others physically, with a certain amount of physical effort and trouble and difficulty. And both of course are very important. Both must be present. We find that the Buddha, in his discourses and his sermons, always insisted upon the importance of energy. He would always be stirring his monks. He would never allow them to sit idle, never allow them just to pass the time. He was always insisting that they should be doing something - not of course rushing hither and thither, but at work either on their own minds or doing something for the benefit of other people. That's because it's very easy to become lazy, it's very easy to become slothful. It's very easy to think, `Well, just for a few weeks I'll let things slide - won't go to the vihara, won't listen to any lectures, won't meditate - just let things slide, just take them easy. It's very easy to do this sort of thing. So therefore the Buddha was always insisting on virya or vigour or energy, all the time.

Now there's a very interesting little story in the Jataka book which illustrates this question of energy. The Buddha is supposed to have told this story. Apparently the god Indra - the same one that we encountered earlier on in the lecture - the god Indra was on a journey. So he came to the banks of a great river, an enormous river, miles and miles across. And just down by the edge of the water he found a little squirrel. So the squirrel was behaving in a rather extraordinary manner. It kept dipping its tail, its big bushy tail, into the water of the river, then lifting it up and sprinkling the water on the dry land.

So the king of the gods, Indra, said to the squirrel `What on earth are you doing?' So the squirrel replied quite cheerfully `I'm emptying all the water of the river on to the dry land.' So Indra said `You foolish little creature. Do you really think that you can do that?' So he said `Yes. It's only a question of going on long enough.' So Indra was quite impressed by that, and the Buddha commented that yes, the effort may appear to be small. We may not appear to be doing very much, may not appear to be making very much progress, but if we carry on long enough ... After all, a house may be very big, but a house is built just by putting one brick on top of another. We all know this - but it's very difficult to apply it. We may not be very impressed by our own efforts. We may think `Well, I only read maybe one book on Buddhism every month. I meditate for just five or six minutes a day. That isn't very much. I hear one lecture a week, or every two weeks - that isn't much. But if you keep it up, if it's regular, if you put this energy into it consistently, regularly, if you make a regular effort, however small, if it's only regular, if it's only kept up, then the effects, the results, they do accumulate. So therefore this effort, this persistence, this vigour, energy, is very important.

Of course, it can go to extremes, like the other faculties, like the other spiritual senses. And what is the extreme in this case? - restlessness - not just energy in pursuit of the good, but energy in pursuit of anything, anything to - as it were - get away, to be distracted, very often to get away from oneself. So you get some people - you probably all know them very well - they can't settle down. They always want to be on the move, always want to be on the go, doing something. They have a neurotic compulsion to do something, to be busy; they can't sit still, can't sit down, can't take things easy in a relaxed, sensible sort of way. Their effort isn't smooth; it's restless and agitated and jerky. So this is because it's one-sided; it hasn't been balanced by its counterbalancing faculty or spiritual sense, which is of course samadhi.

Samadhi, the fourth spiritual faculty or spiritual sense, covers the whole field of what we often

call in this country concentration and meditation. Samadhi means literally the fixation of the mind on a single object - in other words, one-pointedness of mind. This shouldn't of course be done forcibly, as I've mentioned on other occasions. Samadhi, concentration, meditation, fixation of the mind or one-pointedness, is really one might say a sort of unification of the total energies of the psyche. Most of our mental forces, our mental energies, are scattered, but samadhi consists of drawing them altogether into a single focus of energy, as it were.

In the Pali scriptures, and the Sanskrit scriptures too, in their translations, samadhi, in the deeper, fuller sense, is often spoken of in terms of the four dhyanas. The four dhyanas represent, we may say, progressively purer and clearer states of consciousness or superconsciousness, attained as the energies progressively become more and more unified. Now unfortunately these four dhyana states are usually described by writers on Buddhism, especially the scholarly writers, in a very drily analytical manner - you'd hardly think you were dealing with living experiences at all, it's just a catalogue of different mental functions, very often. But the spirit of these dhyanas, of these higher states of consciousness or unified states of consciousness, is brought out very well by the Buddha in four famous similes.

So leaving aside all the psychological analysis, leaving aside all the constituent mental functions, let's just recapitulate these four similes, one for each of the four dhyanas. The Buddha said that the first is like this. He said `Suppose you get a plateful of soap powder.' In ancient India they did have soap. You'll probably be surprised to hear there's a soap tree. It's not mineral soap. It's a sort of enormous fruit which is dried and powdered, and it acts just like soap. They still use it in some parts of south India. So the Buddha said it's just like a plate full of this soap powder which is gradually mixed with water. Water is mixed into it and mixed into it, and the whole ball of soap powder mixed with water is kneaded until you've got a ball, a ball which is absolutely saturated with water. There's not a single grain, not a single speck of soap powder which is not saturated with water. At the same time there's just enough water, not too much. There's no water as it were trickling out from the ball; the ball is fully saturated. There's enough water but not too much.

So the Buddha said the first state or the first stage is like that. When you meditate, you're filled, you're saturated, with this higher consciousness, with a peace or with a bliss which fills every part of the mind, as it were, every part of the body. You're permeated with that feeling, that sensation, that experience, just as the powder is permeated with the water, but there isn't a single drop, as it were, in excess, nothing bubbles over, you're just permeated. So that's the first state, the first stage.

Then the second dhyana, the Buddha said, is like a tank of water, perfectly clear pure water, with a subterranean spring. All the time fresh clear water is bubbling up from underneath, filling the tank, or preventing the water there from decreasing. So in the same way, he said, the second dhyana is a clear pure state of consciousness in which, or into which, something is bubbling up all the time from deep within you - a bliss or a joy or a rapture, in this state or in this stage. That's the second.

Then in the third, the Buddha said, it's just like a pond or a tank full of lotuses. The lotus flowers live immersed in the water, they're distinct from the water, but they're immersed in it, their stalks, their leaves, their flowers, blossoms, seedpods, everything, as it were, is immersed in the water, drinking the water, full of the water, but they themselves are as it were distinct from the water. So he said the third state or the third stage is like that.

Then the fourth state or the fourth stage, the Buddha again uses a very Indian sort of comparison. He says it's like a very hot day. You're all hot and dusty. You go and take a bath in a river or a tank, you come out, and you wrap yourself in a white clean cold sheet, and you just sit there after your bath enveloped in this white sheet. So the Buddha said the fourth stage or fourth state of samadhi or dhyana is like that. You're thoroughly clean and pure, and you're sort of insulated from all the surroundings by this force, as it were, generated in the course of the samadhi or the dhyana.

So these are the four comparisons which he gave for these four successively purer and clearer

states of consciousness or superconsciousness. But of course even samadhi, even concentration and meditation, can go to extremes. And what's the extreme here? - the extreme, as it were, of inertness or passivity, or on the lower levels even of slothfulness, even of laziness, drowsiness, even sleepiness. Sometimes in India you can see this sort of thing. You can say to somebody, `What were you doing?' `Oh, I was just meditating' (yawn). Really he was just sort of dozing his time away, but he says he's meditating, he's a sort of honorary meditator.

So samadhi must be balanced, and it must be balanced by virya, especially virya in the form of good works, physical labour even. In the Zen monasteries of Japan, as in the Ch'an monasteries of China in the old days of course, you get your full share of both. I forget how many hours a day meditation you have - it's probably eight or ten or something like that - and an almost equal number of hours of hard physical work: not just a little arrangement of a few flowers, or just pulling aside a curtain or anything like that, but hard physical work, very often down on your hands and knees scrubbing floors, scouring utensils with sand and things of that sort.

Not so long ago I had a letter from Peggy Kennet, who some of you may remember, who is now a Zen teacher in Japan after many years of labour and trouble. And she wrote to me that in her little monastery, where she has three or four disciples, their daily programme begins at 4 o'clock if I'm not mistaken. From four to nine they do, apparently, things like scrubbing floors and scouring dishes and sweeping the verandah and sweeping the paths and chopping firewood from 4 until about 9. Then they have a simple meal and then they get down to their meditation, also I think for four or five hours, and then another light meal in the afternoon. That's their life, she said: physical labour and concentration and meditation.

So here one sees a balance. If they were spending all their time in meditation, certainly the comparative novices, you can be quite sure they'd just become slothful and lazy. On the other hand, if they were spending all their time in physical labour, unless they were exceptionally gifted, they would eventually become just hewers of wood and drawers of water, just leading a brutal sort of existence. So both must be there. So much meditation, so much physical effort, and so on - balanced.

One can also say that this particular pair - virya or vigour and samadhi, concentration and meditation - can be explained in terms of introversion and extraversion in Jungian terms. That is to say, the one in whom samadhi predominates is the introvert, and the one in whom virya or energy predominates is the extravert. But the Enlightened person of course, even the person who's not Enlightened but spiritually quite developed, would be beyond this sort of classification. It wouldn't be possible to say of them either that they were introvert or that they were extravert.

I remember some time ago one of my monk friends gave it as his opinion to me that an introvert was particularly suitable for Buddhism. I suppose he was thinking an introvert would meditate more. But I don't think it is quite like this. We have to balance both the introversion, meditation and the extraversion, good works. Otherwise, certainly in the earlier stages of our spiritual career, we may tend to go to either one of these extremes.

Now lastly, fifthly, smrti or mindfulness, the fifth spiritual faculty or spiritual sense. Mindfulness, also translated as awareness very often, is fourfold in Buddhism - this is the tradition standard teaching - as regards the body and its movements and attitudes, as regards feelings, whether pleasant, painful or neutral, thoughts of all kinds, and also higher spiritual ideals. If possible one should be mindful and aware the whole time. One should be mindful of how the body is, whether one is walking, standing, sitting, lying down; whether the hand is here or whether it is there, and so on. Then of one's feelings - whether one is happy or sad, elated or depressed, pleased or displeased, and so on. And of course, thoughts - whether one is thinking about home, one's dinner; whether one's thoughts are here in the meeting or the lecture; whether one is thinking of one's friends or relations; or whether one is thinking about the work to be done the day after tomorrow. One should know exactly where the mind is going, where it is straying, from minute to minute. And then constant mindfulness of the higher spiritual ideals. Whatever one may be doing, wherever one may be going, even in sleep, a sort of undercurrent of awareness or mindfulness of one's ultimate goal.

This is of course one of the reasons for the repetition of the mantra which many people do. It is just a means of keeping in touch all the time. You may be walking, may be sitting down, may be talking to someone, but if that can go on the whole time, then one is never completely out of touch, never altogether unaware of one's ultimate objective.

Now mindfulness, awareness, cannot go to extremes. If faith is not balanced by wisdom it can become blind, it can become fanatical. If wisdom is not balanced by faith it can become dry, dry as dust. If energy is not balanced by concentration and meditation it can become restlessness. And if concentration and meditation are not balanced by vigour, by energy, then they can become, they can degenerate into sloth and torpor. But in the case of mindfulness, in the case of awareness, there's no such danger. By its very nature it is incapable of going to extremes. You can't have too much mindfulness, too much awareness. You could say of someone, `Oh, he's got too much faith, no wisdom.' You could say of someone `Oh, he's all intellect, no emotion.' You could say of someone `He's all energy. He never sits down and is calm.' Or you could say of someone `Well, he's always so quiet. He never manifests energy.' But you couldn't say of anyone, `Well, he's so mindful. He's never unmindful.' You couldn't say it, or at least you couldn't say it as a criticism. You couldn't say, `How aware he always is - how strange, how odd.' It might be strange but not quite in that sense.

So it's always useful. In fact not only is mindfulness or awareness always useful; it in fact counterbalances or just balances all the other faculties. It's because we are mindful in our spiritual life that we can balance faith and wisdom, and energy and concentration and meditation. Balance, I need hardly tell you, balance in the Buddhist spiritual life is most important. In fact one might say that the Buddhist spiritual life is the balanced life at the highest possible level, in the broadest possible sense. If we're not balanced then we're not really Buddhist. Buddhist really means balanced - balanced not only just in between but right at the top, poised as it were.

At the same time one can say that you can't really have any one faculty without the others in a lesser degree. They're all present. You may have one absolutely predominating, but the fact that one is there at all means that the others are there, at least embryonically. For instance you may have a lot of sraddha, a lot of faith. You may be very fond of devotional meetings. You may like to offer flowers and light candles and wave sticks of incense - you may like to do all this. But at the same time there will be an understanding of the significance of it all. You won't do it blindly, certainly not in this country. So wisdom is also there.

Then in the performance of the puja a certain amount of effort is necessary, a certain amount of vigour is involved. At least one has to come to the meeting. Then a little concentration. When you're reciting the words when the puja is going on, you're concentrated on it, sometimes one can become quite deeply concentrated just by the puja, just by the worship, just by the various offerings. Some people have been known in Buddhist countries to attain, or obtain, through participation in various forms of worship, various forms of ritual, with understanding, with intelligence - to attain to a quite deep level of concentration, deeper than they might normally get even in meditation. And of course that last factor, mindfulness, is also present. If you're not mindful when you do your puja, when you perform your worship, you'll make mistakes, you'll forget the words. When the bhikkhu says `Buddham saranam gacchami' you'll say `Dharmam saranam gacchami' and so on. That's because you're not mindful. But if you are doing it sincerely and properly you'll be mindful, so that faculty, that spiritual sense, will be there too.

So in this way, when out of faith you perform a puja, there's also wisdom to some extent. There's also energy to some extent, concentration to some extent, and mindfulness to some extent, even to a great extent. So the one may be as it were in the lead; the others are all there, all present, to some extent. So the Buddhist aims at developing all of them equally, all these five, all these spiritual senses or spiritual faculties; aims at developing faith and wisdom, energy and concentration, and of course above all mindfulness.

And this of course is the pattern of the Buddhist life, the development of these five spiritual faculties or, if you like Dr Conze's version, cardinal virtues.

Now it's very interesting, in passing at least, to compare the five spiritual faculties with the Hindu yogas. After that I'll conclude by saying something about the pattern of Buddhist work. Now those of you who have any acquaintance with Hinduism, with the yogas, will know that there are four principal yogas. There's bhakti yoga, the yoga of devotion, jnana yoga, the yoga of knowledge, karma yoga, the yoga of disinterested work, and raja yoga, the kingly yoga, which covers concentration and meditation. Now this word yoga in Hinduism means `union'. It means union, in the Vedanta, with the higher self, or in the theistic forms of Hinduism, union with God. So bhakti yoga would mean the path to union with the higher self or with God through devotion, and jnana yoga would mean the same path or same way to union through knowledge, karma yoga through work, unselfish work, raja yoga through the kingly science of concentration and meditation.

So how do these correlate? Bhakti yoga, the yoga of devotion, obviously corresponds to the spiritual faculty of faith. Then jnana yoga, the yoga of knowledge, obviously corresponds to the spiritual faculty of wisdom. Karma yoga of course corresponds to virya, vigour or energy; and raja yoga, of course, to concentration and meditation. So one can say there is quite an interesting correlation here between these four spiritual faculties out of the five and the four principal Hindu yogas. Those who want further information about the yogas of course can refer to Swami Vivekananda's famous books on all four of them, as well as to other works.

Now there's an interesting difference. In India the Hindu advice usually is this. Suppose you're very emotional, overflowing with feelings. The Hindu teacher will say, well, you're a bhakta, you're a devotee. You just take up bhakti yoga, just devote yourself to devotion. Leave aside jnana, karma, raja, you just be a devotee, and you'll gain liberation. Or if he sees that the person is very intellectual, a thinker, a gnostic, he'll say `You follow the path of jnana, of knowledge. You study the Vedanta. You think it all out. You discriminate between the real and the unreal, and so on.' And if he sees a person who is very active, the Hindu teacher will say, `Well, you're a karma yogi.' In modern India politicians are very often regarded as karma yogins by courtesy, as it were. `You aim at union with God or with the higher self through disinterested work, unselfish work.' Politicians of course are notoriously unselfish. They give up all their time, all their energy, for the public benefit and the public good. Then if he sees a person who's introspective and meditative, a bit uncommunicative, likes to be alone, `Oh you're a yogin, a raja yogin. You concentrate and meditate. You leave aside all the other things.'

So this is the usual Hindu advice. One might say that the Hindu teaching tends to follow the line of least resistance. If you're emotional, then practise bhakti yoga only; if you're intellectual, jnana yoga only. But the Buddhist advice is rather different, even opposite. The Buddhist advice would be: pay attention to that faculty which is weak. Cultivate that. In this way you'll become balanced. You have to develop all four. You have to develop bhakti, jnana, karma and raja.

So you see the difference. The Hindu will say, well, specialise according to your own natural bent, in bhakti if you're devotional and so on. But the Buddhist will say no. If you're strong in bhakti, if you're strong in devotion, strong in faith, cultivate wisdom. Otherwise your faith will go to extremes and you'll be led astray. If you're naturally energetic, always bustling about, then you should practise concentration and meditation more. In that way your vigour and your energy will be balanced.

So this is the Buddhist advice: not just one yoga but all four spiritual faculties. This is of course the more difficult way. We always like to follow the line of least resistance. If we're fond of reading we like to take the intellectual approach. If we're more emotional we like to take the devotional approach. But we shouldn't just follow our natural bent. By all means develop the intellect, develop devotion, but also counterbalance, develop the corresponding, the opposite, the balancing factor too. Don't let your development be one-sided or lopsided.

Now it's interesting that mindfulness, the fifth spiritual faculty, isn't stressed in Hinduism at all. This is rather odd, rather extraordinary, even striking. But I know from my own experience, twenty years in India, hundreds of times I've heard Hindu teachers and religious people speaking about devotion, speaking about knowledge, speaking about meditation. But not once I think have

I heard mindfulness or awareness mentioned. It just isn't there.

So this is a very important difference, and it might be one of the reasons why in Hinduism you have to choose, as it were, between the four yogas. You can't unify them because they can be unified only through mindfulness or awareness. I should, incidentally, mention in fairness there is one exception to this, and that is Sri Aurobindo. He does teach what he calls an integral yoga, blending all the four classical yogas. But even he doesn't say anything about mindfulness or awareness. That seems to be the distinctively Buddhist emphasis.

Now we should all of us examine ourselves, take a look at ourselves, take stock of ourselves, ask ourselves are we more devotional or are we more intellectual, are we active people, are we introverts, and try to correct the imbalance. We very often find of course that women are more emotional. They need to develop their intellects - without any disrespect to them. Men are more intellectual; they need to develop more the devotional side. And I must say that things don't always work out as apparently they should do, at least not in our vihara here, because the other week at a devotional meeting on the full moon day we happened to look around. There was a very good gathering, with one solitary woman, which isn't what one might have expected. One might have expected just the other way round. But if one gets just one solitary woman at a devotional meeting and all the rest are men, it's a very good healthy sign, because it means that the men, who are naturally more intellectual and given to reading and discussion, they realize that they have to balance that with devotion. And it's also a very good, very healthy sign if you get so many women at lectures and discussions and question and answer meetings and so on, because it shows that they feel the need for developing that intellectual side, which in many religious movements is not developed so much by the women followers.

Now we should examine for any possible imbalance not only ourselves but also our Buddhist activities. And this of course brings us from the pattern of Buddhist life to the pattern of Buddhist work. The pattern of Buddhist work should correspond to the pattern of Buddhist life. The Buddhist life consists in the development of the five spiritual faculties. So Buddhist activities, the Buddhist movement in fact, should help us to do this - not help us just to develop one faculty or two faculties, but all of them. One may say that the sphere of these activities is the spiritual community about which we spoke last time. The spiritual community, we may say, of Buddhism, the Sangha in the broadest sense provides the environment for the growth and development of the spiritual faculties, the five spiritual faculties.

Under normal conditions of course, as here, the spiritual community is centred upon the vihara. Viharas have been compared to many things, but I would personally, at least in this context, compare a vihara to a greenhouse. You all know what a greenhouse is. You sow your little seeds in boxes or in trays in the greenhouse in the cold weather, and they sprout up. And when they're a little bit big, a little bit strong, you transplant them outside, when the weather is a bit milder, a bit warmer. The plants don't remain in the greenhouse - this is the whole point - all the time. They remain there only when they're comparatively weak, comparatively immature. So this is what happens. In the environment, the more favourable environment of the spiritual community or of the vihara, one's spiritual faculties develop. They are allowed to germinate and shoot up. And then of course they can be transplanted outside.

The analogy, one might say, is not quite correct inasmuch as the little plants, they're transplanted just once. But in the case of all those who are developing their five spiritual faculties, they have to go backwards and forwards between the greenhouse and the open field, as it were. And sometimes it does happen that if they're too long out of the greenhouse the little shoots get nipped by frost and they get trampled upon by cattle and bruised, and sometimes they wither away and die altogether, and a completely new seed has to be sown.

So the moral of course I think is quite obvious. Perhaps we should say we should try to be like potted plants. If you sow the seed in the greenhouse in a pot - well, when it gets quite big you can move it outside into the sunshine, when it's a sunny day, but as soon as it rains you can bring it back. So in that way the pots can be moved backwards and forwards between the greenhouse and the open air. So that is perhaps what the successful member of the vihara is like. He comes here

quite regularly. His seeds or sprouts of faith and wisdom and so on all develop nicely. Then he goes away for a week. They get a bit nipped, of course, in the course of the week, but back he comes into the greenhouse on Sundays at least, and they sprout and they grow again, getting all the time of course bigger and stronger, until at last of course a few blossoms are put forth. I can see one or two buds now. Sometimes of course the blossoming has to be done elsewhere under more specialist greenhouse conditions, up at the place we call Biddulph, but that is another story.

So inasmuch as we have five spiritual faculties to be developed, we have five types of activities to develop them. We've got devotional meetings that I've already spoken about, with pujas and that sort of thing. These help to develop the faculty of faith. Then we've lectures and classes, speakers' class, question and answer meetings, library. These all help develop wisdom. And then of course we have things like being a member of the committee, looking after the accounts, issuing appeals for funds and collecting the money, acknowledging the donations, sending the receipts, putting the stamps on the envelopes, posting them and all that sort of thing; then visiting the sick, sick members, old members - all this of course helps to develop energy and vigour. I know some people don't feel very energetic or very vigorous when doing this sort of thing, but they really are putting forth a great deal of that particular faculty. Then of course we have the meditation classes. We have our retreats up at Biddulph. These all help develop samadhi, concentration and meditation. So in this way these four spiritual faculties are all provided for. There are activities corresponding to each one of them which helps develop that particular faculty or sense.

Now what about mindfulness? We don't have a mindfulness class at the vihara. But we don't have one for a very definite reason. Mindfulness should be practised all the time. You can't have faith all the time - or not very easily. You can't, certainly, meditate all the time, can't be wise all the time certainly. But you can certainly be mindful, you can be aware, at least most of the time. So the fact that mindfulness is a faculty or a spiritual sense to be practised constantly is hinted or suggested by the fact that there's no separate class for it, no separate course for it. We very rarely have even a lecture about it, because that would give a quite wrong or quite misleading impression perhaps.

So this is the pattern, we may say, of Buddhist life and work. This is the sort of pattern we should try to develop in our own individual lives, and collectively in our Buddhist activities as members of a spiritual community, a spiritual community centred on the vihara. If we can do this then of course our five spiritual faculties will blossom; or rather, they'll all sort of run together, coalesce, into one great big spiritual bloom. We shall tread the path of the higher evolution. We shall have been not only introduced to Buddhism. We shall have become friends, even intimate friends, with Buddhism. As you all know, in our social life introductions are meant to facilitate friendship, and I very much hope that this present series, now concluded, on introducing Buddhism has served its purpose of introducing you to this great subject, and perhaps establish bonds, links, of friendship between you and it.