

# Hatred, Love & Mettā



*Upul Nishantha Gamage*

Hatred remembers only the mistakes and forgets the goodness of others. Love is associated only with good things about others: beauty, wealth, social status, education and so on. Therefore, hatred and love divide a person into two. Then, the good half is loved and the bad half is hated.

Mettā (loving kindness) is a feeling that goes beyond love. Mettā does not split a person into two halves: good and bad, beautiful and ugly, educated and uneducated, wealthy and poor and so on. Mettā is the ability to live without expecting anything in return, without getting angry no matter what another person does. Small incidents and words are not obstacles at all for a mind with mettā.

Love is broader than hatred. However, both hatred and love are narrow compared with mettā. Hatred causes suffering right away. Love causes suffering a little later. Mettā makes you experience immense peace at that very moment and also in due course. Therefore, let go of hatred and cultivate mettā.



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*Dhamma Dāna*

*In memory of our beloved parents -*

**Mrs. Piyaseeli Abraham Galappatty  
Mr. Mendias Silva Galappatty  
and  
Mr. J.Gunawardena**

**May this merit be conducive for them to  
attain the peace of Nibbāna!**

*Ajith Gunawardena and Theja Gunawardena*

# **Love, Hatred & Mettā**

Talk given by

**Upul Nishantha Gamage**

On March 26, 2013 (Full-moon Day)  
At Nilambe Buddhist Meditation Centre

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## 1. Calm mind and cool body

*Dear Dhamma Friends;* today is a full-moon day. This is a day that we put aside the weight associated with the transactions and responsibilities of an ordinary life for a day or half a day. This is a day that we attempt to make our mind free, peaceful and calm. Meditation offers peacefulness and calmness to a life that is tired, stressful, burning and remorseful because of the diverse responsibilities of life. Meditation does not make anybody more and more impatient, sorrowful and remorseful, but more peaceful and calm.

Meditation makes you cooler than an air conditioner or a fan does, which cools down the physical body of a person. An air conditioner or a fan cools down a person externally. Meditation cools down a person internally. Meditation first makes the mind calm. Afterwards, the calm mind makes the body cool down. One can experience a calm mind and a cool body. That is not a fairy tale. **Meditation cools down our inner burning no matter what type of burning that is.** When the cool water known as meditation falls, the burning in our heart subsides to a point where there is no burning anymore. *Dear Dhamma Friends,* therefore, meditation is about putting out our internal fire. The

perfected ones (Arahants) describe their experience with regard to how meditation made them calm and cool. The prime objective of the teaching of the Lord Buddha was to cool us down. There was no other aim or goal or objective of His teaching.

## **2. Diverse fires**

We are burnt by diverse fires. A fire called occupation burns us. That happens not only when you are engaged in it but also when you think about it and talk about it. The responsibilities, difficulties, obstacles, time limitations and competition associated with your job burn you. How much fire is there within a family? The heart of a mother burns over her children; those who have been born, are yet to be born, study, have completed education, are expecting to be married, are already married and so on. There is no end to these blazing fires in the heart of a mother or a father. Even beyond that, the fires in the heart of a husband or a wife are limitless.

*Dear Dhamma Friends*, in this manner, we can find out bit by bit that we are in the midst of the flames, while talking and laughing and also thinking that life is good. We think: “Life is

good. There is nothing bad about life. Life is very comfortable. There is no suffering.” If you look for a moment, you’ll see that the fire of suffering is blazing inside all these comforts.

### **3. Burning in the middle**

Earning money is a fire. Spending money is also a fire. We are burnt by both these fires as if by a torch burning at both ends or like a person holding a candle burning at both ends. **We are burnt by these fires, earning/spending or income/expenditure.** The fire blazes from the past: we burn ourselves thinking about things that we could not accomplish, our mistakes, the mistakes of others. Similarly, we burn ourselves thinking about the future; goals already made, goals yet to be made, the possibility of accomplishing these goals, possible failures, possible help from others, possible obstacles from others. In this manner, we burn in the middle of past and future, earning and expenditure and clinging and aversion like a torch burning at both ends.

### **4. The worst of the worst fire**

If we go deeper, we experience burning, both physically and mentally, caused by anger. No anger can make a person cool.

Anger has not made anybody in the world cool. Regardless of the magnitude of anger, it burns us. **Anger burns the external beauty of a person.** Anger does that. **Anger burns the facial beauty, pleasantness and attractiveness of a person.** A couple of minutes of anger can make one's face as ugly as a burnt piece of charcoal. There is nobody who has become more beautiful, more pleasant, and more attractive because of anger. This is the external burning caused by the blaze of anger.

Not only that, there is internal burning. Anger burns the health of a person. There is nobody who has become healthier because of anger. Anger burns your health. Each little episode of anger opens the door to a variety of illnesses, because anger burns the immunity of the body. As a result, a person undergoes physical suffering, both externally and internally, in every moment that they are caught in the fire of anger.

Anger burns the memory. Anger narrows down your memory. Just see how you remember only petty little things that happened in the past when you are angry. Moreover, you give a great weight to these little things. **An angry mind does not remember anything good.** Anger makes you forget all the good

things done by somebody and magnifies the little bad things done and not done. **Anger completely distorts our thinking.** Anger makes us crazy. Anger burns the general awareness. As a result, awareness is distorted. Nobody has acquired a clear and undisturbed mind because of anger. **Anger burns away one's life expectancy.** The life expectancy does not lengthen but it shortens because of anger. **Though the life expectancy shortens, the saṃsāra lengthens.**

Anger is one among many fires. See the damage caused by the fire of anger that we create in our mind. The fire of anger burns relationships. Anger burns away beautiful relationships between parents and children, siblings, teachers and students, kith and kin, family, colleagues at work, neighbours and so on. It is impossible to maintain relationships in a better and healthier manner because of anger. Anger initiates fights and conflicts, and burns down peace.

### **5. An inextinguishable fire**

*Dear Dhamma Friends,* when we light the fire of anger in our mind, these things happen in varying magnitudes. Sometimes, we may not be attentive to these things. Sometimes, we may be

aware of these things. Whether we are aware or not, **we harm ourselves in every moment that we ignite the fire of anger. We kindle ourselves. We set ourselves on fire.** Sometimes, if a person cannot bear up a huge grief or agitation, if a person creates agitation in his/her mind beyond a tolerable level, s/he sets him/herself on fire. A person can create a worse fire even than that in his/her mind. **Such a fire created in one's mind cannot be put out by another.** Someone else can put out an external fire by splashing water on it or smothering it with gunny bags and so on. However, if someone creates fire in his/her mind, it is difficult for an external person to put that out. Sometimes, when an external person tries to help, the anger within is not ready to accept that help. Therefore, an angry person gets angrier and burns more. Such external help does not turn into water, but into dry grass or hay in front of anger. Someone else's help does not turn into water with which a fire of another can be put out. An angry person burns themselves and also burns others. When a person is angry, if someone else calls him/her, the caller also gets afflicted with that fire. Someone who comes to meet that person is also set on fire. Not only anger, but also other defilements burn us and make us

grieve in this saṃsāra. Even if you put aside the saṃsāra, if you can remember and count, you can find out how many times you were burnt in 2013 by the fire of anger.

## **6. The first fire brigade in the world**

The aim of the Lord Buddha was to put out the fire. First of all, He put out the fire that blazed within Him. Afterwards, He taught us how to put out our own fire. The Lord Buddha did not put out anybody's fire. Nor is it possible to put out somebody else's fire. However, he taught us how to put out our own fire. Therefore, **the first fire brigade in the world was established by the Lord Buddha.** A Buddhist is a person who puts out fire. **A Buddhist is a person who puts out the fire blazing in him/her.** Therefore, *Dear Dhamma Friends*, we need to be more careful about ourselves. There is no god or saint or saviour who would come from an invisible world to save us from blazing fires. We have no idea or belief about such a person. No history book presents information on such incidents.

## 7. One and only help

It is our responsibility to protect ourselves. It is our duty to safeguard ourselves. **Among thousands of responsibilities and duties, the first responsibility and duty is to save, protect and safeguard one's own self.** One may forget that such a responsibility exists. However, it cannot be handed over to another. One can forget about it and carry on living. Such living is caused by being devoid of mindfulness. Being devoid of mindfulness always makes us forget about our suffering. Being devoid of mindfulness always hides from us how much we burn and grieve. That is the nature of being devoid of mindfulness. Therefore, we need to be more and more mindful. **Mindfulness is the only help we have got.** There is no help other than mindfulness. It is only mindfulness that says: “Here comes anger, you are getting ready to be angry and keeping anger inside you starts a fire.”

Only mindfulness makes us aware of these things. **We can find out beforehand that we are about to get angry, only if we are mindful.** Moreover, mindfulness tells us: “We are about to be terribly angry. We are going to burn those around us while we burn ourselves. We are going to fall physically ill, to fall mentally

sick, to shorten our own lifespan, to lengthen the saṃsāra and so on.” This prior notice will be made only by mindfulness like a weather forecast which informs us just before a tsunami, a storm and a cyclone. **Mindfulness says: “You are about to set yourself on fire.”**

### **8. Protecting the most valuable**

**We need to be sensitive to this prior notice.** Don’t ignore it. Don’t overlook it. **Don’t let even little anger dwell in your mind.** A tiny spark of fire is not small because any big fire was caused by a small spark of fire or a tiny flame. Don’t be greedy to let go of anger. **Don’t delay to let go of anger if you love yourself, if you are valuable to yourself, if you don’t have anybody else who is as valuable and precious as you, if you only have yourself to seek refuge in.** If so, *Dear Dhamma Friends*, **you need to protect yourself.** Why do you let your most valuable person gets burnt by a small spark of fire? Develop mindfulness more and more. **Pay heed to the prior notice given by mindfulness.** Listen to those warnings. Don’t ignore and disregard those messages. Let go of anger immediately. It is easier to let go of anger immediately than later. It is difficult to

put out a fire if it spreads. When a tiny fire is in a distant small corner of your mind, it is easy to put out that fire. If the entire mind starts blazing, it is not easy to put that out, because cooling also has to be done by the same mind, not with the help of somebody else.

### **9. The best Dhamma friend**

Because of all these points, mindfulness is so valuable. We have no better Dhamma friend than mindfulness. We may have 10 or 15 Dhamma friends. However, none of them can stay close to us, see our mind and make us aware of each thought that arises, tell us that we are about to get angry and we need to let go of this anger. None of those Dhamma friends can do that, but only we can. However, we don't do that. That is something we never do. We do things that we are not supposed to do while saying and thinking: "Things don't materialize without me; nothing will work properly without me." We just waste our time and life on things that may take place properly or improperly. Childhood and youth have already passed by. In this manner, middle age will also pass by. Sooner or later, our life will end but the world will continue in a similar manner. Just because we die, no

house will be closed, no institute will be closed, no office will be closed, no meditation centre will be closed, the world will keep on rotating, and the sun and the moon will rise and set. All these things will happen as usual. Therefore, we have to take anger with us at the time of death. Those who have cultivated anger will have to reap anger as the harvest in this birth and as well as in the next births. **A person who cultivates anger in this birth won't be able to reap kindness and peace, but distress and sorrow as the harvest in the next birth.**

Acquire mindfulness. **Mindfulness will protect you if you protect mindfulness.** We must protect our mindfulness. **We must safeguard our mindfulness all the time. If we safeguard mindfulness, it will safeguard us.** Mindfulness will say: "You are going to jump into a fire, into a pit of fire that will not let you escape easily."

### **10. Re-establishing the lost identity**

See how anger makes us blind and stupid when we are caught up in. If anger arises in the mind of a son/daughter, s/he does not see his/her parents as their mother/father anymore. That daughter or son is no longer there but an angry person is there.

Anger burns down the identity too. Anger burns down the identity so a daughter/son forgets that s/he is a daughter/son. Anger makes us forget that the person in front us is our mother/father who brought us up. Even that identity is burnt down by anger. This is what anger does. Anger burns down your identity as a husband/wife, your friendships and relationships. Anger leaves enemies and foes within the same family, among siblings. Anger burns down brotherhoods and creates enemies and foes among siblings.

*Dear Dhamma Friends;* anger is an utterly useless defilement. Mindfulness reminds us about who we are. Whenever you are mindful, you remember who you are. Whenever you are mindful, your identity is established better. Mindfulness shows you well who is in front of you. Mindfulness opens our eyes more and more.

### **11. Effects of hatred and anger**

The second point taught by mindfulness is the impermanence of all these things. **Both good and bad are impermanent. Both nice and harsh words are impermanent. It is merely our stupidity if we suffer forever by holding on to a harsh word**

**that we have heard. It is our own stupidity to burn ourselves down from morning until evening by holding on to a word uttered by somebody who didn't think much about what s/he was saying.** Sometimes, the person who said it may not even remember it. However, we make ourselves suffers by replaying that word, recorded by us, thousands of times like a splinter. We drive it even deeper and deeper still by thinking about that word. We think that we suffer because somebody else has said something harsh.

When we remember that particular harsh word while eating, we again get angry, we again hurt ourselves. As a result we forget to chew the food properly, and to swallow the food slowly. A person who eats with hatred cannot digest food properly. Hatred cannot absorb the nutrients in our food. No matter how much we eat, we are weak, we lack immunity. Therefore, we eat more nutritious food. Again if we eat with anger, if we remember the past incidents while eating and get angry over and over, even that food is not properly digested. Not only improper digestion, you'll experience indigestion. Eat food with hatred and see what happens. That food causes stomach-ache. Therefore, let go of hatred when you eat. Don't eat with hatred.

Let go of hatred when you drive. It is not possible to drive with hatred. Let go of hatred if you remember some hostility at the time of sleeping. It is not possible to sleep with strained relations. It is not possible to sleep in anger. Anger never lets you fall asleep. Anger tries hard to keep you awake. What is the purpose of keeping you awake? It is to make you suffer, not to get you to experience comfort. No matter how much you try, it is impossible to fall asleep if your mind blazes with the fire of anger. Let go of anger. Make an attempt to do that.

### **12. Freshening up**

Don't carry over yesterday's anger into today. Don't carry over today's anger into tomorrow. Don't carry over the anger of 2012 into 2013. If you have any anger arising in year 2013 let that be over in 2013 itself. Start the year 2014 as a fresh year. A new Sinhala/Hindu New Year is approaching. Start the New Year afresh while letting go of past anger.

### **13. Becoming a mismatch/misfit**

While experiencing all this, we say that life is so good. You burn from every corner, both inwardly and outwardly. Immense

suffering exists; it is difficult to fall asleep, food is not digested properly, many road accidents happen and so on. In the midst of all this, we say that life is good, life is comfortable. That is the nature of the absence of mindfulness. Cook in anger and see how many times you cut your fingers, how many times you burn your hand. Write something in anger and see how many mistakes you make, how many times you have to cross out re-write, how many unnecessary things you write. Anger makes us unfit for eating, driving, cooking. We don't become fit for any of these things because of anger. We become a mismatch/misfit among others. Leave others aside. We become a mismatch/misfit for ourselves. We have no room for ourselves. We reject ourselves. The food that we eat is intolerable to us. This is the truth.

#### **14. Obvious cause of suffering**

*Dear Dhamma Friends,* we all suffer a lot because of anger. Anger is one reason among many for our suffering. However, suffering caused by anger is something obvious. We don't see clearly the suffering caused by desires. Desires always show us comfort. Desires always tell a story associated with comfort.

Anger directly talks about suffering. Anger cannot say anything about comfort. Therefore, suffering associated with anger is clear. We are not sensitive enough even to see this more obvious suffering caused by anger. At least recognize that suffering and let it go. If we cannot let go of suffering that is obvious, suffering that is blazing, how we can let go of suffering that is not obvious? Let's try to let go of past anger without thinking twice. On the one hand, we need to let go. On the other hand, there is something we need to develop.

### **15. Who is Buddha?**

When the Lord Buddha was asked: "Who are you?" He said "I am Buddha." The word 'Buddha' was brand-new. Therefore, many questions arose. "Was He a god? Was he a Gandharva?" No, none of them, but a 'Buddha.' Many ascetics questioned who 'Buddha' was. The Lord Buddha said: "If a word is to be used to refer to Me, the most appropriate word is 'Buddha.'" Who is 'Buddha?'

The Lord Buddha explained about the person who was referred to by the noble word 'Buddha.' He said: **"I am called 'Buddha' because I have known in exquisite detail everything to be**

known, have understood in exquisite detail everything to be understood, have cultivated and practised the things to be developed and cultivated, have let go of and discarded the things to be let go of and discarded.”

## 16. Clueless living

There are three points here. The first point is about knowing what is to be known. This is done by mindfulness. It is impossible to know anything when we are devoid of mindfulness. We often say in our day-to-day life that we lack mindfulness. We don't know anything; we talk but don't hear and respond. Even if someone taps on our shoulder we don't respond because we are not aware of it. Without being aware, a person cannot respond. That is the nature of being devoid of mindfulness. If the mind is devoid of this quality called mindfulness, there is no understanding about: “Who am I? What am I doing? What is happening to me?” A person who is devoid of mindfulness does not know any of these things. **If you want to know who you are, what is happening in you and what you are doing, you need to acquire mindfulness. There is no spiritual journey devoid of mindfulness.**

A person needs mindfulness to know what is to be known, what is to be retained and what is to be discarded. Which are the plants to be watered? Which are the plants to be uprooted? We need to know these two types of plants separately. As we don't have clear understanding about these things, we water and fertilize thorny bushes every day, wherever we go we get entangled with everything and prick ourselves. Moreover, we get stuck in the middle of a thorny thicket. Huge thorny bushes surround us. It is difficult to escape. Wherever we go, we prick ourselves.

### **17. Self-appointed judge**

As mentioned earlier, the term 'Buddha' refers to the person who has uprooted the thorny bushes that need to be uprooted and cultivated the attributes that need to be cultivated. On the one hand, we need to let go of anger. On the other hand, we need to cultivate mettā (loving kindness). The word mettā has attributes associated with cooling. This word mettā can cool down a person to some extent. However, this ability, which goes far beyond merely chanting, needs to be applied and cultivated in life.

*Dear Dhamma Friends,* we have given up mettā because of worthless and frivolous piles of dirt. On the one hand **we judge the world: “Who is right? Who is wrong?”** Just see that **there was a judge in us just before anger arose.** Afterwards, a person is angry exits. However, just before becoming angry, that person was a judge. That judge told us: “This is wrong. What is being done is wrong. This person is wrong.” No sooner the judge in us tells us these things, we get angry. Who becomes angry? It is the judge in us who becomes angry. We judge others; what our parents do, children do, neighbours do. Beyond all these, we judge everything happening in the universe. We appoint ourselves as judges in the face of all the events that are happening in the world. Nobody has appointed us as judges. Nobody pay us for being judges. No allowance is given. No benefits. Only suffering exists. **We have no qualification to judge an action.** However, we think that it is possible for us to judge an action. That foolish thought dresses us as a foolish judge. As a result, anger arises. **No sooner we judge that something/somebody is wrong, anger arises.** That is a punishment. Who undergoes this punishment? The judge himself/herself gets punished.

Whenever we say that something is wrong, anger arises. Wherever anger arises, the chain of actions discussed earlier continues. Blood starts heating up and boiling. This chain continues lengthening saṃsāra. Who undergoes this punishment? We impose a huge punishment upon ourselves that seems to have no end. While trying to punish others, in the end, the judge himself/herself imposes a punishment on him/herself, which causes suffering.

### **18. Non-stop hearing of cases**

There is suffering. There is anger before suffering. Before anger arises, we make judgments or hear cases alone. This court of law is in our head, nowhere else. We hold onto something we see or hear and then we hold a trial. We hold onto something we remember and hold a trial. We have turned our head into a court complex where cases are heard. This human brain is not for hearing others' cases. Science says that the most wonderful creation of nature is the human brain. No matter what is created, the science has not yet created a human brain. We have turned this most amazing creation of nature into hell. See whether it is possible to find a moment that we do not hear a

case. We hear cases on the road. We hear cases while standing on the road, crossing the road, when others cross the road, when buying something, selling something, reading newspapers, watching television, watching a child's behaviour, watching our mother's/father's behaviour. We hear cases in all these places. What a foolish act that is. Were we born as human beings for that? What hell we have created for ourselves.

### **19. Creation of life**

We say that life is suffering. This life is not responsible for suffering. This suffering is not created by life. We created life. In any moment that a person creates anger, s/he also creates saṃsāra. Nobody can create any anger without making saṃsāra. When we create anger, saṃsāra has already been created for us by anger. This is a natural act. We only have to create anger. Afterwards, that anger makes saṃsāra for us. We do not know what type of life is created by anger. Therefore, a home turns into a hell. Anger can make any home hell. Turning a home into a heaven or a paradise does not depend on the number of storeys or the type of floor titles but on whether anger or mettā exists inside that home. While anger makes hell, mettā makes a

heaven and a Brahma world. The latter is even better than the former. Therefore, you need to plant mettā. You need to cultivate mettā. You need to cultivate and improve mettā. If you cultivate mettā you can harvest the yield of mettā, the yield of cooling and yield of peace everywhere.

## 20. Basis of existence

*Dear Dhamma Friends*, children do not expect their parents to be judges. A student does not expect his/her teacher to be a judge. Children expect love from their parents, a forgiving love. A student expects kindness from a teacher. A friend asks for love from another friend. No friend expects another friend to be a judge. A husband asks for love. A wife asks for love. **Such love is the basis of the existence of this human world. The existence of a family, a village, a country and a world is based on love.** The world exists either as a heaven or a hell. Anger carries on the world as a hell. A family is in hell though the members are inside one house. **Mettā creates a heaven inside a house.** Mettā creates a paradise, even beyond that, a Brahma world inside a house. Therefore, this point is very important.

## 21. The more you try, the less you become angry

*Dear Dhamma Friends*, the world needs mettā. See this clearly. Children need mettā. Parents also need mettā from their children. **Mettā is a feeling that goes beyond love.** Love is good. However, ego and selfishness exist in love. There is some expectation in love: “Because I love somebody this much I should be loved back equally. Because I say and give things with love, similarly, I should be given things.” In the absence of mettā, love is the best feeling for the world.

There is no need for Buddhism to talk about love. There is no point in talking about love as it is a normal feeling. Mettā is a friendship devoid of ego, a friendship with no expectation. One has to make an attempt to acquire mettā. There is no need of much effort to offer love. No need at all to make an attempt to acquire anger. Anger arises in mind effortlessly. Nobody gets angry after making an attempt to do so. The more you try, the less you become angry. One has to make an attempt to offer love. However, one has to try even harder to develop mettā.

It is already mentioned that having less ego and selfishness are some of the attributes of mettā. Ego and selfishness are not

merely two words. “It is I who love. Therefore, I should be loved.” This is in the nature of an investment. A mother and father invest in their children. Therefore, children are expected to return the profits of the investment. Children are also like that. Friends are like that. That is the nature of usual love. There is no such investment associated with mettā. Mettā does not make you an investor who suffers. Mettā is not a transaction which expects returns from the world: “I give so much mettā to the world and the world should give mettā equally to me.” Mettā is merely giving, offering, presenting and spreading. We need to get used to this. We need attitudinal changes. This is difficult. **It is easier to hate than to love a person. Giving mettā is even more difficult than loving.**

## **22. The hardest thing to come by**

Hating causes suffering right away. Loving causes suffering a little later but mettā brings forth peace right away and even later. Just recognize the differences and similarities between hatred, love and mettā. If you want to suffer right away, then hate. Loving makes you experience comforts right away and suffer later. **Giving mettā makes you experience immense**

**peace at that moment itself and also later.** Therefore, recognize your standpoint associated with some event: “I am not a judge. Nobody has appointed me as a judge. Why should I appoint myself as a judge? Why can’t I be a friend to this incident?” A friend is not a person who approves of everything. However, a friendship does not punish oneself and others. **We need friends.** See clearly. Children need friends. Children are deprived of friends. Today’s children have things that were not available to those who lived in the past. Children then did not have mobile phones, but today’s children are given mobile phones by their parents. It is the same with computers, motorbikes and cars. Today’s children are given pieces of land and houses. However, today’s children do not receive mettā from their parents. Children may even give all these materialistic things to their parents if they can. However, parents do not receive mettā from their children.

### **23. Nature of a narrow mind**

When I talked about anger, it was clear that anger always finds fault with others. **Anger always remembers the past mistakes of others and forgets all the good things.** When someone

scolds in anger s/he does not refer to the goodness of others but finds fault and criticises. Anger makes us narrow people. See how narrow it is to select only the bad things among the many good things done by a person. That is the nature of a narrow mind, a weak mind. At any moment anger arises, that makes us narrow people. **Anger filters out all the good things and retains only the bad** things-bad things done by somebody or others, mother or father, the son or daughter, husband or wife, neighbours, fellow employees. Everything else is forgotten. This is the nature of a narrow mind. Anger makes us humans with such a narrow mind.

#### **24. The good half and the bad half**

Love is different. Love talks about the beauty and goodness of others. In comparison to anger, love is better because it talks about the beautiful and good aspects and admires others. Love also expects others to admire us, to talk about our beauty and goodness, to say that living is impossible without the loved ones. That is the selfish nature of love. Therefore, love makes us suffer and also others suffer. Anyway, loving is better than hating.

Mettā does not refer to goodness or badness and beauty or ugliness. A person loves another only if that person is beautiful. There is no love if someone is ugly. Suppose a person loves someone when s/he is beautiful. If that same person becomes ugly due to burning or an illness like leprosy or smallpox, see what would happen to that love. If a person loves someone for a quality they possess, see what would happen to that love when that quality changes. If a person loves someone for his/her wealth, what would happen to that love when the wealth is lost? If a person loves someone for his/her social status, what would happen to that love when such status is lost? Only one half receives love, not the entirety. A person is divided into two and only one half of him/her is loved. It is the same with hatred. Only the bad half is hated. The good half is loved. It is better to love the good qualities of a person than to hate the bad half.

## 25. Using measuring devices

**Mettā does not split a person into two halves; good and bad, beautiful and ugly, educated and uneducated, wealthy and poor, having social status or not.** All these measuring devices

are left aside. We have used these measuring devices and become judges. **There are no measuring devices associated with mettā.** Measuring devices are needed for loving and hating. It is impossible to love or hate a person without measuring devices. If a person is asked why s/he hates somebody, the answer is: “According to this measuring device, that person is wrong.” Whenever you are angry, if someone asks you why you are angry with so and so, you would say: “S/he did something wrong so I am angry with him/her.” How did you decide whether what s/he did was wrong or not? That decision was made using a measuring device. A measuring took place. It is not possible to hate without measuring. Similarly, it is not possible to love without measuring. If a person is asked why s/he loves somebody so much, the answer is associated with some measuring. “S/he has these qualities. S/he is beautiful. S/he is so precious.”

## **26. Mother’s love**

No measuring is associated with mettā. Therefore, a mother is used as a simile for mettā. We often talk about this. The Mettā Sutta compares mettā to the love of a mother, who would give

her life for her only child. In such a manner that a mother, having only one child, gives mettā and protects that child, all beings need to be cherished. There are special characteristics associated with mother's love. One such characteristic is about loving whatever she gets. A mother loves the child who is born. In all other kinds of love, we love what we acquire. First we love and then acquire what we have loved. The love of a mother is different from all other kinds of love as she loves whatever she gets. This is a huge difference. Only a mother can do that for a child. There are many relationships in society. However, all these relationships build up differently from a mother-child relationship. First we choose who we love. Afterwards, relationships build up. However, a mother does not choose her child. She loves the child who is born. That is the nature of mettā.

## **27. Becoming cool**

There are no measuring devices associated with mettā. There is no measuring; tall or short, dark or fair, beautiful or ugly. All the measuring devices are put aside and give mettā to reality, to the truth. There are other attributes associated with mettā such as

giving mettā with no expectations. The objective of mettā meditation is not to expect anything back in return for help extended to another with love and kindness. **Mettā is the ability to live without asking anything from anybody, without expecting anything in return, without getting angry no matter what another person does and without burning oneself.** “Why do I burn myself because of something done and said by another? Why do I burn myself because of something not done and not said by another?” We get angry about both these aspects; about things done and not done.

Develop limitless mettā without judging. **There is no feeling other than mettā which makes a person so cool. Mettā cools down someone’s heart.** Therefore, leave home as a person who gives mettā. Whom you give mettā to is not important. Just see whether it is possible for you to have mettā towards everybody who you meet on the road, without judging them. “I have not stepped onto the road to punish them.” Be mindful! “I have stepped onto the road or sat in the driver’s seat not to punish another, nor to teach a lesson to another but to go to particular place. On the way, I may come across obstacles.

However, whenever I come across any obstacle, do I need to hurt myself by judging? No.”

## **28. Living without obstacles and enemies**

People make mistakes because they are devoid of mindfulness. Just see clearly. If you cut your hand while cooking, you were not mindful at that moment. A person cannot cut his/her finger mindfully. If you hit your toe against a stone while walking, at that moment, you were not mindful. Mistakes happen because of the absence of mindfulness. The entire human society, not just one or two people, is on a walk taking place in devoid of mindfulness. **The entire world of worldlings walks in the absence of mindfulness. It is the same with cooking, washing clothes, eating, sweeping, driving and working. There is no mindfulness when attending to any of these.** That is the real truth. There is nothing to be surprised about. **It is a surprise if a worldling does something mindfully.** That is a miracle. In a society where people habitually do things devoid of mindfulness, we should not take a mistake or omission seriously. A mistake or omission is not a cause of action. A mind with mettā can see that. This is seen by mettā. A mind having

hatred and love cannot see that. Such a mind has boundaries. Such a mind is so narrow. Therefore, it gets stirred up by even trivial things.

Suppose you put a pinch of salt into a thimble containing water. It is impossible to drink that water because it is too salty. That is the nature of a mind with hatred. A mind with love is a little broader than a mind with hatred, like a cup of water. You do not perceive the salty taste that much if you put a pinch of salt into a cup of water. If you put more salt, even that water will be salty in taste. Love is broader than hatred. However, both hatred and love are narrow compared with mettā. **Mettā is as deep as infinity compared to love and hatred.**

The Mettā Sutta refers to unlimited mettā. As it is unlimited, **a mind with mettā cannot be spoiled by anything.** Let alone salt, even the great ocean cannot spoil a mind with mettā. Such a mind is deeper and broader than the great ocean. Therefore, **small incidents and words are not at all obstacles for a mind with mettā.** If a person has mettā, things done and said by others are not barriers to going somewhere or to doing some work. In the absence of mettā the way others behave is always

an obstacle. Stopping for a second to allow a person to cross the road is not an obstacle for a person having mettā. A person just crosses the road thinking about something else. This is the truth about the world of worldlings. Therefore, a mind with mettā does not hate that person, does not create enemies. Such a mind thinks: **“Others may hate me but I won’t create any enemy.”** The basic attributes of a mind with mettā or the results of mettā are as follows.

Nobody is an obstacle to what you are doing. Nobody can create obstacles for you. Your work may be delayed. You may have to postpone some work. You may have to give up some work because of others, because of trouble made by others. However, you don’t take such things as obstacles because such things are not obstacles for a mind with mettā. Even if people do some troublesome things, it is not possible to create hatred in a mind with mettā. A mind with mettā does not make anybody an enemy. Other drivers are not enemies. Those who cross the road are not enemies. Those who live in your house are not enemies. Neighbours are not enemies. What others do is something different. However, there is no creation of enemies. This is the nature of mettā.

*Dear Dhamma Friends,* today's world needs such people. A house needs such a mother, a father, a brother, a sister, a son, a daughter. An office needs such a boss, an employee. The roads need such mettā. Can you think of a place which does not require such mettā? The whole world, even trees need such mettā. Not only human beings but also animals can become extinct. Trees get destroyed. The environment gets destroyed. The world will reach a place where living is going to be impossible because of the absence of mettā. Hatred has made this earth hell. Mettā can transform the earth that has been made hell into a heaven. Cultivate mettā. Let go of anger. Know what you ought to know. That is the path for reaching enlightenment.

**May the Triple Gem Bless You!!!**