CHAPTER V

CONFLICT AND REMEDY IN BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY: MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ
(THE MIDDLE PATH)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I have discussed the wholesome course of action (kusala-kammapatha), which is the medium level of Buddhist ethics, as the conflict solution. In this chapter, I will discuss the Middle Path (majjhimā paṭipadā) which is the high level of Buddhist ethics, as the conflict solution. This Middle Path is the practical path that leads to the ultimate goal of Buddhist ethics, that is, Nibbāna. It is the Buddhist ethics that consists of the threefold training, namely, morality (sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā). The Buddhists should train or practise these because it contains all of Buddhist ethics and practices. Briefly, it is a complete system of Buddhist ethics.

The Middle Path is regarded as the best of paths; it is the only path that leads to purity of vision,\(^{561}\) and it leads to the end of the accumulation of kamma.\(^{562}\) It is mentioned in the Saṁyutta Nikāya that:

“Well, friend, it is just that Ariyan eightfold way, to wit:

Right view, and the rest …right concentration. The destruction

\(^{561}\) Dh., p. 41.
\(^{562}\) A. III., p. 294.
of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of illusion, friend, that is what this righteous life ends in.”

This indicates that the middle Path is a way that can remedy the conflicts, because it emphasizes to eradicate the unwholesome roots (greed, hatred, delusion), and then leads one to the end of sufferings. Therefore, *majjhimā paṭipadā* is the best path that can lead one to the ultimate goal, that is, liberation (*nibbāna*), and eventually the conflicts and sufferings are destroyed. But what is the meaning of *majjhimā paṭipadā*? Why is it an important virtue for the solution of a conflict? How can it remedy a conflict? And how does its result affect people?

To clearly understand the concept of conflict and remedy in Buddhist philosophy, I aim to study and argue on these topics:

1) Meaning and importance of *majjhimā paṭipadā*

2) Relationship between *majjhimā paṭipadā* and tisikkhā (the threefold training)

3) Conflict and remedy in wisdom (*paññā*) on the concept of *majjhimā paṭipadā*

4) Conflict and remedy in morality (*sīla*) on the concept of *majjhimā paṭipadā*

5) Conflict and remedy in concentration (*samādhi*) on the concept of *majjhimā paṭipadā*

And 6) Results of conflict remedy in *majjhimā paṭipadā*

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563 S. V., p. 15.
5.2 MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ

5.2.1 Meaning of Majjhimā Paṭipadā

Etymologically, the term ‘Majjhimā Paṭipadā’, in Pāli language, can be divided into two words, namely, majjhimā+patipadā. Actually, the word ‘Majjhimā’ means middle. And ‘Paṭipadā’ means path or way of life which leads to the cessation of suffering. Therefore, when they are all combined as ‘majjhimā patipadā’, it means the middle path or the middle way which leads to the cessation of suffering. Namely, it is the ariyan eightfold path that leads to the pacification of dukkha.564

In Mijjhima Nikāya, it is expressly declared that:

“When it is said, ‘Not approaching either of these two dead-ends, there is the Middle Course awakened to by the Tathāgata, making for vision, making for knowledge, that conduces to calm, super-knowledge, self-awakening and nibbāna,’ in reference to what is it said ? It is the ariyan Eightfold Way itself, that is to say: right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right mode of livelihood, right endeavour, right mindfulness, right concentration. When it is said, ‘Not approaching either of these two dead-ends, there is the Middle Course . . . that conduces to . . . nibbāna,’ it is said in reference to this.”565

The above discourse indicates that the middle path is a way of practice for abadoning of passion (lobha), malice (dosa) and delusion (moha).566 It is also secure, safe and leads to rapture.567 Thereby, it is called ‘dukkha- nirodhagāminī paṭipadā’, the way leading to the

564 It., p. 13.
565 M. III., p. 279.
566 A. I., p. 196.
567 M. I., p. 152.
cessation of suffering.\textsuperscript{568} And it is called ‘\textit{ariya-at\textasciitilde{t}ha\textasciitilde{ng}ika-magga’}, the Noble Eightfold Path,\textsuperscript{569} because it transforms those who successfully complete it into Noble Ones (ariya). This middle way is also shortly called as ‘\textit{magga’}, the Path.

\textit{Magga} or the middle way is referred to as the Noble Eightfold Path, because it is composed of eight factors. Thus, it should be understood that these eight components are not eight different paths or eight principles that must be successfully accomplished before proceeding to the next. In fact, they are factors of one path. They depend on one another like eight links in a chain, and they must be put into practice simultaneously according to the capacity of the individual. The reason for breaking the path into factors is to show the various prominent phases that occur in the different steps of the practice. These eight factors, when well cultivated and made much of, lead to \textit{Nibb\texttilde{n}a}, have \textit{Nibb\texttilde{n}a} for their goal, and end in \textit{Nibb\texttilde{n}a}.

According to P.A. Payutto, the meaning of \textit{magga} is that: “the Buddha laid down methods of practice which are in harmony with the natural process described in the Middle Teaching (\textit{majjhena dhammadesan\texttilde{a}}), and called it the Middle Way (\textit{majjhim\texttilde{a} patpad\texttilde{a}}). It is a balanced system of practice which conforms with the natural processes, perfectly attuned to bringing about the cessation of suffering. It avoids the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-torment which lead to stagnation or digression from the true goal.”\textsuperscript{570}

Thus, the middle path is a way which avoids the two extremes of misguided attempts to attain liberation. The first extreme is sensual indulgence or extreme hedonism (\textit{k\textasciitilde{amasukhallik\textasciitilde{an}uyoga}). The Buddha

\textsuperscript{568} Ibid., p. 60.
\textsuperscript{569} Ibid., p. 20.
\textsuperscript{570} P.A. Payutto, \textit{Bhuddhadhamma}, p. 514.
always condemned the indulgence of sensual pleasures and its evils because all kinds of evil arise from the indulgence of sensual pleasures. Thus, the Buddha describes sensual indulgence as “low, common, worldly, ignoble and unprofitable”\textsuperscript{571} since sensual indulgence makes spiritual life lost. The second extreme of a misguided attempt is self-mortification or extreme asceticism (\textit{attakilamathānuyoga}). The Buddha disapproves such self-torture for spiritual liberation. As he says in the \textit{Dhammapada}, “not going about naked, not matted locks, not filth, not fasting, not lying on the ground, not smearing with ashes and dust, not sitting on the heels in penance, can purify a mortal who has not overcome doubts.”\textsuperscript{572} He personally realized that such means would not help in the realization of inner peace and liberation. Rather, they make the mind disturbed and restless. Thus, the Buddha expressly describes self-mortification as “painful, ignoble, unprofitable”\textsuperscript{573} because self-mortification makes spiritual life too tense. Therefore, the Buddha rejected both attempts of self-indulgence and self-mortification as inhibiting spiritual achievement, and practised the moderate, the middle way, and finally succeeded in attaining Enlightenment.

Therefore, the real middle path is defined clearly by its goal. The target is of prime importance. Namely, whatever way guided the projectile to its target is automatically the middle path. Thereby, the middle path has a fixed target, that is, the cessation of suffering and liberation.

\textbf{5.2.2 Importance of \textit{Majjhima Paṭipadā} on Conflict Remedy}

Actually, \textit{Majjhima Paṭipadā} or the middle path is regarded as the Buddhist ethics at a high level which is a step of developing morality

\textsuperscript{571} Vin. V., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{572} Dh., p. 21.
\textsuperscript{573} Vin. V., p. 15.
(sīla), concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) to the cessation of suffering and liberation. Thus, magga is the most important in Buddhism. It is the path which leads the prince Siddhartha to enlightenment and eventually to become the Buddha. Again, this path is the ancient road traversed by the rightly enlightened ones of earlier.\textsuperscript{574} It is thereby the path which all of the Buddhas have seen and traversed. Moreover, this path has arisen because of arising of the Buddhas, nobody has seen it except the Buddha.\textsuperscript{575} And after that, the Buddha has revealed it to the disciples to practise. Therefore, magga is the path which leads the followed ones to cessation of suffering.

It is a fact that before Buddha’s time and in Buddha’s time, there were sixty-two views, which were divided into two groups, sassatadiṭṭhi or eternalism and ucchedadiṭṭhi or annihilationism.\textsuperscript{576} Sassatadiṭṭhi was the doctrine of the continuance of the soul after death or the doctrine that the soul and the world are eternal. This view gave rise to the extreme practice of self-mortification or extreme asceticism. And it was a popular idea and practice in India. Whereas, ucchedadiṭṭhi was the doctrine or belief of the annihilation of the soul. This view gave rise to the extreme practice of sensual indulgence or extreme hedonism. In all these practices it is believed that they were cleansing their souls and securing salvation. However, in Buddhism, the Buddha gave a reason that these views and practices are the two extremes of misguided attempts to attain liberation, which are common, worldly, ill, unariyan and unprofitable.\textsuperscript{577} As he says in the Dhammapada:

\begin{quote}
“Not nakedness, nor matted hair, nor mud, nor fasting, nor lying on the ground, nor dust and dirt, nor exertion in a
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{574} S. II., p. 74.
\textsuperscript{575} S. V., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{576} Vin. V., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{577} Ibid.
squatting position purify a moral who has not passed beyond doubt”. 578

Thus, the Buddha advises the middle path which should be practised by one who wishes to attain enlightenment. This middle path is a practical role for all, both recluses and householders. And all of them can attain their goals, the cessation of suffering. 579 This indicates that whoever follows the middle path, can totally attain enlightenment. And this path is only found in the Buddhist teaching.

Therefore, the middle path is rightly the role of practice for human life. It is the system of thought and action which meets the criteria for attaining goals. One who walks the middle way, with the objective firmly in mind, will not allow his life to be led by the allurements of the world. Moreover, one’s life based on the middle way does not incline to attachment to material things; it also does not incline to the extreme of mysticism. 580 Thus, the characteristic of middle way is not making one or others harmful and troubled. It is lived in accordance with the understanding of how all things, both the material and the spiritual, really are. It is commensurate with causes and conditions and really directed toward the goal.

5.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ AND TISIKKHĀ (THE THREEFOLD TRAINING)

The Noble Eightfold Path can be said to encompass the complete Buddhist system of ethics. It contains these eight factors: 581

1) Sammādiṭṭhi: Right view

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578 Dh., p. 21.
579 S. V., p. 17.
580 P. A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 526.
581 M. I., p. 57.
2) *Sammāsanākappa*: Right thought or Right aspiration

3) *Sammāvācā*: Right speech

4) *Sammākammanta*: Right action

5) *Sammā-ājīva*: Right livelihood

6) *Sammāvāyāma*: Right effort

7) *Sammāsati*: Right mindfulness

8) *Sammāsamādhi*: Right concentration.

Infact the eightfold path is one path with eight components, like a good highway which is made up of many components to constitute as the perfect road. Thus, the practicer of dhamma must utilize all of them for the length of the journey.

With regard to *tisikkhā* or the three trainings, they are the training of conduct, the mind and discernment so that problems are solved and suffering is done away with, resulting in true happiness and liberation.\(^5\)\(^8\)\(^2\) *Tisikkhā* contains three systems of training:\(^5\)\(^8\)\(^3\)

1) *Adhisīla sikkhā*: The higher training in morality

2) *Adhicitta sikkhā*: The higher training in mentality

3) *Adhipaññā sikkhā*: The higher training in wisdom

Briefly, they are known as morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*).

In this way, the Eightfold Path, when viewed as a short practical way, can be grouped under three headings in accordance with the Threefold Training (*tisikkhā*) wherein, the first two factors of the Noble Eightfold Path are grouped under wisdom, the next three are grouped under morality, and the last three are grouped under concentration. This is clearly stated by

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5\(^8\)\(^3\) D. III., p. 213.
Dhammadinnā Therī, in her dialogue with Visākha, a lay-divotee, as follows:

“Friend Visākha, the three classes are not arranged in accordance with the ariyan eightfold Way, but the ariyan eightfold Way is arranged in accordance with the three classes. Whatever, friend Visākha, is perfect speech... perfect action and... perfect way of lodging--these things are arranged in the class of Moral Habit. And whatever is perfect concentration (perfect effort and perfect mindfulness)--these things are arranged in the class of Concentration. And whatever is perfect view and... perfect thought--these things are arranged in the class of Intuitive Wisdom”.

This points out that a practicer, who wishes to follow the middle path, must set himself in the order of three trainings, namely, sīla, samādhi and paññā. And this system of training is accepted by the Buddha. To clearly view the middle path arranged in three trainings, they are represented in the following picture:

**Picture 5.1: The middle path is arranged in the threefold training**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morality (Sīla)</th>
<th>Concentration (Samādhi)</th>
<th>Wisdom (Paññā)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Right speech</td>
<td>• Right effort</td>
<td>• Right view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Right action</td>
<td>• Right mindfulness</td>
<td>• Right thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Right livelihood</td>
<td>• Right concentration</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thereby, this threefold training is the stage of spiritual progress. According to this system of training, one is first required to cultivate moral conduct (sīla), then enter into concentration (samādhi), through

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584 M. I., p. 363.
which he can develop insight (paññā).\footnote{D. II., pp. 132-133.} In order to explain the three trainings in full, they are discussed in detail as follows:

5.3.1 Morality (Sīla)

Sīla has various meanings; generally it means nature, character, habit, behavior or conduct, precept, virtue, and so on. In definite terms, it would mean ‘moral practice’ and refer to the codes of morality.\footnote{Buddhatta Mahathera, \textit{Concise Pali-English Dictionary}, \textit{(Belhi: MB, RPT., 1989)}, p. 270.} Traditionally, sīla has been described as the basic foundation of moral life or the pivotal point of the holy life. In a highly technical sense, it is the moral volition.\footnote{Dr. Vyanjana, \textit{Theravāda Buddhist Ethics with Special Reference to Visuddhimagga}. (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1992), p. 148.} Whenever, a man desires to have a virtuous life, sīla is required at the first. In this respect, it is like a stepping stone of training and paves the way for higher training towards the spiritual goal. Its ethical significance is based principally on the fact that without sīla a virtuous life cannot be established. Moreover, higher training, concentration and wisdom, cannot be developed.

In Buddhism, sīla is collectively called as ‘discipline’ or ‘vinaya’. Thereby, it aims at the establishment of social order, laws, regulations and conventions for controlling individual practice and communal behavior for promoting social harmony. For example, the vinaya is regulated by the Buddha for Bhikkhu\footnote{See Vin. I., II. and, III.} and Bhikkhunis.\footnote{See Vin. III.} Moreover, there are also the percepts (sīla) for general lay people.\footnote{D. III., p. 225.} Actually, vinaya or sīla is the regulation which can encourage a man to control
himself for practice under the morality. Sīla thus is both convention and morality together.

For the goal of the training in this higher conduct, it is the creation of an environment in which people can work constructively toward a beneficial communal life and at the same time develop their minds and discernment.\(^{591}\) In the Anguttara Nikāya, it states a causal relationship between virtue (sīla) and wisdom (paññā) that wisdom is shined by one’s conduct.\(^ {592}\) This indicates that wisdom can be purified by virtue and virtue can be purified by wisdom. Virtue and wisdom always accompany each other.

Therefore, sīla helps in clearing the mind from defiling factors and prepares the mind to be receptive to the knowledge leading to Nibbāna.

### 5.3.2 Concentration (Samādhi)

Generally samādhi is rendered in English as ‘concentration’ or ‘meditation’. Technically, however it means a holding moral consciousness together with its mental states, properly and perfectly, on a prescribed object. Thereby, samādhi is described briefly as “one-pointedness of moral consciousness.”\(^ {593}\) According to the Visuddhimagga, samādhi is the profitable unification of mind. It is the centering of consciousness and the consciousness-concomitant evenly and rightly on a single object, undistracted and unscattered. Thus, non-distraction is its characteristic; its function is to eliminate distraction; its manifestation is non-wavering; and its proximate cause is happiness.\(^ {594}\) In this way, it indicates that samādhi is

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\(^{592}\) D. I., pp. 156-167.


\(^{594}\) Vism., pp. 84-85.
the mental development (bhāvanā) which is called ‘samatha-bhāvanā’ or ‘development of tranquility’. Then it should be noticed that when we talk about samatha-bhāvanā, we are talking about samādhi-bhāvanā, for they are identical. They aim at the attainment of the meditative absorptions (jhānas).

In the process of practising samādhi, the meditator must initially eliminate the ten impediments (palibodhas), that is, the impediments of shelter, family, gain, companion, work, travel, kin, affliction (e.g. sickness), books, and super-normal power. This means that his effort in pursuing concentration or meditation must not be hindered by all these impediments. When all these impediments have been abandoned, one is advised to approach a kalyāṇamitta, a spiritual preceptor, who is well versed in the art of meditation, both theory and practice. It is said that a skilled preceptor can determine the temperament of his pupil by various ways of observation and thereby he can prescribe the subject of meditation (kammatthāna) suitable to his temperament (carita). The meditator, with the guidance of kalyāṇamitta, has to select a subject of meditation out of forty subjects of meditation. After the subject of meditation suitable to his temperament has been chosen, the meditator should earnestly focus his consciousness to that subject.

When a meditator has been practising sequentially and rightly, he comes to the three levels of samādhi, namely: (i) the momentary concentration (khanika-samādhi), which means the rudimentary concentration that can be used in everyday duties successfully and used as a starting point of wisdom practising as well, (ii) the access concentration (upacāra-samādhi), which means the concentration at the

595 Ibid., p. 91.
596 Ibid., p. 112. The forty meditation subjects are these: ten kasinas (totalities), ten kinds of foulness, ten recollections, four divine abidings, four immaterial states, one perception, and one defining.
level of extinction of five hindrances (nivarana) prior to the entrance to
the state of jhana or absorption, and iii) the attainment concentration
(appana-samadhi), which is the concentration present in the four
absorptions (jhanas), and signifies the ultimate concentration.\textsuperscript{597}

Therefore, the goal of the training in this higher mentality is the
development of the quality and efficiency of the mind so that it is most
conducive to noble conduct and the development of wisdom.\textsuperscript{598} And
jhana is the result of culmination of samadhi. In short, concentration
should be developed with morality (sila) as its basis, and with the guidance
of wisdom (panna). In this way, concentration is said to be conjoined with
the Noble Path leading to the final liberation. As the Buddha’s word in the
Dhammapada expresses:

“There is no meditation for one who is without wisdom, on
wisdom for one who is not meditating. He, in whom there are
meditation and wisdom, is indeed close to Nibbana”.\textsuperscript{599}

\textbf{5.3.3 Wisdom (Panna)}

Usually, the term ‘panna’ is rendered in English as ‘wisdom’,
‘knowledge’ or ‘insight’. However, ‘panna’ literally means ‘right
knowing’ or ‘right understanding’. It is the right understanding of
existence, life and the real nature of things as they are in accordance with
the Law of Three Characteristics (tilakkan, namely, impermanence
(anicca), suffering (dukkha), and selflessness (anatta).\textsuperscript{600} In the English
version of the Visuddhimagga, panna is translated as understanding. It is
defined as “understanding consisting of insight-knowledge

\textsuperscript{597} Ibid., p. 144.
\textsuperscript{598} P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 546.
\textsuperscript{599} Dh., p. 54.
\textsuperscript{600} S. IV., pp. 1-2.
(vipassanāñāṇa) associated with profitable consciousness.” This definition reveals that the term ‘vipassanā’ (insight) is synonymous with the term ‘paññā’. Thus, paññā is the right understanding of the real nature of things, and when it is applied to practice it is known as ‘vipassanā’, which visualizes the same. In this way, paññā does not only understand the real nature of things, but it is also a term of practical import. In addition, it should be understood here that development of insight (vipassanā-bhāvanā) is the development of wisdom (paññā-bhāvanā), leading to the final liberation, Nibbāna.

In the process of development of insight (vipassanā), it is necessary for the meditator in the beginning, to have four things conducive to the growth of paññā, namely, association with a good person (kalyāṇamitta), hearing the good doctrine (saddhamma), through a systematic thought (yonisomanasikāra), and behavior in accordance with the doctrine. When having consisted of these four things, the process of development of insight continues rightly. A meditator must regard or understand the several types of the ground of wisdom (paññābhūmi) as they are really and rightly. They are: (i) the five aggregates (pañcakkhandhas), (ii) the twelve bases (āyatanas), (iii) the eighteen elements (dhātus), (iv) the twenty-two faculties (indriyas), (v) the four noble truths (caturāriyasaccas), and (vi) the dependent origination (paṭiccasamuppāda). When a meditator has understood these several types of the ground of wisdom really and rightly, he attains the stage of purification of paññā (paññā-visuddhi).

It should be mentioned here that a meditator, having attained the stage of purification of morality (sīla-visuddhi) and the stage of

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601 Vism., p. 479.
602 A. IV., pp. 104-106.
603 For detailed explanation of the grounds of wisdom, see Vism., Part III. Understanding, Chapter XIV, XV, XVI and XVII, pp. 479-678.
purification of concentration (citta-visuddhi), comes to acquire the stage of purification of paññā (paññā-visuddhi) which can explained as follows. A meditator has the insight of the truth of human body that the body is composed of nāma-rūpa or the five khandhas, this stage called as the purification of view (diṭṭhi-visuddhi). He realizes that the entire phenomenal existence constitutes the conditioned co-production, everything has a cause, and the cause has to be extinguished, this stage is called as the purification of transcending doubts (kañkhāvitaranā-visuddhi). He continues contemplating on the three characteristics (tilakkhana), namely, impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and selflessness (anattā), and perceives a void around himself. He is able to know the distinction between mundane (lokiya) and supramundane (lokuttara) forms of the Noble Eightfold Path; this stage is called as the purification of the knowledge and vision regarding path and not-path (maggāmaṇṇadassana-visuddhi). Then, a meditator, having perceived the right path, continues his practice of contemplating on tilakkhana with an added clarified vision and come to acquire the nine kinds of insight-knowledge (vipassanāṇā), this stage is called as the purification of the knowledge and vision of the way of progress (patpadānaṇṇadassana-visuddhi). And the last stage is called as the purification of knowledge and vision (pañṇadassana-visuddhi). Namely, a meditator, having attained the knowledge of adaptation (anulomāṇṇa) which gives rise to ‘mature knowledge’ (gotrabhūṇṇa), can completely repulse the things of the world. He becomes a noble one (ariya). Thus,

P.A. Payutto, Dictionary of Buddhism, pp. 268-269. The nine kinds of insight-knowledge are thses: 1) the knowledge of the arising and passing of all things, 2) the knowledge of dissolution of all things, 3) the knowledge that perceives with fear the five aggregates of existence, 4) the knowledge that perceives with misery the five aggregates of existence, 5) the knowledge associated with disgust and aversion from existence, 6) the knowledge of desire for deliverance, 7) the knowledge associated with deliverance from all forms of existence, 8) the knowledge associated with equanimity as regards all formations, and 9) the knowledge of adaptation.
after successfully destroying all the fetters, he attains the state of *arahantship* and realizes the ultimate goal of life, the state of eternal bliss.  

Therefore, the goal of the training in this higher wisdom is the observation and understanding of all things as they really are which enables one to conduct one’s life wisely, to adopt an attitude towards things which is conducive to welfare, and a clear and trouble-free mind. And eventually, one can become a noble one (*ariya*) and attain the state of *arahantship*.

Briefly, this threefold training is necessary to be interdependent and interrelated. These three go together supporting each other towards final liberation. Namely, when there is morality, right concentration inevitably develops. When there is right concentration, true knowledge and insight inevitably develop in one who has right concentration. When there is true knowledge and insight, dispassion (*nibbidā*) and detachment (*virāga*) inevitably generate in one who has true knowledge and insight. When there is dispassion and detachment, emancipated knowledge and insight inevitably develop in one who has dispassion and detachment. Thus, *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā* and *vimutti* are casually conditioned, and represent the progressive stages of the Noble Path. The ethical significance of these four things is clearly stated by the Buddha’s words as follows:

> “Monks, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the morality, concentration, wisdom and deliverance that we have run so long, wandered on so long in this round of existence both you and I. But when these four things, monks, are understood and penetrated, the craving for existence is rooted

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606 Ibid., p. 546.
out and that which leads to renewed becoming is destroyed; there is no more coming to be”.

5.4 CONFLICT AND REMEDY IN WISDOM (PAÑÑĀ) ON THE CONCEPT OF MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ

The two factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, right view (sammādiṭṭhi) and right thought (sammāsaṅkappa) are regarded as developing or training paññā (wisdom) which aim to purify wisdom or knowledge. These two factors, when practised, enable a person to be free from an ignorance, doubt and wrong view that come from greed, hatred and delusion. Moreover, they can ensure his actions will continue in the right way, and eventually lead to the cessation of suffering, nibbāna.

5.4.1 Conflict and Remedy by Right View (Sammādiṭṭhi)

The first factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘sammādiṭṭhi (right view)’. Sammādiṭṭhi literally means a right view or a right understanding. Right view plays an important role in the Eightfold Path and forms the basis for the remaining seven factors. And it is considered as the forerunner of all other paths because through right view one is able to cultivate the rest.

In Vibhaṅga, right thought is stated as:

“Therein what is right view? Knowledge of suffering, knowledge of the cause of suffering, knowledge of the cessation

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608 A. II., pp. 1-2.
609 M. III., p. 114.
of suffering, knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This is called right view.”

Thus, right view refers to the understanding of things as they are, and it is the ‘Four Noble Truths’ that explain things as they really are. This understanding is the highest wisdom which sees the ultimate reality. Thereby, right view enables one to comprehend wrong view as wrong, and right view as right, wrong thought as wrong and right thought as right, and so on. Moreover, one is able to destroy defilements, develop knowledge, and reach salvation through the power of right understanding. As the Buddha declares that a monk eliminates ignorance (avijjā), cultivates knowledge (vijjā), and attains Nibbāna through right view and right contemplation of the path. This is because of having established the right view. Thus, right view is of prime value to terminate one’s ignorance and cultivate the right knowledge which will lead to putting an end to the cycle of rebirth. According to Abhidhamma, right view is the mental state of wisdom (paññā) that tends to eradicate ignorance. It is placed first because all actions should be regulated by wisdom.

With regard to the conditions of arising of sammādiṭṭhi, the right view can be cultivated by conditions, namely, (i) paratoghosa, which means listening to the suggestions and teachings of others, or getting instruction from others, and (ii) yonisomanasikāra, which means a critical or systematic reflection. Of the two conditions of cultivation of sammādiṭṭhi, the first is an external condition regarded as kalyāṇamitta, a good spiritual friend, who should be interpreted in the sense of a teacher who guides a man to salvation. While the second is an internal one, it is

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610 Vbh., p. 138.
611 M. III., p. 114.
612 S. V., p. 10.
614 A. I., p. 79.
the investigation to motivate the function of wisdom that enables a man to
differentiate the right part from the wrong part. The Buddha states that in
the process of learning and practising the right path there is no other
external factor more beneficial that having a good spiritual friend
(*kalyāṇamittta*), and there is no other internal factor more beneficial than a
systematic reflection (*yonisomanasikāra*).\(^{615}\) These two factors thus help
to develop *sammādītiṭṭhi* of one. Furthermore, a man who has a good
spiritual friend and who is possessed of systematic reflection will
cultivate and make much of the Noble Eightfold Path.\(^{616}\) Therefore, it
points out that both of them help to develop the right view that is the
forerunner in attaining salvation.

According to Buddhist ethics, there are two kinds of right views:
(i) *lokiya sammādītiṭṭhi*: the mundane right view which pertains to worldly
principles, and (ii) *lokuttara sammādītiṭṭhi*: the supramundane right view
which pertains to enlightenment.\(^{617}\)

*Lokiya sammādītiṭṭhi* is a belief or understanding in relation to the
world which conforms to moral principles. Right view on this level is
mostly a result of external or social influences (*paratoghosa*), such as
religious teachings and traditions, and is led by faith. Even when it is
related to intelligent reflection, it tends to be a skillful reflection of the
kind which promotes good values, rather than reflection on the way
things are. In this context, mundane right view is supported by natural
laws and conforms to natural truths. It is sometimes defined as
*kammassakatañāṇa*, the knowledge that beings are the owners of their
kamma, or that life proceeds according to the law of kamma.\(^{618}\)

Therefore, mundane right view can lead to benefit on both the social and

\(^{615}\) It., p. 8.
\(^{616}\) S. V., p. 30.
\(^{617}\) M. III., pp. 114-115.
individual levels, and enhances development of the path as well as supporting the arising of its other factors. Indeed, because it is connected with the natural order, it can also be a factor for the arising of the transcendent right view.

*Lokuttara sammādiṭṭhi* is the right view that is beyond the world, not subject to the world. It is knowledge and understanding of life and the natural world as they really are, or understanding of the nature of reality. This kind of right view arises as a direct result of *yonisomanasikāra*, intelligent reflection. It must come through direct knowledge from within, from a direct intuition into nature. Again, it is directly connected to the truths of nature, which do not change with time and place. Thus the Buddha expressly defines the path’s stage of right view in terms of the Four Noble Truths, namely, the understanding of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and the path leading to the cessation of suffering because when these Four Noble Truths are understood and penetrated, there is no becoming a man again. This clearly indicates that right view in the highest sense is comprehension of the Four Noble Truths. Moreover, right view also indicates to the understanding of the Three Characteristics of Things (*tilakkhana*), namely, all conditioned things (*saṅkhata dhamma*) are transient (*anicca*), subject to suffering (*dukkha*) and without the self (*anattā*). Again, it also refers to the understanding of the law of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).

Therefore, of the eight factors, right view is considered as the most important one, because if the view or understanding is right, in the practical process, the remaining factors would accordingly be right. By this way, right view can eradicate or destroy the unwholesome root, *moha* –

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619 Ibid., p. 692.  
621 *Dh.*, p. 41.  
622 *M. III.*, p. 107.
delusion. Hence, right view is required in all the stages of practice on the path towards liberation, and it is the beginning as well as the culmination of the Noble Eightfold Path.

**Right view (sammādiṭṭhi) is the conflict resolution**

It is true that *sammādiṭṭhi* or right view can really protect a wrong understanding or evil mind from arising; it cultivates the right understanding. It is the most important factor in the Noble Eightfold Path, because when one is accompanied with a right understanding or view, he is always conscious before and in the course of his action, speech and thought on a right way. Thus, it indicates that various conflicts arise from a cause of wrong view or misunderstanding, because having misunderstood, one is always without reason or critical thinking for all things so that he cannot see things as they are. Moreover, he is also attaches with his personal entity (*attā*), whereby he misunderstands that he is always correct and disagrees with others’ view. In this way, he is prejudiced (*agati*) against others, which gives rise to a lot of conflict among people. Therefore, if one has the right view or understanding and regards that all problems come from their causes, he will consider it necessary to seek its real cause as well as the way to resolve it. Having thoroughly regarded the problems, he will understand the cause, and search the right way to resolve them by critical reflection (*yonisomanasikāra*) and a good spiritual friend (*kalyāṇamitta*). In this way, he sees all things as they are and understands them truly and rightly. He always conducts a way of the right deeds, words and thoughts, and the internal and external conflicts are destroyed.

Therefore, *sammādiṭṭhi* can create co-understanding between people in seeking the way to resolve conflicts. When wisdom (*paññā*) arises, problems and sufferings are eradicated, so there is co-
understanding between a person and others in society. A society of wisdom can arise among people.

5.4.2 Conflict and Remedy by Right Thought (Sammāsaṅkappa)

The second factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘sammāsaṅkappa (right thought)’. Right thought is the outcome of right view. It is the opposite of wrong thought. Saṅkappa, according to Abhidhamma, is vitakkacetasika, which may be termed as ‘initial application of thought.’

In Vibhaṅga, right thought is stated as:

“Therein what is right thought? Thought (associated with) renunciation, thought (associated with) absence of illwill, thought (associated with) absence of cruelty. This is called right thought.”

This indicates that sammāsaṅkappa or right thought is wholesome mental state which eliminates wrong thought and supports the other moral elements to be induced to final liberation. In this context, right thought establishes a proper way of thinking, which is opposed to the improper way of thinking called micchāsaṅkappa (wrong thought), and serves the double purpose of eliminating evil thoughts and developing right thoughts.

What right thought will arise depends on clear thinking (yoniso manasikāra) as the supporter, which means that, in order to look at things as they really are, thinking must be clear, independent and unbiased. Furthermore, right view and right thought must support and reinforce

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each other.\textsuperscript{624} In this way, when there is intelligent reflection, right view can arise and one sees things as they really are. When things are seen as they really are, there is right thinking and attitude.\textsuperscript{625} Thus, intelligent reflection leads to clear and independent thinking which is free from both positive and negative bias.

According to \textit{Andhakarana Sutta}, right thought is thoughts of renunciation, goodwill and harmlessness, thoughts which lead neither to harm for oneself nor others, but is conductive to the growth of wisdom, and do not cause pain and lead to \textit{Nibbāna}. Thus he strengthened such thoughts and brought them to completion.\textsuperscript{626} The explanations of these three varieties of right thought: thoughts of renunciation, goodwill and harmlessness are briefly explained below.

\textbf{1) Thoughts of renunciation (Nekkhammasaṅkappa)}

\textit{Nekkhammasaṅkappa} is thoughts which are free of greed and selfish sensual desire. And this also includes thoughts of renunciation and all kinds of skillful thinking. Thoughts of renunciation are indeed opposed to all that is carnal and sensual. It is a thought which looks for ways to destroy the cycle of suffering, and focuses the whole mind on the object of \textit{Nibbāna}. It does not mean merely as ‘going forth’ (\textit{pabbajjā}), but refers to it as the thought or aspiration of detachment from sensual pleasures.\textsuperscript{627} Thus, a person, whether ascetic or householder, who does not attach or indulge in sensual pleasures, is said to be free from spiritual slavery, and his mind is above the sphere of sensual pleasures.

\textbf{2) Thoughts of goodwill (Abyāpādasāṅkappa)}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{624} M. III., p. 116.
\item \textsuperscript{625} P.A. Payutto, \textit{Bhuddhadhamma}, p. 703.
\item \textsuperscript{626} It., pp. 73-74.
\item \textsuperscript{627} It may be said that if \textit{nekkhammasaṅkappa} or thought of renunciation is meant mere thought of ‘going forth’ from home to homelessness, then this factor of the Noble Path is not suitable for a householder.
\end{itemize}
Abyāpādasāṅkappa refers to thoughts which are free of aversion, hatred or negativity. And this also includes all kinds of thinking which are free of aversion, and implies the condition which is opposite to these, which is mettā, goodwill or a desire for the happiness of others. Mettā is the boundless thoughts of friendship and of universal good will. As the Buddha had not even a moment of ill-will or hatred occurring in his mind. He always extended his mettā to all people in much the same way as he did to Rāhula, his son. This shows how the Buddha cared for the benefit and happiness of others without discrimination, and how he practised what he taught others to do.

3) Thoughts of harmlessness (Avihimsāsaṅkappa)

Avihimsāsaṅkappa means thoughts which are free of cruelty or danger. This gives particular emphasis to the condition which is directly opposite to these, which is compassionate thoughts (karuṇā) of helping others to be free of suffering. This is also a kind of thinking that is free of aversion. Karuṇā is the most valuable characteristic of thought of harmlessness. It is a fact that a compassionate one is very sensitive to other’s suffering, and is ready to sacrifice himself for the sake of others. In many Jātaka Stories, it is evident that the Bodhisatta endeavored himself to help others, to relieve them of their distress, and to promote their happiness in every possible way, sometimes even going to the extent of sacrificing his own life.628 True compassion is not a weak state of mind. It is a strong enduring feeling that motivates one to act and incites one to help the distressed, to relieve them of their pain. This needs strength of mind, much tolerance (khanti) and equanimity (upekkhā). The success of compassion relates to eradicating all forms of violence and relieving the suffering of the distressed. Its failure relates to the arising of passionate grief (domanassa).

628 For example an accounts of selfless sacrifice and compassion of the Bodhisatta, see Mahā-Sutasoma Jātaka, J. V., pp. 246-279.
Thus, equanimity is a necessary virtue to cultivate together with compassion.

Therefore, it points out that right thought can eradicate or destroy two kinds of unwholesome roots, that is, greed (lobha) and hatred (dosā). And this is the path leading to Nibbāna.

**Right thought (sammāsaṅkappa) is the conflict resolution**

Actually, sammāsaṅkappa or right thought is a factor that can help one to protect or eliminate evil or unwholesome thought, especially thoughts accompanied with greed (rāga) and hatred (dosā). Hence, right thought is a stage of developing the thought or mind to develop wisdom that can eliminate the most important root, delusion (moha). Thereby, thought or mind and wisdom are closely related together because when one is accompanied with a right thought, one can regard all things as they are. Or one can understand all things as they are because one is accompanied with right thoughts without greed and hatred. Therefore, for sammāsaṅkappa to resolve conflicts it is necessary to have thoughts or mind in a right stage and without greed, hatred and delusion. In this way, one’s thought or mind can be based on loving-kindness (mettā), compassion (karuṇā) and equanimity (upekkhā), and does not connect with sensual pleasures, ill-will and violence. So conflicts are difficult to arise depending on right thoughts. On the other hand, having had a right thought, one should share his thoughts to deliberate or join with others. This is to seek mutual co-operation among people in society.

Therefore, sammāsaṅkappa can rightly create co-agreement without greed, hatred and delusion among people. And this can decrease or eradicate the attachment in a self-thinking as well as understanding, hearing, receiving, exchanging and advising others. Then, a society of creative thinking will arise.
5.5 CONFLICT AND REMEDY IN MORALITY (Sīla) ON THE CONCEPT OF MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ

The three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, right speech (sammāvāyāma), right action (sammākammanta) and right livelihood (sammā-ājīva) are regarded as the practising or training oneself in morality (sīla) which aims to the purification or rightness of the conducts. These three factors, when practised, enable a person to be happy and peaceful, etc. Moreover, they can ensure that his conduct will continue to be good, and be a basis of the development of mind and wisdom continuously.

5.5.1 Conflict and Remedy by Right Speech (Sammāvācā)

The third factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘sammāvācā (right speech)’. Buddhism regards the three purities of body, speech, and mind as the final aim of a religious life. These are not possible if the speech is not well restrained until it becomes pure. For this reason, the Buddha laid down right speech as one of indispensable factor of the path leading to the ultimate goal of spiritual life.

In Vibhaṅga, right speech is stated as:

“Therein what is right speech? Abstaining from false speech, abstaining from slanderous speech, abstaining from harsh speech, abstaining from frivolous speech. This is called right speech.”\textsuperscript{629}

This indicates that right speech is the abstinence from four wrong speeches. Right speech is an external factor concerned with the benefit of

\textsuperscript{629} Vbh., p. 138.
society rather than individuals. It thus refers to speaking at the proper of
time, place, and circumstance. Moreover, right speech should not be
dominated by unwholesome thoughts of greed, anger, jealousy, pride,
selfishness and so on.630

The four kinds of right speech have already been discussed in the
previous chapter from which it is understood that the function of the
fourfold right speech is nothing else but the negation of false speech.
Namely, to restrain from lying is to speak the truth. To restrain from
slanderous speech is to speak with consideration and in well-spoken
words. To restrain from harsh speech is to speak soft and pleasant words.
To restrain from frivolous speech is to speak proper and righteous word at
the proper time, place, and circumstance.631 It thus is clear that these four
kinds of right speech are not mere negative abstention, but also of
cultivating speech in a positive way. Right speech is regarded as the
treasure of all knowledge that can bring greater benefits to individual and
society. In this way, the Buddha not only taught or advised us to abstain
from evil speech, but also to accept good speech. And such positive
manner of speech is called ‘well spoken.’ As the Buddha says:

"Monks, if a word have five marks, it is well spoken, not
ill spoken, nor is it blameworthy nor blameable by the wise. It is
spoken in season, it is spoken in truth, it is spoken softly, it is
spoken about the goal, it is spoken in amity."632

This indicates that these five marks are the factors that will
determine that the word, which is uttered, is the right speech or a word is

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631 Sn., p. 51.
632 A. III., p. 178.
well spoken. Therefore, if a speaker speaks with a pure mind as well as with no prejudice (*agatī*), the audience will be pleased with his speaking.

With regard to developing *sammāvācā* or right speech, it is pointed out that systematic reflection (*yonisomanasikāra*) is an important factor that can cause right speech because systematic reflection develops right understanding. In this way, one will know and understand how to develop right speech. In the Majjhima Nikāya, the Buddha’s right speech is presented as the example, where it is explained that whatever speech he (Buddha) knows to be untrue (*abhūtaṇī*), false (*atacchaṇī*), useless (*anatthasañhitaṇī*), unpleasant (*appiyaṇī*), and disagreeable (*amanāpaṇī*) to others, he does not speak. Whatever speech that he knows to be true (*bhūtaṇī*), real (*tacchaṇī*), but useless, unpleasant and disagreeable to others, he does not speak. Whatever speech he knows to be true, real, useful (*atthasañhitaṇī*), but unpleasant and disagreeable to others, he knows the right time to express it. Whatever speech he knows to be untrue, false, useless, but pleasant (*piyaṇī*) and agreeable (*manāpaṇī*) to others, he does not speak. Whatever speech he knows to be true, real, but useless, though pleasant and agreeable to others, he does not speak. Whatever speech he knows to be true, real, useful, pleasant and agreeable to others, he knows the right time to express it.633

The above reference clearly indicates that the Buddha always uttered words accompanied with systematic reflection. He also always spoke the truth in accordance with its profit, and the purpose in his speech is nothing else but for the benefit of all beings. Furthermore, it is true that the Buddha’s intention of delivery of his discourse is to state the relationship of speech and its profit, which are the things to be expected by both the speaker and listener.

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In developing right speech, let us consider the following passages, which are stated in the Subhāsita Sutta or the Discourse on ‘Good Speech’ thus:

“The good say that the well-spoken [utterance] is best. One should speak what is righteous, not unrighteous; that is the second. One should speak what is pleasant, not unpleasant; that is the third. One should speak what is true, not false; that is the fourth.”\textsuperscript{634}

And again, in the same discourse the Buddha himself stresses the so-called fact:

“That ward only should one speak by which one would not torment oneself nor harm others. That word indeed is well-spoken. One should speak only the pleasant word, the word which is welcomed. What one speaks without bringing evils to others is pleasant. Truth indeed is the undying word; this is the eternal law. In truth, the good say, the goal and the doctrine are grounded. The sure word which the Buddha speaks for the attainment of quenching, for the putting of an end to misery, is indeed the best of words.”\textsuperscript{635}

**Right speech (sammāvācā) is the conflict resolution**

It is a fact that speech is a part of creating divisions among people; it can also break lives, create enemies, and start wars. On the other hand, it can give wisdom, heal divisions, and create peace too. Although the effects of speech are not as immediately evident as those of bodily action, and its importance and potential is also easily overlooked. But a little reflection will show that speech and its offshoot, the written word, can have enormous consequences for good or for harm. Thus, right speech is

\textsuperscript{634} Sn., p. 52.
\textsuperscript{635} Ibid.
important for conflict remedy, because a right talk or discussion can create an understanding in the words uttered. A right talk should be based on a word which is well, righteous, pleasant and true, without greed, hatred and delusion. This right talk can lead to the good goal, moreover unity, love, and friendship are created among people. On the contrary, if talking is based on one’s greed, hatred and delusion, so it is difficult to lead to the goal.

Therefore, *sammāvācā* or right speech causes process of talking or meeting to lead to the good goal, namely, the unity, love, friendship, and good relationship to each other. Thereby, conflicts or divisions are destroyed. A society of love soon arises.

### 5.5.2 Conflict and Remedy by Right Action (*Sammākammanta*)

The fourth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘*sammā-kammanta* (right action).’ Right action means refraining from unwholesome deeds that arise with the body as natural means of expression. The mental factor (*cetanā*) of abstinence is the pivotal element of this path factor. And because this abstinence applies to actions performed through the body, it is called ‘right action.’ This right action is stated in *Vibhaṅga* thus:

“Therein what is right action? Abstaining from killing beings, abstaining from taking that which is not given, abstaining from sexual misconduct. This is called right action.”

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636 Ibid., p. 51.
638 Vbh., p. 138.
Thus, abstaining from killing beings helps to avoid hostility among human beings, abstaining from taking that which is not given helps avoid insecurity about property and abstaining from sexual misconduct helps avoid suspicion among the man. The aims of right action are to promote moral, honorable and peaceful conduct because it admonishes one from destroying life, from stealing, from dishonest dealings, from illegitimate sexual intercourse, and that he should help and lead others to a peaceful and honorable life in the right way.

According to Buddhist ethics, good conducts cultivated, can be a basis of purifying the mind and developing wisdom because when the body is purified and the mind is steadfast, wisdom can be cultivated. Thereby, right action is an important virtue that has to be developed towards the purification of the mind and wisdom. Whenever one practises the right action, he is good in conduct as well as helps to promote the peace and welfare of the individual and society. Therefore, right action is characterized by non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, while wrong action is characterized by greed, hatred, and delusion. Herewith, right action implies any action that originates from wholesome motives and aimed at the good, benefit and happiness of oneself and of others.

**Right action (sammā-kammanta) is the conflict resolution**

It is a fact that one’s action can effect oneself and others, so a right action is mostly necessary for peaceful co-existence of people in society because its consequence can obviously be seen. Thus, good conduct should be based on amiable actions without greed, hatred and delusion because any action accompanied with greed, hatred and delusion, causes conflicts among people in society. He should help to regulate the right and good rules or laws to control the behavior of the people and to create
or develop good traditions and cultures for society. Beside this, one should also be a good role model for the followers.

Therefore, cooperation to create good virtues in society is the main object of sammākammanta or right action for conflict solution. Since, it helps to take care of each other and creates unity, and eventually the society of unity arises among people.

5.5.3 Conflict and Remedy by Right Livelihood (Sammā-ājīva)

The fifth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘sammā-ājīva’ or ‘right livelihood’. Right livelihood is concerned with ensuring that one earns a living in a righteous way. It is an extension of the two other factors of right speech and right action which refer to respect for truth, life, property and personal relationships.

In Vibhaṅga, right livelihood is stated thus:

“Therein what is right livelihood? Herein a noble disciple, having abandoned wrong livelihood, makes a living by means of right livelihood. This is called right livelihood.”

This points out that right livelihood means that one should earn a living without violating the principles of moral conduct. According to P.A. Payutto, right livelihood (sammā-ājīva), in Buddhism does not refer simply to right and proper profession and its material results. It also refers to the proper performance of duty, and conduct that is appropriate to the payment received. For example, when a child is well-behaved and seeks to repay his parents’ kindness, this is right livelihood for the child.

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639 Ibid.
640 P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 733.
Therefore, right livelihood may involve both the fulfillment of wealth acquired by right way and the quality of life by right conduct.

Actually, right livelihood, in its completely sense, is not referred to right means of acquisition of wealth only, but it also includes the right means of keeping as well as using that wealth. Thus, it is necessary to discuss right livelihood in detail by means of: 1) acquisition, 2) keeping, and 3) using.

1) By means of acquisition

The Buddhist teaching emphasizes the processes, activities, and means of acquisition of wealth by right way more than the income of wealth because it is true that when one through effort seeks the wealth by right means of acquisition, he can earn his living happily and be satisfactory in his livelihood in accordance with his own power, ability, and wisdom. It is stated that one who is industrious (utthana-sampadā), clever, able, interested and responsible in his work, can acquire the benefit and happiness in the present. This indicates that one should not earn his livelihood by wrong means of violating the principles of moral conduct. Moreover, he should follow the principles of moral conduct, and the law of the society. Since his good conduct is honest and sincere, he benefits both himself and related ones.

Therefore, one should avoid wrong means of livelihood, which bring harm and suffering to others in society. Wrong means of livelihood stated by the Buddha are: (i) trading in weapons, (ii) trading in human beings, (iii) trading in flesh, (iv) trading in intoxicants, and (v) trading in poisons. It is these five wrong trades that cause many social problems human beings are facing in the present time. Again, these trades support

641 A. IV., p. 188.
people to do evil to both animals and humanity, so that the lives and properties of other people are not secure. In the Mahācattārīsaka Sutta, the Buddha further mentions several dishonest means of acquiring wealth, which fall under wrong livelihood, namely, practising trickery, boastful talk, insinuation, dissembling, giving up small gains in the hope of some more profitable achievement. Obviously any occupation that is acquired by the violation of right speech and right action is a wrong form of livelihood, but other occupations, such as selling weapons or intoxicants, may not violate those factors and yet be wrong because of their consequences to others. Hence, one should absolutely avoid these dishonest means of livelihood.

In addition, the Buddha’s instruction and advice on right livelihood are addressed both to the householders and to the monks. He has expressly declared to his disciples that monastic life should be absolutely pure and free from fraud in earning livelihood. Furthermore, various kinds of base arts (tiracchānavijjā) are considered as wrong means of livelihood for monks, such as palmistry, portents, dreams, etc. Because these base arts regarded as worldly arts are unworthy for monks, unconnected with the Noble Path, and are not conducive to dispassion and cessation.

2) By means of keeping

Righteousness by keeping is a later step and the consequence of righteousness of acquisition by right livelihood. According to the Buddha’s teaching, right livelihood in this aspect refers to the endowment of keeping or watchfulness (ārakkañçampadā) of one’s possessions without allowing it to get wasted. Whatever one has acquired by constant diligence,

643 M. III., p. 118.
by the strength of one’s limbs, by the sweat of one’s brow, by well-
concerted plans, one has to save and protect it. It is stated that wealth needs 
safeguard and protection from thieves, fire, floods, danger arising from 
authorities, from enemies and unfavorable relatives.\textsuperscript{645} These properties 
can easily come to ruin because of outside dangers, so a person should 
consciously and carefully earn livelihood. On the other hand, in the Kula 
sutta, the Buddha addresses the monks that there are four reasons for the 
lasting of a wealthy family: (i) seeking for what is lost, (ii) repairing what 
is worn out, (iii) moderation in spending, and (iv) putting in authority a 
virtuous woman or man.\textsuperscript{646} Therefore, right keeping should be based on 
clever and appropriate means, and the articles earned through right 
livelihood.

On the other hand, to save and protect one’s possessions, one 
should avoid the causes of ruin or six ways of squandering wealth 
\textit{(apāyamukha)}: (i) drinking intoxicating liquors, (ii) wandering abroad at 
night, (iii) going round watching shows, (iv) indulgence in gambling, (v) 
association with bad companions, and (vi) being lazy in doing work.\textsuperscript{647} 
Therefore, one who is concerned with the safety and protection of his 
wealth should completely avoid these six causes of ruin. The wealth 
should be saved and protected as an investment for the further 
development of a healthy livelihood, and as an insurance against future 
adversity.

In addition, according to Buddha’s teaching, keeping the wealth 
without using or good administration of it is disagreeable because when 
one only keeps it, profits and benefits do not arise for him. He is thus 
regarded as a stingy and culpable man who does not keep himself happy

\textsuperscript{645} A. IV., p. 188. 
\textsuperscript{646} A. II., p. 255. 
\textsuperscript{647} D. III., p. 175.
and cheerful in the right way.\textsuperscript{648} And eventually, his wealth may be destroyed by outside dangers in the future.

3) By means of using

The way one uses wealth is important, because if one uses it in the wrong way, he will easily be ruined. Wealth that has been rightly gained should be used in the right way for promoting both physical benefits and well-being as well as spiritual development. It is a fact that whenever wealth is rightly utilized for the benefit and happiness of oneself and of others, it is like a forest pool with clear, cool and fresh water; folks can draw and drink from it, bathe in it, or use it, as they please.\textsuperscript{649} According to P.A. Payutto, our relationship with wealth should be one that incorporates \textit{nissaraṇa paññā} (detached wisdom, the understanding that leads to detachment), clear knowledge and understanding of the true value and limitations of wealth. The mind must be in control of wealth rather than enslaved by it, and wealth should be used as a tool to create benefit in society rather than contention and strife. It should be used to relieve problems and create happiness rather than tension, suffering and mental disorder.\textsuperscript{650} Therefore, wealth used for the benefit to oneself and others is important.

To understand how to use wealth rightly, the Buddha clearly states that the acquired wealth should be put to the following uses: (i) to support oneself and one’s family, including servants and workers to live in comfort and happily, (ii) to support friends and companions to live in comfort and happily, (iii) to make oneself secure against all misfortunes, (iv) to support meritorious purposes, and (v) to support those religious mendicants who

\textsuperscript{648} A. V., p. 120.
\textsuperscript{649} S. I., p. 116.
\textsuperscript{650} P.A. Payutto, \textit{Bhuddhadhamma}, p. 736.
lead a pure life and to promote one’s own spiritual development. This indicates that the means of using wealth should deliberately be based on consideration, because when one uses the wealth to support oneself and others, he can get the profits and benefits from it and support himself too. However, it is necessary to know how to divide the wealth into proper parts so as to support one and the others. The Buddha clearly states that the ideal way of dividing the income of householders is into four parts: one part should be used for his own needs and to support others, two parts for his business or occupation, and the fourth part should be saved for times of adversity. This is right technique of dividing the livelihood that can be applied in the modern times. This way, a balanced livelihood (samajīvitā) can be maintained. One should be aware of the balance of using wealth, by being neither extravagant nor stingy, just like a person weighing things on a scale, knows how to keep it balanced. If one supports oneself and others in a moderate way (mattaññutā), it is said that one has a balanced livelihood.

Therefore, in Buddhism, right livelihood (sammā-ājīva) is one who possesses a constant mind in practising along the Noble Path and expects spiritual development by seeking wealth using the right means. His seeking should be motivated by will (chanda) and not by craving (taṇhā) because will leads to effort and action based on wisdom (paññā), whereas craving leads to blind seeking based on ignorance (avijjā). Both will and craving lead to satisfaction, but with very different ethical consequences. Furthermore, whatever one has acquired rightly through one’s own effort should be saved and protected rightly. This means that it should be kept

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653 A. IV., p. 189.
with wisdom, rather than keeping it with greed. In other words, such wealth should not become an obsession, or a cause for worry and anxiety. In this way, many wholesome things increase as the Buddha says:

“On the other hand a certain enjoyer of sense-pleasures, seeking after wealth lawfully, not arbitrarily, and making himself happy and cheerful, both shares with others and does meritorious deeds, but makes use of his wealth without greed and longing, without infatuation; he is not heedless of the danger, he is not blind to his own salvation.”

Right livelihood (sammā-ājīva) is the conflict resolution

Right livelihood creates responsibility for mankind, because one who is successful in a right livelihood has to make a lot of effort and is responsible towards his duties as well. A self-respecting person knows the value of all things that are rightly gained by his own powers, and keeps them safely and uses them prudently. Thus, earning livelihood in the right way does not torment one nor harm others. It is also the origin of self-respect, including spreading happiness and peace among people in society. Moreover, one who is successful in a right livelihood, has the mind or desire to help others (karuṇā), who are suffering hardships and miseries. He may share or help others through money or material goods, even by knowledge. He may advise a good career which can help others to earn a livelihood in the right way, thereby ensuring that they do not earn livelihood in the wrong way.

Therefore, sammā-ājīva can eradicate social problems, because it is closely connected with being unselfish and not taking advantage of others. Furthermore, it can really make responsible in one’s duties. Thus, there is peace in the society through sammā-ājīva.

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655 A. V., p. 120.
5.6 CONFLICT AND REMEDY IN CONCENTRATION (SAMĀDHĪ) ON THE CONCEPT OF MAJJHIMĀ PAṬIPADĀ

The three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path, right effort (sammāvāyāma), right mindfulness (sammāsati), and right concentration (sammāsamādhi), are regarded as the developing or training for samādhi (concentration) which aims for the purification of the mind. These three factors, when practised, enable a person’s mind to become powerful and strong. Moreover, they can ensure that his actions will continue to be good, and his mind is ready to realize the truth, which will open the door to freedom, to enlightenment.

5.6.1 Conflict and Remedy by Right Effort (Sammāvāyāma)

The sixth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘sammāvāyāma’ or ‘right effort’. Right effort is the first factor in the section relating to samādhi or higher mental training. It is a strenuous effort in connection with almsgiving, morality, and mental development.

In Vibhaṅga, right effort is stated as:

“Therein what is right effort? Herein a bhikkhu engenders wish, makes effort, arouses energy, exerts the mind, strives for the non-arising of evil, bad states that have not arisen; engenders wish, makes effort, arouses energy, exerts the mind, strives for the abandoning of evil, bad states that have arisen; engenders wish, makes effort, arouses energy, exerts the mind, strives for the arising of good states that have not arisen; engenders wish, makes effort, arouses energy, exerts the mind, strives for the stabilizing, for the collocation, for the increase, for the maturity,
for the development, for the completion of good states that have arisen. This is called right effort.”

This indicates that right effort means that one cultivates a positive attitude and has enthusiasm in the things he is doing, whether in his career or the practice of Dhamma. In Buddhism, effort (vāyāma) implies mental energy and not physical strength. The latter is dominant in animals, whereas mental energy is so in man, who must stir up and develop this mental factor in order to check evil and cultivate healthy thoughts. Thereby, right effort must also be steady, uninterrupted, not too hasty, but based on self-confidence.

From the verses in Vibhanga above, right effort can presented in four divisions, and it is also called the four sammappadhāna, right efforts. Each of the four divisions is given its own specific name, as follows: (i) the effort to prevent the arising of dormant unwholesome states, (ii) the effort to abandon unwholesome states that have already arisen, (iii) the effort to develop wholesome states that have not yet arisen, and (iv) the effort to maintain and perfect wholesome states that have already arisen. These four divisions of right effort can be put into two aspects, namely, unwholesome states (kusala dhamma) and wholesome states (akusala dhamma). The unwholesome states referred to here are the three root causes of all evil, namely, greed (lobha), hatred (dosa), and delusion (moha). All other passions gather round these root causes. While wholesome states are their opposites. The function of right effort thus is fourfold; to prevent, abandon, develop, and maintain. And to give

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656 Vbh., p. 138.
658 A. II., p. 15.
special attention to practical application, these four kinds of right effort should each be examined according to the Pāli texts.

1) **The effort to prevent (sati-varappadhāna)**

The effort to prevent is characterized as the will to prevent the arising of evil, of unwholesome states that have not yet arisen. Namely, one makes an effort, stirs up his energy and exerts his mind. Herein when he perceives a form, or a sound, or an odour, or a taste, or a bodily or mental impression, he neither adheres to the whole, nor to its parts. And he strives to ward off that through which evil and unwholesome states should arise if he remains with unguarded senses, and he guards over the senses, restrains the senses. This is called the effort to prevent.660

2) **The effort to abandon (pahānappadhāna)**

The effort to abandon is characterized as the will to abandon the evil, unwholesome states that have already arisen. Namely, one makes an effort, stirs up his energy and exerts his mind. Herein he does not retain any thought of sensual pleasure, ill-will, violence or any unwholesome states that have arisen, and he abandons them, dispels them, destroys them, causes them to disappear. This is called the effort to abandon.661

3) **The effort to develop (bhāvanappadhāna)**

The effort to develop is characterized as the will to produce and develop wholesome states that have not yet arisen. Namely, one makes an effort, stirs up his energy and exerts his mind. Herein he develops the ‘Factors of Enlightenment’ (bojjhaṅga), which are inclined towards solitude (viveka), dispassion (virāga), and the extinguishing of suffering (nirodha) that ends in deliverance, namely, mindfulness (sati), investigation

[661] Ibid., p. 16.
of the Dhamma (dhamma-vicaya), energy (viriya), rapture (pīti), tranquillity (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi) and equanimity (upekkhā). This is called the effort to develop.  

4) The effort to maintain (anurakkhanappadhāna)

The effort to maintain is characterized as the will to maintain the wholesome states that have already arisen. Namely, one does not allow the wholesome states to disappear, but causes them to grow into the full perfection of development. He makes an effort, stirs up his energy and exerts his mind. Herein, for example, he maintains firmly in his mind a favorable object of meditation (samādhi-nimitta) that has arisen, such as the mental image of the corpses at different stages of decay (asubha). This is called the effort to maintain.

Therefore, right effort must be in the mind, whereby it is brought to a balance, and then applied to practical situations. Application of effort must be balanced and harmonized with other conditions, especially mindfulness (sati) and clear comprehension (sampajañña), so that it is constrained to levels that is neither too tense not too slack. By this reason, right effort is included in the group of samāthi, concentration. It is considered as an essential requisite for concentration, and functions together and simultaneously with the other two factors of the group, that is, right mindfulness (sammāsati) and right concentration (sammāsamādhi). As such, right effort is interrelated and interdependent, because without right effort a man is unable to achieve the enlightenment. It is stated that if this fourfold effort is well cultivated, more developed, it surely induces Nibbāna. In this regard, the Buddha clearly addresses the monks as follows:

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662 Ibid.
663 Ibid., pp. 16-17.
664 P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 756.
“Just as, monk, the river Ganges flows to the east, slides to the east, tends to the east, even so a monk, by cultivating the four right efforts, making much of the four right efforts, flows, slides and tends to Nibbāna.”

**Right effort (sammāvāyāma) is the conflict resolution**

Actually, effort is the basis of success of all works. *Sammāvāyāma* or right effort is important for all actions. It should be noted here that a right effort is the effort to check, verify or investigate oneself, and in wider meaning it is the help to check, verify or investigate all problems occurred in society. Thus, self-verifying can build self-confidence, because it can make one to realize whether he is standing in the right or wrong position. If he is standing in the wrong position, he can seek a way to resolve it. On the contrary, if he is standing in the right position he will make all effort to maintain it. Thereby, if somebody comes to check or investigate him, he is able to open his mind to accept the result of such a check, including the resolve to improve himself. And having done so, he should always check, verify and investigate himself, so as to maintain his own good conducts and rightly to do them more and more. In this way, everybody is careful of their conduct fearing the blame from others. Hence, there is purity and transparency of people’ conduct or performance, and it is difficult for social problems to arise.

Therefore, *sammāvāyāma* or right effort is the effort to investigate everything caused problems in society. It is carefully protection the mistakes. And eventually there is the society of safety soon.

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665 S. V., p. 219.
5.6.2 Conflict and Remedy by Right Mindfulness (*Sammāsati*)

The seventh factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘*sammāsati*’ or ‘right mindfulness’. Right mindfulness is the recollection of wholesome things concerning alms-giving, morality, and mental development. It is the kind of mindfulness that goes along with wholesome consciousness.

In Vibhāṅga, right mindfulness is stated thus:

“Therein what is right mindfulness? Herein a bhikkhu dwells contemplating body in the body, ardent, aware, mindful, removing covetousness and mental pain in the world (i.e., in the body). In feelings. :P : In consciousness. :P : Dwells contemplating ideational object in ideational objects (i.e., the aggregates of perception and mental concomitants), ardent, aware, mindful, removing covetousness and mental pain in the world (i.e., in ideational objects). This is called right mindfulness. (P = Complete each in general form of first example.)”

It is also mentioned in the Abhidhamma that mindfulness (*sati*) is a continuous recollection, state of remembrance, the non-fading. It is a faculty (*indriya*), a power (*bala*), right mindfulness, and the enlightenment factor (*bojjhaṅga*) of mindfulness, which is the factor of the path and is included in the path. And this is right mindfulness.\(^{667}\) *Sati* or mindfulness, thus, not only means ‘not forgetting’, but also ‘non-inattention and non-neglect’. In this way, the meaning of *sati* involves the attention, circumspection, and state of alertness and readiness to deal with

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\(^{666}\) Vbh., pp. 138-139.  
\(^{667}\) Ibid., p. 141.
whatever one encounters and recognition of responsibility in relation to it.\textsuperscript{668}

Mindfulness (sati) is a function of mind or mental factor that is often used with another word of equal significance, that is, sampajañña (clear comprehension). Thereby, the compound word, sati-sampajañña, occurs frequently in the Buddhist texts that they are mutually complementary. On the other hand, the word ‘appamāda (heedfulness)’ is very close to the word sati. Since the word appamāda means the non-neglect of mindfulness that implies ever-present watchfulness or heedfulness in refraining from unwholesome things and doing wholesome things. Here the word is used to definitely denote mindfulness. Thus, it may be said that sati and appamāda are synonyms. Mindfulness is a very important condition in the field of Buddhist ethics. And the Buddha’s teaching stresses the importance of mindfulness in all levels of practice. As the Buddha addresses the monks:

“Monks should dwell mindful and composed. This is our instruction to you.”\textsuperscript{669}

Therefore, mindfulness is an internal factor, and like clear thinking (yonisomansikāra), is often coupled with the external factor of the good friend (kalyāṇamittta).

Regarding the method of practice to establish mindfulness effectively, the Buddha introduces the development of the foundations of mindfulness, called ‘the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (cattāro stipatthāna)’. They are: (i) the contemplation of the body, (ii) the contemplation of feelings, (iii) the contemplation of mind, and (iv) the contemplation of mind-objects. These four foundations of mindfulness

\textsuperscript{668} P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 759.
\textsuperscript{669} S. V., p. 120.
are highly praised by the Buddha as the only path (ekāyano maggo) which can lead to the attainment of purity and to the entering upon the right path and the realization of Nibbāna.670 Now I will briefly discuss in detail the four foundations of mindfulness:

1) The contemplation of the body (kāyānupassanā)

It clearly explains that one’s mind is firmly tied to one’s own body with the rope of right mindfulness. He is constantly observing, and focusing his mind on physical phenomenon such exhaling and inhaling, standing, walking, sitting, sleeping, etc. Whatever the small postures of his body, he knows what he is doing clearly. He closely contemplates his numerous organs as being full of diver impurities which are composed of the four elements. And finally, he often observes the corpses of persons as well as contemplates that his body too would be like this in the future.671 This is the contemplation of the body.

2) The contemplation of feelings (vedanānupassanā)

It reveals that one’s mind is firmly tied to one’s feelings – pleasant feelings (sukhavedanā), unpleasant feelings (dukkhavedanā), and neutral feelings (upekkhāvedanā) – with the rope of right mindfulness. He sees all feelings as merely feelings, not belonging to him, as they arise depending on their causes and conditions, and they will cease when their causes and conditions cease.672 In this way, an aspirant will be able to see the three characteristics (tilakkhaṇa) inherent in feelings, that is, changeability (aniccatā), destructibility (dukkhatā) and insubstantiality (anattatā). This is the contemplation of feeling.

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670 D. II., p. 327.
671 Ibid., pp. 328-333.
672 Ibid., p. 333.
3) The contemplation of mind (*cittānupassanā*)

It points out that one’s mind is firmly tied to one’s thoughts with the rope of right mindfulness. Here one fully knows the real state of the mind at any given moment. Namely, if one fully knows that his mind is consumed with greed, hatred and delusion, then he tries to get rid of them from his mind. Or if it is composed of non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion, then he further cultivates and develops all of these wholesome mental qualities. Or he really knows that his mind is concentrated or unconcentrated, liberated or unliberated, etc. Through this contemplation, he can see the occurrence and disappearance of mental qualities, whether wholesome or unwholesome.673 This is the contemplation of the mind.

4) The contemplation of mental states
(*dhammānupassanā*)

It can truly be said that one’s mind is firmly tied to one’s own mental state with the hope of right mindfulness. A person ponders over the existence or non-existence within his mind of several phenomena (*dhammā*) both wholesome and unwholesome, namely: the five hindrances (*nivaranā*), the five aggregates (*khandhas*), twelve sense-bases (*āyatana*), the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*), and the four noble truths (*ariyasacca*).674 In this way, repeatedly fixing the mind on these mental states will put an end to mental restlessness. Then he has gained control of the mind to concentrate on any object of meditation. This is the contemplation of mental states.

Therefore, whoever steadily develops these four foundations of mindfulness, can certainly expect one of the following two results: either attainment of Arahantship in the present life, or if there is any remainder

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673 Ibid., p. 334.
674 Ibid., pp. 335-345.
for rebirth, the state of Non-Returner (*anāgāmi*), within seven years at the longest.\(^{675}\) Thereby, right mindfulness is an important role in the acquisition of both calm-meditation (*samatha*) and insight-meditation (*vipassanā*) depending on one’s ability in developing mindfulness. And eventually, it can lead one to final liberation, *Nibbāna*.

**Right Mindfulness (*sammāsati*) is the Conflict Resolution**

Actually, in the Noble Eightfold Path, *sammādiṭṭhi* or right view is of primary importance, and *sammāsati* or right mindfulness is secondary because while one is doing, speaking and thinking, he should always have mindfulness, otherwise he may lose all the time. Mindfulness is like the ground beneath the house which supports or assists the components to be built as a house. Thus, it can be said of *sammāsati* as a means of conflict remedy so that right mindfulness is self-knowledge because when one is firmly accompanied with *sammāsati*, he admits his own mistakes without rebuttal or contest, and this is conscious self-knowledge. Also when one has the right mindfulness, he is heedful (*appamāda*), which is a means of protection against non-mindfulness.

Therefore, right mindfulness is heedful or careful to admit self-knowledge. It also helps one to warn both oneself and others from misconducts. Thus, internal and external conflicts can be eradicated. And eventually, a society of carefulness will arise.

**5.6.3 Conflict and Remedy by Right Concentration (*Sammāsamādhi*)**

The eighth factor in the Noble Eightfold Path is called ‘*sammāsamādhi*’ or ‘right concentration’. The term *samādhi* comes under

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\(^{675}\) Ibid., p. 346.
‘sammāsamādhi’, which is one of the original terms employed by the Buddha himself. Right concentration is concentration related to such wholesome consciousness.

In Vibhaṅga, right concentration is stated thus:

“Therein what is right concentration? Herein a bhikkhu, aloof from sense pleasures, aloof from bad states, attains and dwells in the first jhāna accompanied by initial application, accompanied by sustained application, with zest and pleasure born of detachment; inhibiting initial application and sustained application he attains and dwells in the second jhāna with internal refinement, exalted development of mind, without initial application, without sustained application, with zest and pleasure born of concentration; he, desireless of zest, dwells equable, mindful, aware, and he experiences pleasure by way of the body (of mental aggregates); this the Noble Ones declare, “The equable, mindful dweller in pleasure”; he attains and dwells in the third jhāna; by the abandoning of pleasure and by the abandoning of pain, then first terminating mental pleasure and mental pain he attains and dwells in the fourth jhāna (which is) neither pain nor pleasure (but is) purity of mindfulness caused by equanimity. This is called right concentration.”

This reveals that right concentration means the profitable or one-pointedness (cittekaggatā) of mind. Namely, it is the state, in virtue of which consciousness and its concomitants remain evenly and rightly on a single object undistracted and unscattered. Thereby, a factor of one-pointedness of mind has the function of unifying the other mental factors in the task of cognition. It is the factor responsible for the individuating

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676 Vbh., p. 138.
677 Vism., pp. 84-85.
aspect of consciousness, and ensuring that every citta or act of mind remains centered on its object. Right concentration has four foundation of mindfulness as the distinguishing marks and has four right efforts as the requisites. Thus, right concentration is samādhi attuned to wisdom and liberation rather than a selfish desire for psychic powers or special abilities.

Venerable Buddhaghosa, in his Vissudhimagga, has described the process of samādhi development, which aims at developing the concentration purely within the scope of all mundane levels. It can be summarized as follows: first of all, the meditator should purify his precepts (sīlas); then (i) he must get rid of the ten obstructions (palibodhas); (ii) he should approach good company (kalyāṇamitta), who can provide him the subjects of meditation (kammatṭhāna); (iii) then he should adopt anyone of the forty subjects of meditation, which is in accordance with his temperament (carita), including (a) the entry into a monastery which is suited for practising samādhi, and (b) the removal of all subtle obstacles; and (iv) he then practises according to the method of samādhikammatṭhāna.

By this way, a meditator is able to practise the subjects of meditation and to develop his mind to samādhi. He enters two kinds of samādhi, that is, upacāra samadhi and appanā samādhi. Upacāra samādhi or access concentration is almost one-pointed, the five hindrances are in abeyance, and the mind is on the verge of entering the absorptions (jhānas), or attainment concentration. Appanā samādhi or attainment concentration is the highest level of samādhi, found in all the jhānas, and considered to be the mastery of concentration practice.

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678 M. I., p. 363.
679 Vism., p. 91.
680 Ibid., p. 86.
For the four absorptions (jhānas) attained at this highest level of samādhi, it is stated that when the meditator enters the first absorption (pathama-jhāna), the five hindrances (nīvaraṇas) vanish. These five factors of absorption (jhānanga) are present in his mind, that is to say, initial application of thought (vitakka), sustained application of thought (vicāra), joy (pīti), happiness (sukha) and one-pointedness (ekaggatā). By further obtaining of inner tranquillity and one-pointedness of mind, he enters into the state free from initial and sustained application of thought, then the second absorption (dutiya-jhāna) is attained by him, which is born of samādhi, and filled with joy and happiness. In this absorption, there are three factors, namely, joy, happiness and one-pointedness that still exist in his mind. By getting rid off joy, he dwells in equanimity, mindful, with clear awareness, thus he enters the third absorption (tatiya-jhāna). In this stage of absorption, there are two factors, namely, equanimous happiness (upekkhā-sukha) and one-pointedness which still exist in his mind. By getting rid off joy and grief, and by giving up pleasure and pain, he enters into a state beyond pleasure and pain, into the fourth absorption (catuttha-jhāna), which is purified by equanimity and mindfulness. In this stage of absorption, there still exist two factors, namely, equanimity and one-pointedness in his mind.681

It should be noted here that these absorptions are not the end; they are only the means to secure the higher state of mind. In the text of the Dīgha Nikāya, the Buddha addresses Cunda, a lay-devotee, thus:

“The four modes of being addicted and devoted to pleasure, Cunda, conduce absolutely to unworldliness, to

681 M. I., p. 81.
passionless, to cessation, to peace, to insight, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna”. 682

The four modes of being addicted and devoted to pleasure here mean the four absorptions, and their fruits can lead a meditator to being the enlightened one.

**Right Concentration (sammāsamādhi) is the Conflict Resolution**

Actually, *sammāsamādhi* or right concentration is a preparing the mind for the application of keen discernment into the true nature of things. It is a foundation for knowledge and insight which leads to liberation. It can indicate that right concentration causes strength of character, calmness, mental stability, politeness, gentleness, cheerfulness, energy, radiance, goodwill and compassion. And it also prepares the mind for implanting good qualities and encourages good character, so it builds a stability of mind which is a safeguard against mental illness. Thereby, as a means for providing conflict solution it can be stated here that whenever one has stability of mind, wherein his mind is relaxed and relieved of tension, confusion and anxiety, he can work happily or study without mistakes and accidents. He can develop and maintain his bodily and mental health. He can concentrate on building good things and lead himself to success. Thus, peace and happiness appear within his mind.

Therefore, *sammāsamādhi* or right concentration is a safeguard against mistakes, and builds stability of mind by developing the mind all the time. And when everybody can do so they can help to build stability in their society without any conflicts. Thereby, a society of stability arises forever.

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682 D. III., p. 124.
5.7 RESULTS OF CONFLICT REMEDY IN MAJJHIMĀ 
PAṬIPADĀ

5.7.1 Development and Training of Oneself Rightly and 
Consciously

It is a fact that the middle path, which is under the three trainings, 
is the development one’s morality, concentration and wisdom. And the 
important support of developing and training is heedfulness (appamāda). 
Heedfulness or earnestness is the most important factor for practice of the 
middle path to be successful. As the Buddha says:

“Just as, monks, the dawn is the forerunner, the harbinger, 
of the arising of the sun…even so possession of earnestness is 
the forerunner…of the arising of the Ariyan eightfold way.

Of a monk who is a possession of earnestness it may be 
expected that he will cultivate and make much of the Ariyan 
eightfold way”.

Thereby, a practitator who is supported by heedfulness practises in 
accordance with the middle path to develop and train himself carefully. 
This is to protect against all misconducts which may lead him the wrong 
way. Thus, having developed and trained himself rightly, a practitator 
comes to the right way and can attain his goal, the cessation of suffering. 
The developing and training supported by heedfulness is the important 
basis of a practitator who practises in accordance to the middle path.

683 S. V., p. 29.
5.7.2 Unwholesome Roots and Defilements are Eliminated and Destroyed

When one practices the middle path, right view or understanding arise for him, whereby he does right deeds, speeches, and thoughts as well as slowly avoids wrong deeds, speeches, and thoughts. In this way, wholesome roots (non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion) quietly arise within one’s mind, meanwhile unwholesome roots (greed, hatred, and delusion) are slowly eradicated. And eventually he can destroy unwholesome roots as in the Brahmin sutta the Buddha states:

“Right view, Ānanda, if cultivated and made much of, ends in the restraint of lust, ends in the restraint of hatred, ends in the restraint of illusion. Right aim, Ānanda, …right speech…right action…right living…right effort…right mindfulness…right concentration, Ānanda, if cultivated and made much of, ends in the restraint of lust, ends in the restraint of hatred, ends, in the restraint of illusion”.

Thereby, the middle path is like the best of cars which can lead one to the goal. This path can totally fight, destroy and remove all evil actions, mistakes, sufferings and defilements. It is like the light which always eradicates the dark, and eventually the dark does not appear. Thus, this path is the safe way which not only can protect a practitator from all harms and conflicts, but also lead him to attain Nibbāna.

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684 M. I., p. 55.
685 S. V., p. 5.
5.7.3 Approach to the Cessation of Kamma

Whenever, one can practise in accordance with the middle path, it can lead one to the way of the cessation of kamma. Since, having practiced according to this path, his actions are deeds neither dark nor bright as well as their results are neither dark nor bright. Thus, all actions come to cessation as the Buddha says:

“There is a dark deed with a dark result; a bright deed with a bright result; a deed with a dark result; a bright deed with dark and bright result; and the deed that is neither dark nor bright, with a result neither dark nor bright, which being itself a deed conduces to the waning of deeds. …and of what sort, monks, is the deed neither dark nor bright, with a result neither dark nor bright, a deed which conduces to the waning of deeds? It is right view …right concentration”.  

“And just in this Ariyan eightfold Way are the steps leading to action’s ending: right view and so forth. And when the Ariyan disciple thus knows action…; he knows the penetrative godly life as action’s ending”.  

Thus, the middle path can lead one to overcome all actions. It should be clearly stated here that the cessation or waning of kamma does not mean giving up all activity, the cessation of unfortunate circumstances, or non-action. It refers rather to the giving up of all unenlightened or evil action and maintaining the actions of the enlightened ones.  

Namely, one avoids or does not act upon the unenlightened action based on craving and clinging because if he clings the concept of good and evil as well as the hope of its result. Action based  

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687 A. II., pp. 238, 241.  
688 A. III., p. 294.  
689 P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 530.
on this kind of perception is called *kamma*, because it is based on craving and clinging. Whereas, the cessation of *kamma* means the giving up of all actions based on craving and clinging. For instance, the noble ones (*ariya*), perform good and useful actions with wisdom and compassion. Even then, they only refer to their action as good in keeping with worldly conventions, they do not cling to the notion that they have done good actions. They perform good actions simply for their good results, for the realization of their objective. Their actions thus are not referred to as *kamma*. The middle path is a method for the giving up of the actions known as *kamma*.

### 5.7.4 Attainment the Benefits and the Goals Rightly

All actions have a goal, a path without a goal is empty and a goal without a path is blind. In Buddhism, the ultimate goal of spiritual life is *Nibbāna*, and the middle path practiced under the three trainings is the right way leading to such a goal. In Buddhism the benefits and goals can be classified into three kinds, as follows:690

1) **Benefits are obtainable here and now**

A practitator who leads the middle path to practise under the threefold training, gains temporal welfare. He lives safely as well as creates a good environment around his areas. His conduct and body is always ready to do more good. Meanwhile, he also develops quality and efficiency of the mind, so that it is most conducive to noble conduct and the development of wisdom. Furthermore, he rightly knows and understands all things as they really are and this cause of conduct helps to adopt an attitude towards things which is conducive to welfare. He is

ready to encounter all things wisely and consciously. Therefore, he acquires welfare in his life such as wealth, status, happiness, praise, friendship, family, etc.

Thus, having acquired the benefits, he also advises others to follow his example. In Buddhism, giving advice to others to practise rightly and consciously is also the duty of good Buddhists. As the Buddha addresses the monks:

“Walk, monks, on tour fro the blessing of the manyfolk, for the happiness of the manyfolk out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the blessing, the happiness of devas and men”. 691

2) The good should be won in the life to come

After having acquired temporal welfare, if a practitator cannot attain enlightenment, after his passing away, he attains spiritual welfare, in the next life. He is always accompanied with consciousness, even in his death. Thereby, consciously he goes to the good next life and is happy in heaven. As is mentioned in the Pāli text:

“Monks, I know not of any other single thing so apt, when body breaks up after death, to cause the rebirth of beings in the Happy Lot, in the Heaven World as right view.

Possessed of right view, monks, bings are reborn…in the Heaven World”. 692

Happiness or result in the next life, can also mean happiness or result in this life, but in the future. As P.A. Payutto points out that happiness or result is also the development of the mind in virtues and morality, the performance of merit and good actions, and the

691 Vin. IV., p. 28.
692 A. I., p. 28.
development of the noble life. It is inspired by faith and self-sacrifice, confidence in virtuous qualities, and an appreciation of the subtle happiness and special qualities that result from mind-training and the jhānas.\textsuperscript{693} Therefore, happiness in this level emphasizes mental virtue more than the external material as a level of happiness in this life.

3) The final goal

It is fact that the level of this goal is the most essential and highest goal in life. And the ultimate goal of Buddhist teaching is nibbāna, the liberation. As explained that the real goal of practising in accordance with the middle path is the cessation of suffering, the liberation. Thus, the middle path is a way which truly leads one to this goal, nibbāna, because if a practitator tries to practise in accordance with the middle path rightly, he attains nibbāna. As mentioned in the Nibbānapaṭīṭaṃ sutta:

“And what is that path, friend, what is that approach to the realization of this Nibbāna?

It is this Ariyan Eightfold Path, friend, for the realization of Nibbāna, to wit: right view, right aim, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. Such, friend, is this path, this approach to the realization of Nibbāna.”\textsuperscript{694}

5.8 CONCLUSION

From a study of majjhima paṭipadā (the middle path) as a means to the conflict and remedy in Buddhist philosophy, the middle path is regarded as the highest level of Buddhist ethics. It is the way which leads

\textsuperscript{693} P.A. Payutto, Bhuddhadhamma, p. 537.
\textsuperscript{694} S. IV., p. 170.
a practitator to the ultimate goal in Buddhism, *nibbāna* or liberation, which is the best happiness,⁶⁹⁵ the absolute peace, and the supreme freedom. Since, when one can take the middle path to practise under the threefold training (*tisikkhā*) of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhī*) and wisdom (*paññā*), it is full of good conduct both in deeds and words, stability and carefulness of mind, and right thought and wisdom. Thereby, a person’s body, behavior, mind and wisdom are rightly developed in a good way. On the other hand, all people, monks and householders, Buddhists and non-Buddhists, can walk or practise along this path, and get the results, if they all have the confidence and make an effort to practise along the middle path continuously.

The *mijjhimā patipadā* focuses on the cultivation and development of one’s morality, concentration and wisdom to eliminate the main roots of unwholesome, namely, greed, hatred and delusion. Hence, it is the most important virtue for conflict solution among people in a society because the middle path can create the absolute society or utopia in Buddhism, that is, (i) a society of wisdom, (ii) a society of creative thinking, (iii) a society of love, (iv) a society of unity, (v) a society of peace, (vi) a society of safety, (vii) a society of carefulness, and (viii) a society of stability.

Thereby, conflicts or disharmonies are completely eradicated. And everybody will live a life of peace forever.

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⁶⁹⁵ “*Nibbānaṁ paramāṁ sukhaṁ*”, Dh., p. 30.