CHAPTER: TWO

The study of Kāyasucarita

(Good bodily action)

This chapter will explain in detail how Buddha’s ethics is harmonious to any society and the modern society as well because Buddhist ethics is not arbitrary standards invented by man for his own utilitarian purpose. And also it will expose how Buddhist ethics will lead and run in the social, economical and political fields forever.

2.1 Three Kinds of Abstention

Virati means abstaining from evils in deed and speech. In keeping the moral precepts well, virati plays an important role. Virati is of three kinds.

(1) Abstention from four verbal evil actions: telling falsehood, slanderering harsh speech, idle talk is called micchāvācā virati.

(2) Abstention from three physical evil actions: killing, stealing, committing sexual misconduct is called micchākammanta virati.

(3) Abstention from three physical evil actions and four verbal evil actions mentioned above relating to livelihood is called micchājīva
Viratī.¹

### 2.2 Viratī in Three Actions

There are three practical aspects of each three kinds of viratī mentioned above. They are: sampatta viratī, samadāna viratī and samuccheda viratī.²

Samadānaviratī means undertaking to observe five or eight or nine moral precepts before the Buddha image or a Bhikkhu or elders and refraining from doing evil actions. For example, if a person get a chance to kill an animal but spare it because he or she has taken the precept of abstention from killing, it is called samadāna viratī. It also means that a person has made up one’s mind not to do any evil before he or she actually encounters evil and make up one’s mind or arousing feelings of determination on a vow that you wish to observe. It may be when occasion comes one will be reminded by oneself about the vow or determination.³

Once, there was a layman who, after taking precepts from a Bhikkhu, went to the fields to search for his lost cow. While he was ascending a hillock, a big python entwined his legs. As he was about to

---

¹ Dhs. A, p. 216 (Roman)
² Sn. A.I.p. 299 (Roman).
³ Dhs.A, p. 102 (Roman)
kill the snake with his sword, he remembered he had taken sīla (precepts) from his teacher and thought “I shall accept death if need be; I shall not take other’s life. Breaching of moral precepts resembles destroying the Dhamma and it is best for me to give up my life.” So he did not harm the snake and dropped his sword. Then, he reflected on the moral precepts he was observing. Due to the power of sīla, the snake let him free and went away. Like that lay person, everyone should keep the moral precepts at the risk of one’s life and give up one’s life instead of breaking one’s moral precepts. There is no doubt about giving away one’s property and dignity for the sake of keeping one’s morality. The invisible good results always exist behind every relinquishment.

*Sampatta viratī* means incidental abstinence from committing evil actions when one is confronted with the cause and the object for committing evil actions. Once in Sri Lanka, a youth named Cakkana was tending to his sick mother whose physician recommended the fresh meat of a rabbit as a cure. So the youth went into the forest in search of a rabbit. He caught a small one in a paddy field. When he was about to kill it, he suddenly felt pity for the timid or frightened animal and set it free. When he was back home, he told his sick mother the incident and then made a solemn utterance; “Ever since I came to know what was right and

---

4 Ibid., p. 102 (Roman)
5 Ibid., p. 102 (Roman)
what was wrong, I have never taken the life of any living being with a
will to do so.” Due to this solemn truth, his mother recovered from her
ailment as if the illness was removed and thrown away from her. In this
incident, the youth had not observed any sīla beforehand. But at the time
he caught the rabbit, instant compassion made him refrain from killing.
This is a case of samspatta viratī.6

After practicing the two steps, samadāna and sampatta virati one
can observe the third one, samucccheda virati, the eradication of moral
defilements. The abstention that is associated with maggacitta (supra-
mundane consciousness) is called samucceda viratī, because when
maggacitta is attained, the abstention at that moment is for the sake of
total cutting off of moral defilements.7 When a poisonous tree together
with its roots was ground into powder and burnt to ashes, it will no longer
produce any fruits. In the same way, noble persons (ariyas) are free from
immoral actions all times because they have eradicated all defilements
through samucceda pahāna. Even a stream-winner (sotāpanna) needs
not specially observe the precepts in this life as well as in his next
existence. The moral precepts have already been established in him
forever.

6 Dhs.A, p. 102 (Roman)
7 Ibid, p. 102
2.3 Impurity and Purity of Sīla

In observing the precepts, if the first or last precept is breached, the sīla is said to be broken, if one of the middle precepts is breached, the sīla is said to have a hole in it. If alternate precepts are breached, the sīla is said to be spotted. If two or three precepts are breached in a row at the beginning, the middle or the end, the sīla is said to be striped. These broken, punctured, spotted and striped sīla are impure sīla. Sīla that is unbroken, intact, spotless and un-striped is pure morality. It is called bhujissa sīla that lead one to liberation from slavery to craving (taṇhā). It is also called viññupasattha sīla because it is praised by the wise. It is also called “aparāmattha pārisuddhisīla” because it is devoid of strong desire to gain the great wealth and happiness of human beings or devas and devoid of bigoted belief that one can realize nibbāna by mere moral practice. Therefore sīla that is unbroken, intact, spotless, unstrained, able to resist craving, praised by the wise and untarnished by craving and wrong view is the pure morality.

Sīla endowed with these seven factors is conducive to concentration of mind. Therefore, one who wants to develop concentration must exert oneself to be endowed with these seven factors.

---

8 Vism,p. 49 (PTS)
9 Ibid, p. 53 (PTS)
One should safeguard the moral precepts well just like a female pheasant safeguarding her eggs at the risk of her life. Or just like a yak safeguarding its feather at the risk of its life, or just like a person who has only one son or daughter looks after him or her tenderly and fondly, or just like one whose one eye is blind safeguarding the remaining eye.\(^\text{10}\)

The *Pāli* word for moral discipline, *sīla*, has three levels of meaning:

1. Inner virtue, i.e., endowment with such qualities as kindness, contentment, simplicity, truthfulness, patience, etc.;
2. Virtuous actions of body and speech which express those inner virtues outwardly; and
3. Rules of conduct governing actions of body and speech designed to bring them into accord with the ethical ideals.

These three levels are closely intertwined and not always distinguishable in individual cases. But if we isolate them, *sīla* as inner virtue can be called the aim of the training in moral discipline, *sīla* as purified actions of body that manifests of that aim, and *sīla* as rules of conduct the systematic means of actualizing the aim. Thus *sīla* as inner virtue is established by bringing our bodily and verbal actions into accord

\(^{10}\) D, A, I, p. 55
with the ethical ideals, and this is done by following the rules of conduct intended to give these ideals concrete form.

The Buddhist texts explain that sīla has the characteristic of harmonizing our actions of body and speech. sīla harmonizes our actions by bringing them into accord with our own true interests, that is keeping mind free from greed or hatred, with the well-being of others, and with universal laws. Actions contrary to sīla lead to a state of self-division marked by guilt, anxiety, and remorse. But the observance of the principles of sīla heals this division, bringing our inner faculties together into a balanced and centered state of unity. Sīla also brings us into harmony with other men. While actions undertaken in disregard of ethical principles lead to relations scarred by competitiveness, exploitation, and aggression, actions intended to embody such principles promote concord between man and peace, cooperation, and mutual respect. The harmony achieved by maintaining sīla does not stop at the social level, but leads our actions into harmony with a higher law the law of kamma, of action and its fruit, which reigns invisibly behind the entire world of sentient existence.

The need to internalize ethical virtue as the foundation for the path translates itself into a set of precepts established as guidelines to good conduct.
1. *Pāṇātipāta virati*

2. *Adinnādāna virati*

3. *Kāmesumicchācārā virati*

(1) The training rule of abstaining from taking life;

(2) The training rule of abstaining from taking what is not given;

(3) The training rule of abstaining from sexual misconduct;

These three *kāyasucarta* are the minimal ethical code binding on the lay Buddhist devotees. The precepts function as the core of the training in moral discipline. They are intended to produce, through methodical practice, that inner purity of will and motivation which comes to expression as virtuous bodily conduct. Hence the equivalent term for precept, *sikkhāpada*, which means literally “factor of training,” that is, a factor of the training in moral discipline. However, the formulation of ethical virtue in terms of rules of conduct meets with an objection reflecting an attitude that is becoming increasingly widespread. This objection, raised by the ethical generalist, calls into question the need to cast ethics into the form of specific rules. It is enough; it is said, simply to have good intentions and to let ourselves be guided by our intuition as to what is right and wrong. Submitting to rules of conduct is at best superfluous, but worse tends to lead to a straightjacket conception of morality, to a constrictive and legalistic system of ethics.
However, specialty of the teaching of the Buddha lies in the fact, that the Buddha gave importance to the mind. Before the above said precepts is broken, the mind will get polluted with greed or hatred that is the reason the Buddha has selected them for the people who wish to be a virtuous one.

2.4 Pāṇātipātā virati (abstaining from taking life)

The first of the three kāyasucarita reads in English, “I undertake Pāṇātipātā virati - the training rule to abstain from taking life.”

Here the word ‘pāṇa’, means that which breathes, denotes any living being that has breath and consciousness. It includes animals, insects as well as men, but does not include plants as they have only life but not breath or consciousness. The word “living being” is a conventional term, an expression of common usage, signifying in the strict philosophical sense the life faculty (jīvitindriya). The word tipāta means literally striking down, hence killing or destroying.

Thus the precept is abstinence (virati) from the taking of life. Though the precept’s wording prohibits the killing of living beings, in terms of its underlying purpose it can also be understood to prohibit injuring and torturing. The Pāli Buddhist commentaries formally define
the act of taking life thus: “The taking of life is the volition of killing expressed through the doors of either body or speech, occasioning action which results in the cutting off of the life faculty in a living being, when there is a living being present and (the perpetrator of the act) perceives it as a living being.”11

The first important point to note in this definition is that the act of taking life is defined as volition (cetanā). Volition is the mental factor responsible for action (kamma); it has the function of arousing the entire mental apparatus for the purpose of accomplishing a particular aim, in this case, the cutting off of the life faculty of a living being. The identification of the transgression with volition implies that the ultimate responsibility for the act of killing lies with the mind, since the volition that brings about the act is a mental factor. The body function merely as doors for that volition, i.e., as channels through which the volition of taking life reaches expression. Killing is classified as a bodily deed since it generally occurs via the body, but what really performs the act of killing is the mind using the body as the instrument for actualizing its aim.

A second important point to note is that killing need not occur directly through the body. The volition to take life can also express itself

11Khp. A, p.30 (Roman)
through the door of speech. This means that the command to take life, given to others by way of words, writing, or gesture, is also considered a case of killing. One who issues such a command becomes responsible for the action as soon as it achieves its intention of depriving a being of life.

### 2.4.1 Five Factors of the First Precept

The act of the killing can be performed in six ways, which has been mentioned in the commentary on *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* as follows:

1. killing with one’s own hands;
2. causing another to kill by giving an order;
3. killing at a distance by shooting with an arrow or a gun throwing grenade, pelting with stones, etc.;
4. killing by digging trenches and entrapping a being;
5. killing by mantras or occult sciences (*vijja*)
6. killing by magical or psychic powers (*iddhi*).¹²

A complete act of killing constituting a full violation of the precept involves five factors:

1. The one who is aimed to be killed is a living being
2. One knows that the one to be killed is a living being.

¹²Dhas.A. p.97 (Roman)
(3) One has the desire volition to kill.

(4) One makes the effort to kill.

(5) The being dies because of that effort and action.\textsuperscript{13}

Any action performed in accordance with the above five factors is called \textit{pāṇātipāta kamma}. The penetrator will suffer the bad consequences in this life and he will also be reborn in the four miserable realms after his death.

If anyone of the above five factors is missing, the action can’t be called \textit{pāṇātipāta kamma}. For instance, if one steps accidentally on insects and kills them as one walks along the road, one does not commit \textit{pāṇātipāta kamma} because this incident happens unintentionally. It is just a demeritorious action.

For this action, although the penetrator will not be reborn in miserable realms, he may suffer the evil consequences of his demeritorious action commensurately.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}Dhs.A, p.97 (Roman)
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid. p.97 (Roman)
2.4.2 The Consequences of Killing Living Beings

Whosoever kills any living being will be reborn in one of the four lower abodes after death. Even when he is free from there and is again reborn as a man, he will encounter the following evil consequences:

(1) Having physical deformities and disfigurements,
(2) Being ugly,
(3) Being pale and feeble
(4) Being dull and inactive
(5) Being easily frightened when confronted with danger
(6) Being killed by other or facing death in youth,
(7) Suffering from many diseases
(8) Having few friends and
(9) Being separated from beloved ones.\(^\text{15}\)

The consequences of killing a living being may be great or small depending on different situations. According to the size and moral virtue of the victim, the consequences may be great or small. With regard to animals naturally, lacking in morality, if the size of the animal is small, the consequence is small; if the size of animal is large, the consequence is great. With regard to human beings, if the victim is of low morality,

\(^{15}\text{Khp-A.p.32 (Roman)}\)
concentration and wisdom, the consequence is small, if the victim is of high morality, high concentration and great wisdom, the consequence is great. Where the victims are of equal size and of equal morality, the consequence is small if the killer’s motives and efforts are weak, and the consequence is great if the killer’s motives and efforts are strong.\textsuperscript{16}

2.4.3. The Benefits of Abstaining from Killing

A person who abstains from killing any living being will be reborn after his death in a good destination either as a human being or as a celestial being. If he is reborn as a man he will possess good health, longevity etc. All living beings are afraid of death.\textsuperscript{17} No one wants to have a torturing. Physical pain and lack of organs are the consequences of torturing and killing living beings. So everyone should refrain from torturing and killing others by being considerate to them. On the other hand the one who abstains from killing living beings will enjoy the benefits which are the opposites of the consequences of killing living beings.

\textsuperscript{16} Dhs. A, p. 97 (Roman)
\textsuperscript{17} Iti. A,p. 228 (Roman)
2.4.4 The Story Illustrating the Consequence of Killings

Once, a housewife went to the market to buy meat in order to feast a special guest. As she could not get meat from any place she killed a little sheep which was bred in her house. The guest and her husband were very satisfied with the meat. But when she died, she was cast into hell where she had to suffer for a long time. After that, she was born as an animal as many times as the number of hair on the little sheep she had killed. In every animal life, she was killed being cut at the throat as she had killed.

According to the dhammapada, the Buddha said, that

Yo daṇḍena adaṇḍesu appaduṭhesu dussati
dasannamaññataram thānaṃ khippameva nigacchati.
Vedanaṃ pharusam jānim sarīrassa va bhedanam
garukam vāpi ābādham cittakkhepaṃ va pāpune.
Rājato vā upasaggaṃ abbhakkhānāṃ va dāruṇaṃ
Parikkhayam va ṇātīnaṃ bhogānāṃ va pabhāṅguraṃ
Atha vāssa agārāni aggi dahati pāvako
kāyassa bhedā dyooaṇño nirayaṃ so papajjati.18

---

18 Dhammapada, daṇḍa vagga, p 47
He who does harm with weapons to these who are harmless and should not be harmed will soon come to any of these ten evil consequences:

1. He will be subject severe pain,
2. or impoverishment,
3. or injury to the body
4. or serious illness or lunacy,
5. or misfortunes following the wrath of the king
6. or wrongful and serious accusations,
7. or loss of relatives,
8. or destruction of wealth
9. or the burning down or his house by fire or by lightning.
10. After the dissolution of his body, the fool will be reborn in the plane of continuous suffering (niraya).

2.4.5 The Story of Thera Mahā Moggallāna

While residing at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verses 137- of this book, with reference to Thera Mahā Moggallāla.

Once, the nigantha ascetics planned to kill Thera Mahā Moggallāla because they thought that by doing away with Thera Mahā Moggallāla
the fame and fortune of the Buddha would also be diminished. So they hired some assassins to kill Thera Mahā Moggallāna who was staying at kālasilā near Rājagaha at that time. The assassins surrounded the monastery; but Thera Mahā Moggallāna with his supernormal power got away first through a koy hole, and for the second time through the roof.

Thus they could not get hold of the thera for two whole months. When the assassins again surrounded the monastery during the third month, Thera Mahā Moggallāna, recollecting that he one of his past existences, did not exercise his supernormal power. So he was caught and the assassins beat him up until all his bones were utterly broken. After that, they left his body in a bush, thinking that he has passed away. But the thera, through his jhānic power, revied himself and went to see the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery. Then he informed the Buddha that he would soon realize parinibbāna at kālasilā near Rājagaha, the Buddha told him to go only after expounding the Dhamma to the congregation of bhikkhus, as that would be the last time they would see him. So, Thera Mahā Moggallāna expounded the Dhamma and left after paying obeisance seven times to the Buddha.

The news of the passing away of Thera Mahā Moggallāna at the bands of assassins spread like wild fire. King Ajātasattu ordered his men to investigate and get hold of culprits, the Assassins were caught
sorrowful over the death of therī Mahā Moggallāna, and could not understand why such a personage like Thera Mahā Moggallāma should do at the hands of assassins to the Bhikkus. “Bhikkus! Considering the Moggallāna had lived a noble life in this existence, he should not have met with such a death. But in one of his past existence, he had done a great wrong to his own parents, who were both blind. In the beginning, he was a very dutiful son, but after his marriage, his wife began to make trouble and she suggested that he should get rid of his parents.

He took his blind parents in a cart into a forest, and there he killed them by beating them and making them believe that it was some thief who was beating them, for that evil deed he suffered in niraya for a long time; and in this existence, his last, he has died at the hands of assassins. Indeed, by doing wrong to those who should not be wronged, one is sure to suffer for it. The little sheep.\(^\text{19}\)

\(^\text{19}\). Dhp.II, p. 110 (PTS)
2.5 Adinnādāna virati (abstaining from taking what is not given)

The second precept reads: *Adinnādāna virati*, “I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking what is not given.” The word ‘*adinna*’, meaning literally “what is not given,” signifies the belongings of another person over which he exercises ownership legally and blamelessly (*adaññapo anupavajjo*). Thus no offence is committed if the article taken has no owner, e.g., if logs are taken to make a fire or stones are gathered to build a wall. Further, the other person has to have possession of the article taken legally and blamelessly; that is, he has to have the legal right over the article and also has to be blameless in his use of it. This latter phrase apparently becomes applicable in cases where a person gains legal possession of an article but does so in an improper way or uses it for unethical purposes. In such cases there might be legitimate grounds for depriving him of the item, as when the law requires someone who commits a misdemeanor to pay a fine or deprives a person of some weapon rightfully his which he is using for destructive purposes.

The act of taking what is not given is formally defined thus:

“Taking what is not given is the volition with thievish intent arousing the activity of appropriating an article belonging to another
legally and blamelessly in one who perceives it as belonging to another.”²⁰ As in the case of the first precept the transgression here also consists ultimately in volition. This volition can commit the act of theft by originating action through body or speech; thus a transgression is incurred either by taking something directly by oneself or else indirectly, by commanding someone else to appropriate the desired article. The fundamental purpose of the precept is to protect the property of individuals from unjustified confiscation by others. Its ethical effect is to encourage honesty and right livelihood.

According to the commentaries, for a complete breach of the precept to be committed five factors must be present:

1. An article should be belonging to another legally and blamelessly;

2. The perception of it as belonging to another;

3. The thought or intention of stealing;

4. The effort made of taking the article; and

5. The actual appropriation of the article.²¹

By reason of the third factor there is no violation in taking another’s article if we mistakenly perceive it as our own, as when we

²⁰ Khp. A, p. 26 (Roman)
²¹ Paramatthajotika, p. 22
might confuse identical-looking coats, umbrellas, etc. The third factor again provides a safeguard against accidental appropriation, while the fifth asserts that to fall into the class of a transgression the action must deprive the owner of his article. It is not necessary that he be aware that his possession is missing, only that it be removed from his sphere of control even if only momentarily.

Second Precept is adinnādāna viratī. It means abstaining from taking what is not given. Taking other’s things without asking for permission of owner and taking other’s properties by force or by cheating or by trick or by trading with false weight, false measuring basket, or false scale or adulteration are adinnādānakamma.²²

If everyone observes this precept, we could keep our house open and unlocked. We wouldn’t need the police for our security. Nevertheless, there are some people who violate it, and we live under heavy security forces. Reflecting on world history in the nineteenth century, some powerful countries colonized other countries. Their policy was obviously against this precept. The colonial countries lived unhappily under imperial countries because they had lost their country, their culture, their civil rights and their nationality. They did not have freedom and were oppressed in many ways. About a hundred years ago,

²² Dhs. A, p. 96 (Roman); Iti. A, p. 219
the Britain took over (colonial) our country, Myanmar (Burma) and dethroned our royal King, Thibaw. Since then, the country has suffered for many years without independence. Countries often ruled by corrupted governments become poor. The government officials put the revenues of tax-payers into their own pockets without using them for the welfare of their country. People, therefore, suffer from a shortage of basic needs such as food, medicine, electricity, water, communication and transportation.

People also violate this moral precept because of their extreme greed which motivates them to do corrupt acts. They should try to control greed in order to keep the precept of abstaining from stealing. In order to control greed, they should reflect on the disadvantages of stealing as mentioned in the Buddhist scriptures and try to eradicate greed with the help of Insight meditation.

2.5.1 Five Factors of the Second Precept

(1) The thing stolen is possessed by other.
(2) One knows that it is other’s property.
(3) One has the intention to steal it.
(4) One makes bodily or verbal actions and
(5) Effort to steal it.\textsuperscript{23}

Any action accompanied by these five factors is called \textit{adinnādāna kamma}.

\textbf{2.5.2 The Consequences of taking what is not given}

One who commits stealing will suffer evil consequences in this life and he will also be reborn in \textit{apāya}-lower abodes when he dies.\textsuperscript{24} Even when he is freed from there and is again reborn as a man, he will encounter the following evil consequences:

(1) Being poor

(2) Having bodily and mental suffering

(3) Being tortured by hunger and starvation

(4) Having unfulfilled wishes

(5) Having unstable and easily perishable fortune

(6) Having properties destroyed by the five enemies, namely, flood, fire, thieves, bad inheritors and bad rulers.\textsuperscript{25}

The consequence of theft may be grave or minor depending on the morality and virtue of the owner and the value of the stolen properties.

\textsuperscript{23}Dhs.A, p. 98 (Roman)
\textsuperscript{24}A.A. II, p. 155 (PTS)
\textsuperscript{25}Khp. A, p. 26 (Roman)
Stealing things from one who is endowed with morality and virtue is a grave consequence whereas stealing things from one who lacks morality and virtue is a minor consequence. If the stealing thing is of less value, the consequence of theft is minor whereas if the stealing thing is of great value, the consequence of theft is grave because if the property stolen is of less value, the amount of loss is small to the owner, whereas if the property stolen is of great value, the amount of loss is great to the owner. Therefore, the consequence of stealing the valuable thing is greater than the consequence of stealing the property of less value.

In a case of theft that one steals two things of different value from two owners, if stealing things are of equal morality and virtue, the consequence of theft may be grave or minor depending on the condition of defilements in the thief, if the defilements in the thief are strong, the consequence of theft is grave, whereas the defilements in the thief are weak, the consequence of theft is minor.\footnote{Dhs. A, p. 99 (Roman); Iti. A, p. 220}

\subsection*{2.5.3 The Benefits of Abstaining from stealing}

One who abstains from stealing others’ properties will be reborn in a celestial abode after his death, and in whatever existence he may be, he will enjoy the following benefits:
(1) He is wealthy,
(2) He does not have to work hard for a living,
(3) He has plenty of food and drinks,
(4) He easily gets what he wants;
(5) He is skillful in trade and prosperous
(6) His wealth is not destroyed by the five elements, namely flood, conflagration, tyrant, thief, and sons and daughters who are unworthy heirs.  

2.5.4 The Story Illustrating the Consequences of Stealings

Once upon a time, four women in Rājagaha country amassed riches through malpractice of short changing and adulteration in selling their goods. They died in their prime life and became Petas, miserable being, outside the city. At night they entered the city looking for scattered food remnants or saliva or phlegm spat out by human being as they went along one street after another, they came to their former houses and saw their husbands enjoying with new wives. They felt so painful that they cried out. “We have been suffering miserably for having amassed wealth unlawfully while our husbands are enjoying to their heart’s content with

27Khp. A, p. 26 (Roman); Iti. A. p. 222
their new wives.”

2.6 Kāmesumicchācāra varati (abstaining from sexual misconduct)

The third precept reads: Kāmesumicchācāra varati, “I undertake the training rule to abstain from misconduct with regard to sense pleasures.” The word kāma has the general meaning of sense pleasure or sensual desire, but the commentaries explain it as sexual relations (methuna samācāra), an interpretation supported by the suttas. Micchācāra means wrong modes of conduct. Thus the precept enjoins abstinence from improper or illicit sexual relations. Misconduct is regard to sense pleasures is formally defined as “the volition with sexual intent occurring through the bodily door, causing transgression with an illicit partner”.

The third precept is abstaining from committing misconduct in sexual relations. A man having sex with a woman other than his wife, or a woman having sex with another men other than her husband is sexual misconduct, Kāmesumicchācāra, which is, indeed, a heinous crime.

---

28 Pv.A, p. 289 (PTS)
29 M. A.I, p. 198 (Roman)
30 Dhs.A, p. 97 (Roman)
This precept is very effective in making a perfect family life. If the husband and wife are faithful to each other without committing sexual misconduct, their marriage will be solid and happy. Otherwise, they will have a family feud. This precept seems particularly weak in big cities, because news of sex scandals is heard often from televisions and newspapers. People are living in danger of rapists. Extreme sexual desire is the cause of violating the precept of abstaining from committing sexual misconduct.

To control this desire, one should contemplate on the thirty-two parts of the body. He has to contemplate like this; “This body has hairs of the body, hairs of the head, nail, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, bowels, stomach, excrement, brain, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, nasal mucus, oil of the joints, and urine.

### 2.6.1 Four Factors of Third Precept

1. The woman belongs to one of the twenty types of women whom one should not have sexual relationship.
2. One desires to have sex.
3. One makes the effort to have sex.
4. One takes pleasure in having sex.
If these four factors are involved in committing adultery, one is said to have committed *Kāmesumicchācārakamma*.\(^{31}\)

### 2.6.2 Twenty Types of Women whom one should not have Sexual Relationship

A man observing moral precepts must avoid twenty types of women in order to keep his moral precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct. The twenty types of woman are:

(1) Mātu-rakkhitā - A woman who is under the guardianship of her mother,

(2) Pitu-rakkhitā - A woman who is under the guardianship of her father,

(3) Mātā-pitu-rakkhitā - A woman who is under the guardianship of her parents,

(4) Bhāgini-rakkhitā - A woman under the protection of her sisters

(5) Bhātu-rakkhitā - A woman under the protection her brothers

(6) Nati-rakkhitā - A woman under the protection of her relatives

(7) Gotta-rakkhitā - A woman under the protection of her family or class

---

\(^{31}\)Dhs.A, p. 97 (Roman)
(8) Dhamma-rakkhitā - A woman under the protection of her religious companions

(9) S aparidaṇḍā - The woman chosen by the king to be queen, or the wife of some exalted man

(10) Sārakkhā - A woman engaged to be married to another man

(11) Dhanakkitā - A woman bought by a man to be his wife

(12) Chandavāsinī. A woman who has agreed to become another man’s wife by living with him

(13) Bhogavāsinī. A woman who becomes a man’s wife by receiving from him articles of use, household utensils etc

(14) Paṭavāsinī. A woman who becomes a man's wife by receiving from him gift of clothing

(15) Odapattakinī. A woman who is given in marriage to a man by her parents, guardians or relatives

(16) Obhatacumpatā. A poor woman who earns a livelihood by selling goods and is taken as his wife by another man

(17) Dhajāhatā. A woman captured in war and made the wife of her captor.

(18) Kammakāribhariyā. A wife who is also a servant.

(19) Dāsibhariyā. A slave who is made her owner’s wife
(20) Muhuttikā. A woman who is hired by or lent to a man to be his wife for a single occasion or for a few days.\textsuperscript{32}

If a man has sex with any woman who is under the guardianship of someone, he commits Kāmesumicchācāra, which is a heinous crime. The perpetrator will suffer the evil consequences such as being reborn in the four miserable realms, being reborn as a sexual pervert in the human would for many existences, and being separated from his loved ones.\textsuperscript{33}

\section*{2.6.3 The Consequences of Sexual Misconduct}

Whosoever, has sexual relation with any person other than one’s spouses is said to have committed sexual misconduct. That person will be reborn in one of the lower abodes when he dies. Even if he is freed from there and is again reborn as a human being, he will encounter the following evil consequences:

(1) Being disgusted by others
(2) Having many enemies,
(3) Lacking of wealth and property,
(4) Being deprived of happiness,
(5) Being reborn as a woman,

\textsuperscript{32}Vin.I, p. 327 (PTS)
\textsuperscript{33}Iti-A, II.p.52(Roman); A.V, p. 172 (PTS)
(6) Being reborn as a sexual pervert,
(7) Being reborn in the inferior lineage,
(8) Encountering disgrace,
(9) Having physical deformities
(10) Being separated from beloved ones
(11) Being inflicted with the loss of wealth.\(^\text{34}\)

The consequence of sexual misconduct may be grave or minor depending on the morality and virtue of the person whom one has sexual relationship. If one commits adultery with a person of high morality, the consequence is serious; if the person has no morality, the consequence is not serious. For example, the youth Nanda who committed adultery with a female Arahant, Uppalavaṇṇa, fell into a fissure in the earth and was immediately reborn in avīci niraya hell. Even if the victim lacks morality, the consequence will be serious if the adultery is committed forcibly.\(^\text{35}\)

### 2.6.4 The Benefits of Abstaining from Sexual Misconduct

A man who never has sex with another man’s wife or with a damsel under someone’s guardianship, and a woman who ever had sex with another man other than her husband will enjoy the following

---

\(^{34}\) A.III, p.169; Dhs-A.p.99 (Roman)  
\(^{35}\) Dhp.II, p. 127 (PTS)
benefits:

(1) They have no enemy
(2) They are loved by all beings
(3) They get food, drinks, clothing, etc.
(4) They sleep soundly
(5) They wake up peacefully
(6) They will not be reborn in the four miserable realms
(7) They will not be reborn as a woman or as a sexual pervert
(8) They can control their temper
(9) They can act and speak boldly and frankly
(10) They can live in dignity
(11) They can live cheerfully and happily without having to cast down their eyes
(12) They love and adore only the opposite sex. i.e. they never become homosexual.
(13) They are born with complete sets of organs and limbs
(14) They possess prominent marks and features
(15) They can live in confidence
(16) They can live happily
(17) They have no anxiety and no worry
(18) They are free from danger
(19) They are never separated from their loved ones.\textsuperscript{36}

\section*{2.6.5 The story illustrating the consequences of committing adultery}

Once upon a time, in one of her lives Isidāsī bhikkhunī was a male goldsmith. He committed adultery several times. When he died he was cast into hell. After that he entered into the womb of a female goat that was blind and lame. Again, he was born as an ox. In the next existence he was born as a gay. When he died, he was born as a daughter of a rich person in Ujjēnī country. She is called “Isidæsī”. When she grew up, she married with a rich person’s son. Throughout her life, she did the duties that she should do. But because of committing adultery she was drove away by her husband. Second time she married with another man. Again she was drove away by her husband. Then she married with male bagger but she was left by him. Final she remorse her life, entered into the order of bhikkhunī and became an arahant.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36} Iti. A.II p.52 (Roman)
\textsuperscript{37} Kn. Theiri.p.163; its-A.p.261 (Roman)
2.7 How to live in life

It is interesting to note that according to Buddhism there are deeds which are ethically good and bad, deeds which are neither good nor bad, and deeds which tend to the ceasing of all deeds. Good deeds are essential for one’s emancipation, but when once the ultimate goal of the Holy Life is attained, one transcends both good and evil. The Buddha says: “Righteous things (dhamma) you have to give up: how much more the unrighteous things (adhamma).” The deed which is associated with attachment (lobha), ill will (dosa) and delusion (moha) is evil. That deed which is associated with non-attachment (alobha) goodwill (adosa), and wisdom (paññā), is good.

The deeds of an Arahant, a Stainless One, possess no ethical value as he has gone beyond both good and evil. This does not mean that he is passive. He is active, but his activity is selfless and is directed to help others to tread the path he has trodden himself. His deeds, ordinarily accepted as good, lack creative power as regards himself. Unlike the actions of a worldling his actions do not react on himself as a Kammic effect.

His actions, in Pāli, are called kiriya (functional). Purest gold

---

38 Arhat in Sanskrit, a fully liberated saint who has experienced Nirvana by uprooting and destroying his or her attachment, hatred and delusion.
cannot further be purified. The mental states of the four types of supra-
mundane Path consciousness, namely, Sotāpatti (Stream-Winner),
Sakadāgāmi (Once-Reruner), Anāgāmi (Non-Returner) and Arahatta
(Worthy), though wholesome (kusala), do not tend to accumulate fresh
Kamma, but, on the contrary, tend to the gradual cessation of the
individual flux of becoming, and therewith to the gradual cessation of
good and evil deeds. In these types of supra-mundane consciousness the
wisdom factor (pañña), which tends to destroy the roots of Kamma, is
predominant; while in the mundane types of consciousness volition
(cetanā) which produces Kammic activities is predominant. What is the
criterion of morality according to Buddhism? The answer is found in the
admonition given by the Buddha to young Samṇera Rāhula.

“kāyena kamaṁ karomi idaṁme kāyakammaṁ attabyābādhāyapi
samvattati, parabyābādhāyapi samvattati, ubhayabyābādhāyapi
samvattati, akusalaṁ idaṁ kāyakammaṁ dukkhadrayaṁ
dukkhavipṁkanti”

“If there is a deed, Rahula, you wish to do, reflect thus: Is this deed
conducive to my harm, or to others’ harm, or to that of both? Then is this
a bad deed entailing suffering. From such a deed you must resist.

“kāyena kamaṁ karomi idaṁme kāyakammaṁ
nevattabyābdhāyapi saṃvattati, na parabyābdhāyapi saṃvattati, na ubhayabyābdhāyapi saṃvattati, kusalam idam kāyakammaṃ sukhadrayaṃ sukhavipākanti”⁴⁹

“If there is a deed you wish to do, reflect thus: Is this deed conducive to my harm, nor to others’ harm, nor to that of both? Then is this a good deed entailing happiness. Such a deed you must do again and again.” In assessing morality a Buddhist takes into consideration the interests both of himself and others—animals not excluded. In the Karaṇiya Metta sutta the Buddha exhorts: “Mātā yathā niyam puttamāyusā ekaputtamanurakkhe”⁵⁰

“As the mother protects her only child even at the risk of her own life; even so let one cultivate boundless towards all beings.” The Dhamapada states:

“Sabbe tasanti daṇḍassa sabbe bhāyanti maccuno, Attānam upamaṃ katvā na haneyya na ghātaye”⁵¹

“All rear punishment, to all life is dear. Comparing others with oneself, let one neither hurt nor kill.” To understand the exceptionally high standard of morality the Buddha expects from His ideal followers,

---

⁴⁹ Ambalatthikarahulovada Sutta of MN, II
⁵⁰ Kariniyametta Sutta of KN
⁵¹ Dhp. 129
one must carefully read the *Dhammapada, Sigālovāda Sutta, Vyāgghapajja Sutta, Mangala Sutta, Metta Sutta, Parābhāva Sutta, Vasala Sutta, Dhammika Sutta*, etc.

As a moral teaching it excels all other ethical systems, but morality is only the beginning and not the end of Buddhism. The original Pāli term for Buddhism is Dhamma, which, literally, means that which upholds or sustains (him who acts in conformity with its principles and thus prevents him from falling into woeful states).

There is no proper English equivalent that exactly conveys the meaning of the Pāli term. The Dhamma is that which really is. It is the Doctrine of Reality. It is a means of Deliverance from suffering and Deliverance itself. Whether the Buddha arises or not the Dhamma exist from all eternity. It is a Buddha that realizes this Dhamma, which ever lies hidden from the ignorant eyes of men, till He, an Enlightened One, comes and compassionately reveals it to the world.

“Whether the Tathagatas appear or not, O Bhikkhus, it remains a fact, an established principle, a natural law that all conditioned things are transient (anicca), sorrowful (dukka) and that everything is soulless (anatta). This fact the Tathagata realizes, understands and when He has realized and understood it, announces, teaches, proclaims, establishes,
discloses, analyses, and makes it clear, that all conditioned things are transient, sorrowful, and that everything is soulless.”\textsuperscript{42} In the Majjhima Nikaya the Buddha says: “One thing only does the Buddha teach, namely, suffering and the cessation of suffering.” This is the Doctrine of Reality.

Udāna states: \textit{“Seyyathāpi, bhikkhave, mahāsamuddo ekarasso Loṇarasso, evamevakho, bhikkhave, ayaṃdhammavinayo ekaraso Vimuttirasso” }\textsuperscript{43} “Just as, O Bhikkhus, the mighty ocean is of one flavour, the flavour of salt, even so, O Bhikkhus, this Dhamma is of one flavour, the flavour of Deliverance (Vimutti).” This is the Means of Deliverance.

This sublime Dhamma is not something apart from oneself. It is purely dependent on oneself and is to be realized by oneself. As such the Buddha exhorts: \textit{“Attadīpā viharatha attapaṭisaraṇā”}—Abide with oneself as an island, with oneself as a refuge.\textsuperscript{44}

\textit{“Dhammadīpā viharatha, dhamma paṭisaraṇā, anañña Patisaraṇā”} — Abide with the Dhamma as an island, with the Dhamma as a refuge. Seek not for external refuge.\textsuperscript{45}

Finally, as may be seen from the foregoing, Buddhist ethical principles are very noble and in an ideal world their practice would lead

\textsuperscript{42} Buddhism in Nutshell, by Narada Thera, Printed in Taipei, Taiwan, 1988. p-8
\textsuperscript{43} Sonavagga pali of KN, III
\textsuperscript{44} Mahaparinibbana Sutta of DN
\textsuperscript{45} Attadipa sutta of SN, V
to peace and harmony but, unfortunately, as the Buddha has taught, people are motivated by greed, hatred, and delusion - even Buddhists. Essentially, according to Buddhist teachings, the ethical and moral principles are governed by examining whether a certain action, whether connected to body or speech, is likely to be harmful to one's self or to others and thereby avoiding any actions which are likely to be harmful. In Buddhism, there is much talk of a skilled mind. A mind that is skilful avoids actions that are likely to cause suffering or remorse. Buddhist ethics recognizes the objectivity of moral value. It brings great benefits to this life and the lives hereafter. Therefore, a person should try his best to observe the moral values with understanding and as often as he can.