Prologue

The following dislodge article is an enlightened dialogue between the Master Ananda and his shishya or disciple named Yogi and is adhered at the onset of the biography since a trailer speaks volumes of the trail that the Buddha set ablaze. Just to let the heaviness sink in, it has to be mentioned that Ananda was the only escort during the whole spiritual sojourn of the Gautama.

**Yogi**: Guruji, today, I would like to learn about Buddha.

**Aanandha**: Sure. Buddha is called the enlightened one.

**Yogi**: But, how did he achieve enlightenment?

**Aanandha**: In Buddha’s case, we can say that he did not consider spirituality as separate from life. For him the path of spiritual life is a means to assimilate the changing reality into a solid foundation. He considered Nirvana as a means and not the goal. It’s an assimilation process where All is for ONE and One is for all and ONE stands for-Only Nothing Exists.

**Yogi**: But isn’t this a paradox? Buddha did not have enlightenment as his goal?

**Aanandha**: No. Buddha set out his spiritual journey to find the cause of pain and suffering in humanity.

**Yogi**: So, the start point was curiosity?

**Aanandha**: No, not idle curiosities as you have. It was a sincere lack of comprehension at the loss of life due to sickness, aging & death since he had witnessed it for the first time. He was genuinely pained, in fact more pained than the victims since they had accepted their ill-fate as their reality. But, Siddharth was alien to this pain and hence couldn’t reconcile with his acceptance of life as was his illusion till then. He understood that there should be a solution to human suffering. And, that this solution is within oneself and not outside. Hence, he set out to find an answer to human pain and suffering.

**Yogi**: But, how did he find the answer?

**Aanandha**: He stilled his mind. And, in the process he went in a no mind state where the individual and the universal mind are one and the same thus synchronized with the Earth and became an enlightened individual to be as beautiful as the Moon or intellect.

**Yogi**: How long did he sit in meditation?

**Aanandha**: He sat in meditation for years together and decided not to come out till he attains Nirvana or truth. BTW, Nir means without and Van means vehicle or the body. Thus nirvan can translate to mean freedom from bondage to the body. In simple terms, realize that the universe of which I am a miniscule part is an illusion including me.

**Yogi**: He was so steadfast.

**Aanandha**: For his final journey down the rabbit hole he sat under a Pipal tree which bore flowers & small red cherries which have high concentration of serotonin levels.

**Yogi**: So what does serotinin do?

**Aanandha**: During meditation, one reaches the no mind state. In the no mind state his breath swallowed the serotonin given freely by the tree. This disconnects the neurons causing all sensory inputs to close down (all 5 senses shut down), the neurotransmitters which are the chemicals that link the neurons stop functioning leading to a breakdown of the logical mind. With no logic, time stands still or becomes an illusion since it is a product of the logical mind itself. Thus in the no mind state the Gautama could delimit his being from the body completely and achieve a universal illusion state and thus became a universal being from a mere human being.

**Yogi**: What happened next?

**Aanandha**: On the full moon day, his mind was synchronized with the moon which rules the organic life on earth like the Bodhisatva tree. He showed It is possible for sentient beings to realize a dimension of awareness which is totally unconstructed and peaceful, and end all suffering due to the mind's interaction with the conditioned world.

**Yogi**: Why did he have to wait for one week?

**Aanandha**: Buddha had reached blissful state. At this point he had dropped even his basic bodily functions.

**Yogi**: So, should we pain our body to achieve bliss?

**Aanandha**: No. He dropped his bodily functions to lose his body consciousness so that ultimately he drops the urge to reach bliss. In other words, he understood that that he was holding on to bliss and he has to drop that last thing too, only then there is bliss for humanity because he was the epitome of humanity.

**Yogi**: But, Guruji, What is dropping bliss?

**Aanandha**: He understood that he was holding onto to a goal instead of eliminating the basic urge to have goals. Since his motive was to get bliss for one and all he understood that he has to give up his last reservation to get bliss for himself. In a way, he sacrificed his goal to achieve a planetary/universal goal which was Sath – Chith- Aanand.

**Yogi**: What does Sath, Chit Anand mean?

**Aanandha**: Sath is the truth, reality or existence of the conscious mind that we encounter in our daily life (Advaita- affirmations of all existential past doctrines as non dual),Chit is awareness of this reality with one’s identity (Dwaita-in the encountered reality of the present or the dao of zen) and Anand is when it dawns that the bliss is me or I am the universe, when we realize that one is all and all is one (Vedanta-no debate with regards to time or the tao of zen).

BUDDHA

Gautama Siddharth (c. 563 BCE - c. 483 BCE), as Buddha was christened at birth is like no mortal that inhabited this planet since he raised the planetary consciousness to unprecedented levels... Gautama Buddha was a radiant being flush with the truth that life is the illusion that needs to be conquered for ushering a new dawn for mankind. Going by the obsession of the present age with the Gautama, it is but natural to enquire as to how he reached where he reached, the other side, beyond life and death.

According to tradition, the Buddha laid great emphasis on ethics and correct understanding. Everyday notions of divinity and salvation too came under his discriminating gaze. He emphatically stated that there is no intermediary between mankind and his divine nature. Even distant gods are subjected to karma themselves in decaying heavens. The Buddha is always a guiding beacon and teacher for beings who make a choice to attain the spiritual awakening called bodhi and understand reality. The Buddhist system of insightful meditative practice has spring not from divine insight but an understanding of the true nature of the mind, which must be discovered by treading the path guided by the Buddha's teachings.

The implication is profound. It intrinsically accepts the impermanence of Self, Reality and ultimately Time itself. The following idiom comes to mind, “I reside in all but all dont reside in me, they reside in themselves –Earth”. Welcome to the grounds of Buddha.

The times of the Siddhartha or Gautama Buddha were exciting. All were progressively working towards realizing the only undreamt dream that ever was: to play with the illusion called reality in one’s one lifetime. The Jain tirthanks made a solar grid for earth of 24 hours thus establishing uniform time globally. 24 Jain tirthanks culminating in Mahavir Jain delimited the imaginative stellar mind & paid homage to the best creation, we ourselves, and at the same time enhanced the creativity aspect. In fact the time gap between Mahavir and Gautama is a span of a century. In reality it looks like parallel processing by creation to me.

The 28 Buddhasculminatingin Gautama paid homage to the moon or the***Logical*** mind construct like an exemplary unified being living, and talking the walk of life. Thusin simple ways he brought the vast universal reality under one planetary canvas While it is real and terrifying to the solar oriented Jains, in converse, life is a mere illusion to themoon gliding Buddhist.

 Siddhartha was born as the only gifted prince of a small kingdom in the erstwhile Nepal, close to India. His mother Mayawati dies within the first week of Siddhartha’s birth hence the great princely comfort that was lavished on him was to hide the truth that he was a motherless child. There is a tale in the ancient scrolls that, on the night Siddhartha was conceived, Queen Maya dreamt that a [white elephant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_elephant_%28animal%29) with six white tusks entered her right side, and ten [months](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lunar_month) later Siddhartha was born. As was the Shakya tradition-the father’s linage that he imbibed, when his mother Queen Maya became pregnant, she left Kapilvastu for her father's kingdom to give birth. However, her son is said to have been born on the way, at Lumbini, in a garden beneath a Sal tree. There is a tale in the ancient scrolls which narrate how the future Buddha starting taking baby steps the moment he was conceived.

It is stated that he took seven steps to the North to acknowledge the prevailing planetary consciousness and also completed his life cycle by forming an equilateral triangle with his tiny feet representing the balance of the Tamasic-inertia, Rajas-action &sattva-goodness to be incorporated in every moment of the life he got as a gift and a mission... to lift the planetary consciousness which was the same as the universal consciousness at the time of his birth. It is stated he gave a Lion’s roar to proclaim his victory over life.

He was brought up by his mother's younger sister, [MahaPajapat.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahapajapati_Gotami) He had 3 Mahals or palaces for the three seasons so as to not let him seek anything outside since the world outside the palaces was a reality with no illusions of joy, comfort and leisure. Out in the kingdom life was as usual for men not born in royal homes. He was married with a son whose name was Rahula before he set out on his search to find the root cause of pain and suffering when reality in the form of illness, death, and an ascetic shook him on his first royal entourage.

When Siddhartha was aged 29, he renounced the world to become an ascetic. Buddha broke away from the princely freedom in bondage for bondage in freedom. In his case the bondage being, to find the root cause of pain and suffering in an otherwise wonderful world. In the process he not only relinquished his material possessions, social labels as a prince, his personal tie-ups with family but also the FUTURE.

He began his spiritual journey with his trusted serving friend Ananda without much ado by slipping out of the palace bedroom in the stealth of the night since he didn’t know how to explain the great vacuum in his heart wanting to be filled with TRUTH.

Just as anyone he too experienced being in the here & now by addressing the conscious mind in the waking state, the underlying sub-conscious in dreams or R.E.M: rapid eye movement, and the deep sleep state wherein without any awareness one enters nothingness or the modern Delta state in the sleep state neuro-signals analysis.

An hour before sunset called Brahmamuhurta he would just sit still to imbibe the neutrinos rushing from the SUN (at sunrise they are destroyed by the sunbeams). Neutrinos have a very special quality in particle physics-they can travel unobtrusively though out the universal matter. But when it comes to us the various life energy centers or chakras trap them in the body and depending on the mental state at that moment the appropriate body AURA is formed for the rest of the 24 hours. It is this aura that keeps us going in the day.

The initial tryst with reality gave the Buddha three aspect of consciousness to rest his later work on, diseased man as the conscious layer, a decaying corpse as the subconscious layer (anima or mother fixation for unearthing our origin) and an ascetic as the unconscious layer.

This marriage with reality gave the Buddha three aspects of consciousness to rest his later work on:

* Disease as the conscious bodily layer,
* Death as the subconscious mental layer and
* Renunciation as the unconscious unconditional layer.

The Buddha believed in the potential that anyone and everyone capable of transcending reality or Maya (apparent illusionary reality) by using the greatest tool provided by life to control or explore the mind-the Body. As the Buddha often quoted, “Do not dwell in the past; do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment. We are shaped by our thoughts; we become what we think. When the mind is pure, joy follows like a shadow that never leaves”.

One only gets what one deserves, good, bad &/or ugly depending on the temperament his lifetime’s moods had on his persona due to his individual adventure with life from the instant of birth to the moment of introspection. This is true for afterlife too according to Buddhist schools of thought.

The body is the reservoir of the past, present and the future thoughts. It is the physical manifestation of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious mind. Thus Buddha found a practical answer to the eternal quest-- HOW to conquer the mind. He realized that the cunning, clever and baffling mind can only be approached in the here & now thru its mirror the BODY and the guru being the breath since both mental and physical states affect breath.

Working backwards Buddha did re-engineering by witnessing the breath and mapping the source of the agitation which is the mind. Using a witness Bhava or feeling one can watch one’s own thoughts in a dispassionate way and not generate more ripples of thought leading to more thoughts causing emotional imbalance leading to uneven breath. Just watching the thoughts arise and subside without playing with them is the essence of meditation.

Thoughts may come, thoughts may go but remaining in the stillness of breath one can transcend body consciousness to register bodily transformations or sensations and thus layer by layer transcend the limitations we have on over own inflicted on ourselves. It is over belief system or mental construct of ourselves that limits us from reaching our full potential. It is who we believe we are that is dropped to gain anonymity or Diksha into becoming a Buddha and not entering Buddhism as the master always contended, “The way is not the sky; The way is the heart”.

 The goal of the technique of Vipasana or easy non-conscious breathing that the Gautama gave was a method to pin the cloud to the ground. He proved it thru millions of lives over the ages that just witnessing the breath without regulating it can clear ones subconscious and this brings clarity to consciousness.

The technique does a triple role:

* Occupies the mental framework to a witness state of arising thoughts
* Watches the breath without consciously altering it, just natural breathing
* Thus having engaged the mind and the body, the emotions start healing

Buddha showed that if the canvas called reality is approached with humility and compassion, then it is possible to tear away the veil called maya or the illusionary state of reality. When people saw him after he attained Nirvana, they were agape at the divinity that formed before their eyes. They were mesmerized into listening pearls of wisdom going out of the Bodhisattva. When they enquired if he is a god, he replied in the negative, when asked if he was the 9th avatar or savior, he said no and simply stated that he is--awake.

In his own words, he proclaimed, “I killed the one who was building houses”. Simply put he destroyed the source of ego the witness or conscience or soul. Thus he had entered without support in the construct of his own dream which is the reality that is common to all and starting from an arising consciousness state he became a completely conscious entity.

If Mahavir inflamed the senses, Buddha lights a fire to the breath and presented the torch of heaven for one and all to comprehend and practice. The sound inflames the intellect which torches reason which in turn ignites the mind and the body breath just follows suit like an underdog. The Buddhist chants are aimed towards this purpose.

There is an oft quoted remark of Buddha, “If you meet the Buddha kill him”. It reminds one to be an independent enquirer in to nature of life, the self and the universe. Hence Gautama always maintained that, “No one saves us but ourselves. No one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the path”. One is cautioned to be aware that the means is to be relinquished on reaching a goal just as a raft is let loose on reaching the other side instead of carrying it all along. In simple terms it is to be understood that any means of tools used for the experiment has to relinquish after it has served its purpose.

DHAMMA

Of all Buddhist terminology, the word Dhamma commands the widest, most comprehensive meaning. Dhamma is a pali word for Dharma meaning that which upholds or supports the practitioner and prevents one from falling into paths that are detrimental to spiritual evolution. There is nothing that does not come within the purview of this word.

Though the word Dhamma is actually the word Dharma minus the slayable ‘Ra’ (which means Sun) since the pronunciation of dharma itself absolves the utterance of dharma with ‘ra’ there is a mystic nuance to its cojoin meaning.

“ … justice achieved is always justice denied in the form

All that has been created is bound to be temporal in nature since it has a time of conception. But the principle of creation is in itself universal, timeless and boundless. It is like searching for God particle or finding the cause of all causes. In fact, all things, animate or inanimate, all phenomena, those that can be seen or felt and those beyond our empirical perception, all conditioned and unconditioned states, can be included in the term Dhamma. The Dhamma was not something that the Buddha had formulated for his disciples. It was revealed and proclaimed according to the Truth he had discovered.

The late Venerable Buddhadasa, one of the most influential thinkers and Dhamma exponents in contemporary Thailand, explains the meaning of the term by a fourfold definition.

a) the state of nature as it is,

b) the laws of nature,

c) the duties that must be performed in accordance with the laws of nature, and

d) the results that are derived from the fulfillment of such duties.

Buddhadasa's explanation closely follows the pattern of the Four Noble Truths, found in the very first discourse of the Buddha.

1. **Honesty** : The first Truth deals with dukkha (suffering), a Pali term which characterizes all things that exist. Dukkha represents the state of nature as it is, as many years later even Jesus said Man is born in sin.
2. **Open-mindedness** : The second Truth deals with the cause of dukkha, comparable with the laws of nature, for it is on the laws of nature that things (dukkha) arise, function, and cease or continuous change or morph
3. **Willingness** : The third Truth deals with the extinction of dukkha, a state of complete freedom experienced as a result of the efforts to fulfill the duty of Dhamma.
4. **Action is the magic word** : The fourth Truth deals with the path leading to the cessation of dukkha. By treading the path of Dhamma (performing duties) one obtains results proportionate to one's endeavor -- being free from dukkha.

There are six qualities attributed to the Dhamma in the Pali scriptures which help to increase conviction and faith in the Dhamma as described in the meditation technique known as Recollection of the Dhamma (dhammanussati).

***Promise*** The first attribute of the Dhamma is through ones direct experience as illustrated in the life of the Buddha. Like a brightly lit beacon the Buddha's omniscience and boundless compassion assures us of the validity and value of his teachings from the start to the end (all happens for the best on this path), for living a noble life leading to purity and complete freedom.

***Proof*** Secondly, the Dhamma is realizable through its practitioners' own efforts or in other words is both a subjective and objective experience needing no further proof of its universal validity. Those who practice the Buddha's teachings will see and be convinced of the truth of the Dhamma for themselves. Belief in what is said by others will be replaced with the full benefits of their own commitment.

***Time*** The third attribute of Dhamma is expressed in the Pali term akalika, which is translated either as "timeless" or "yielding immediate results." Since truth is eternal, the Dhamma transcends all temporal limitations is hence timeless. The Dhamma is said to yield immediate results because its effects can be experienced at each and every moment. Realizing each event is a conditioned and conditioning link in a continuous flux of ever-changing events, one indulges in transcendent experiences (lokuttaradhamma), although they can be more conveniently understood in the light of mundane perception.

***Value*** The fourth attribute of the Dhamma is ehipassika, loosely meaning, "come and see." This is an open invitation to investigate and verify Dhamma as it is valid across all belief systems and for every truth seeker. Buddha advised his disciples not to blindly believe in him, but to question and re-question until they were fully convinced of the teacher and the teachings (the Dhamma). He further encouraged them to put the Dhamma to test by practicing it, "just as a goldsmith tests the purity of his gold by cutting, rubbing, and burning it."

***Limit*** Next, the Dhamma is said to lead to higher knowledge and the realization of Nibbana, Pali for Nirvana. This quality makes the practice of Dhamma highly rewarding, for the ultimate realization (of Dhamma) means the highest bliss and complete freedom from all suffering. In our normal day-to-day activities, even in the most ordinary matters, doubt and uncertainty arise from time to time when we lack direct experience of the things we have to deal with. Direct experience is especially important where Nibbana is concerned.

***Otherside*** The sixth attribute of the Dhamma is an often quoted one. The Pali term for it is paccattam, which means that the Dhamma as an experience is directly known through personal insight, not thru hearsay. A direct experience is the most crucial factor in the realization of the Truth since it brings in tangible proof. Moreover, emotional sentiments require personal experience to really understand as they cannot be understood through logic or verbal explanation. With personal experience, doubt and uncertainty disappear. The Dhamma is a matter of personal experience. Paccattam implies wisdom or the ability to understand things deeply and correctly, according to their true nature. Without a base of direct experience, doubt and uncertainty regarding the Dhamma can still arise. But with paccattam, or self-realization, there is no room for such doubts.

The doctrine of Dependent Origination was specifically recommended by the Buddha for monks to study. It is one of the doctrines about which the Buddha had admonished his followers not to be divided or contentious, and which he asserted would be "for the great benefit of mankind, for the well-being of the world, and for the advantage of gods and humans."

 The doctrine of Dependent Origination helps to clarify the Buddhist position concerning the false view of a permanent self (atta). According to the teaching, nothing is absolute, nothing is permanent, for all things arise, exist, and cease depending on causes and conditions. Since all things are conditioned, interdependent, and interrelated, the existence of a permanent self is a logical impossibility.

 If only we pay attention, we will see the Dhamma in everything around us and in all existential realities like in the movie Matrix. The principle underlying the doctrine of Dependent Origination has been succinctly summarized by the Buddha in a formula of four sentences highlighting interdependence:

* This is, that is (imasmim sati idamhoti);
* This arising, that arises (imassuppadaidamuppajjati);
* This is not, that is not (imasmimasatiidamnahoti);
* This ceasing, that ceases (imassanirodhaidamnirujjhati).

In a line it can be summed up as “this is because that is, that is not because this is not”. This short formula covers the whole scope of existence and clearly demonstrates the interrelationship of all things. Based on this principle of conditionality and interdependence, the doctrine of Dependent Origination is explained in many different forms. However, the best-known mode of exposition consists in the circle of twelve links that are connected together by the law of conditionality:

1. Dependent on delusion are kamma-formations.
2. Dependent on kamma-formations is consciousness.
3. Dependent on consciousness are mental and physical phenomena.
4. Dependent on mental and physical phenomena are the six faculties of physical sense-bases and mind.
5. Dependent on the six faculties is (sensorial and mental) contact.
6. Dependent on contact is feeling.
7. Dependent on feeling is craving (desire).
8. Dependent on craving is attachment (clinging).
9. Dependent on attachment is becoming.
10. Dependent on becoming is birth.
11. Dependent on birth is dukkha
12. Dependent on dukkha is decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair.

The doctrine of Dependent Origination also clearly invalidates the concept of a first cause. Each of the twelve links is both cause and effect thus leaving no room for the first cause. The practical objective of the doctrine of Dependent Origination is to show how suffering (dukkha) arises and how it can be brought to an end. In this way, one becomes truly free and liberated.

An integral part of the Four Noble Truths is the Noble Eightfold Path, which comprises right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. The three principles of abstention from evil, doing what is good, and purification of mind can all fit into the framework of the Noble Eightfold Path. We may even assert that they are the same things expressed differently. In fact, like the threefold training of morality, concentration and wisdom, they are the Noble Eightfold Path expressed in another way. Thus we can see the characteristic unity and coherence in all of the Buddha's teachings.

# Miracles

There are two so-called miracles that are worth mentioning that de-alienates the god status from an avatar as the Buddha wished. All of them fall under the category of *negativity cannot stand an enlightened gaze*.

**Angulimalai:**

Once during his initial forays after being fully enlightened he was prohibited by the village folks he was passing from entering the adjoining forest as it was infested with a fearsome Rakshas called Angulimalai who loots the passersby and the kills them to collect the little finger from the victims to adorn a necklace as a memoir of his accomplishments. The Buddha continues his walk with a serene face, indifferent to the volumes of advice from past experience by the villagers.

In the dense forest he is accosted by Angulimalai (Anguli-little finger is water of life &malai-is one who wears its garland) whom he ignores and just continues doing what he was doing-walking. Angulimalai starts pursuing the Buddha but no matter how hard he tried he was always falling behind the Buddha. Realizing him to be a noble soul, Angulimalai immediately falls to the ground and begs the Buddha to stop, to which the Buddha replies, “I have stopped but when will you”. The fearsome bandit immediately comes to his senses and submits his being to Dhamma or one illusion and becomes one of the foremost disciples of the Great Buddha.

**Three assassination attempts by his cousin Devadatta:**

During the hay days of the master the sangha parivar or family of brotherhood had grown to amazing proportions fuelling the ambitious plans of his cousin to overthrow the benign Buddha and take over the sangha or power.

* In the first attempt he sent armed assassins to finish the Buddha. But the assassins, on encountering the Awesome Buddha just lay down their arms and submitted to the will of the sangha and not to an ambitious Devadatta. Thus even the harmful intents of humans don’t harm the righteous.
* A second attempt is said to have involved Devadatta rolling a boulder down a hill. But it splintered along its decent, only grazing the Buddha's foot. Thus even the elements of Earth don’t harm the righteous.
* In the third attempt, Devadatta is said to have got an elephant drunk and set it loose. This ruse also failed. Thus even the life on Earth doesn’t harm the righteous.

After his lack of success at homicide, Devadatta is said to have tried to fragment the sangha, by proposing extra restrictions on the [daily](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vinaya) conduct. When the Buddha again prevailed, Devadatta started a breakaway order. Initially, he managed to convert some of the bhikkhus as the sadhaks or disciples are called, but Sariputta and Maudgalyayana are said to have expounded the dharma so effectively that they were won back.

SANGHA

Soon after the Buddha's enlightenment, as he was contemplating the Dhamma, its sheer profundity became apparent to him. In a world view enveloped as it is in the veil of ignorance and overcome by greed and hatred, he wondered whether it would not be futile to expound the Dhamma to the world. The Dhamma, seemingly goes against the flow of worldly thoughts and is difficult for people to accept. But out of wisdom and compassion born of his relentless pursuit of truth, he also perceived the different levels of people's intellectual and spiritual maturity. He presumed those "with less dust in their eyes," having less delusion and defilements, would listen and understand, they would benefit from the Dhamma. Thus the Buddha decided to begin the mission that eventually led to the establishment of the Buddhist religion.

Some of the fundamentals of the teachings attributed to Gautama Buddha are:

* The Four Noble Truths: that suffering is an ingrained part of existence; that the origin of suffering is craving for sensuality, acquisition of identity, and annihilation; that suffering can be ended; and that following the Noble Eightfold Path is the means to accomplish this;
* The Noble Eightfold Path: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration;
* Dependent origination: the mind creates suffering as a natural product of a complex process;
* Rejection of the infallibility of accepted scripture: Teachings should not be accepted unless they are borne out by our experience and are praised by the wise.
* Anicca (Sanskrit: anitya): That all things that come to be have an end;
* Dukkha (Sanskrit: duḥkha): That nothing which comes to be is ultimately satisfying;
* Anattā (Sanskrit: anātman): That nothing in the realm of experience can really be said to be "I" or "mine";
* Nibbāna (Sanskrit: Nirvāna): It is possible for sentient beings to realize a dimension of awareness which is totally unconstructed and peaceful, and end all suffering due to the mind's interaction with the conditioned world.

Although the Buddha's native language is not known, it's likely that he taught in Pali since it was the dominant Middle Indo-Aryan dialect and the scriptures handed down since then are written in Pali. Located at Igatpuri near Mumbai, India is the international research centre for decoding these scriptures to throw some light on puzzles that plaque the present times.

**Sarnath** is the deer park where [Gautama Buddha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gautama_Buddha) first taught the [Dharma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dharma), and where the Buddhist [Sangha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sangha) came into existence through the [enlightenment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enlightenment_%28spiritual%29) of [Kondanna](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kondanna). Sarnath is located 13 kilometres north-east of [Varanasi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varanasi), in [Uttar Pradesh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttar_Pradesh), [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India).

It is said that along with kondanna there were four others ascetics who knew that Siddharta would be a Buddha and hence were the inner circle that was zeroing on Nirvana. Siddhartha sought masters of those times who had breached the veil of maya in order to bring light to the world. One of the best and most well knownteacher was Alara Kalama. Siddhartha quest was so great that he mastered all that could be learnt from him. Finally Alara Kalama could not teach Gautama anymore and he said, "You are the same as I am now”. This pattern of superseding the teacher and becoming an adept was to be a common feature since this happened with the next master UddakaRamaputta too.

At this point along with Kaundinya and his four colleagues he left to Uruvela to practice self-mortification in the hope that he would become enlightened.These involved self-deprivation of food and water, and exposing themselves to the elements to near-death for six years, at which point Siddhartha rejected self-mortification. At this point the five companions included Kaundinya left him disillusioned considering him to have strayed from austerities.

After Siddhartha became the enlightened [Gautama Buddha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gautama_Buddha), he sought to carry the message to his previous teachers but they had left their mortal coils. Hence he finds Kaundinya and his four colleagues to share his teachings. Kaundinya and his companions were skeptical and initially refused to acknowledge his presence, except to offer a seat on the ground since their last impression of his was one who failed the rigors of asceticism. However, the ascetics were soon won over when they sensed that the Buddha had changed since they left him. Gautama gives his first discourse then.

The four truths are presented within the Buddha's first discourse, *Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dharma ([DhammacakkappavattanaSutta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhammacakkappavattana_Sutta%22%20%5Co%20%22Dhammacakkappavattana%20Sutta))*. An English translation is as follows ( courtesywikepedia):

"This is the noble truth of dukkha: [birth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jati_%28Buddhism%29) is dukkha, [aging](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaramarana) is dukkha, [illness](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illness) is dukkha, [death](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaramarana) is dukkha; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are dukkha; union with what is displeasing is dukkha; separation from what is pleasing is dukkha; not to get what one wants is dukkha; in brief, the [five aggregates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skandha) subject to [clinging](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upadana) are dukkha."

"This is the noble truth of the origin of dukkha: it is this [craving](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ta%E1%B9%87h%C4%81) which leads to [renewed existence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhava), accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there, that is, craving for [sensual pleasures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C4%81ma), craving for [existence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhava), craving for extermination."

"This is the noble truth of the cessation of dukkha: it is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, nonreliance on it."

"This is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of dukkha: it is the [Noble Eightfold Path](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noble_Eightfold_Path); that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, [right effort](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Right_Exertions), right [mindfulness](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindfulness_%28Buddhism%29) and right [concentration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi_%28Buddhism%29)."

Kaundinya reached the [Sotapatti](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sotapatti) stage of arahanthood upon hearing this, becoming the first human to comprehend the teachings. Sotapanna literally means "one who entered (āpanna) the stream (sota)", after a metaphor which calls the Noble Eightfold Path, 'a stream'. Five days later, hearing the subsequent [AnattalakkhanaSutta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anattalakkhana_Sutta) regarding no-self or soul-lessness, Kaundinya gained full arahantship, "beyond death" or "deathless". Kaundinya thus became first arahant.

[**AnattalakkhanaSutta**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anattalakkhana_Sutta)

In this discourse, the Buddha demonstrates that constituents of a person's body and mind are each impermanent , subject to suffering ([*dukkha*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dukkha)) and thus unfit for identification with a "self". The Pali version of this discourse elucidates this as:

* Form, ... feeling, ... perception, ... [mental] fabrications, ... consciousness is not self …hence consciousness lends itself to dis-ease. And it is not possible to order consciousness to be thus and not to be thus.
* Thus consciousness whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every consciousness is to be seen as it actually is with right discernment as: 'This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.' Neti, Neti
* Having educated the mind thus a well-instructed disciple grows disenchanted with form, feeling, perception, fabrication and ultimately consciousness and becomes dispassionate and the knowledge of being ‘fully released’ registers with him since birth is ended, holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further to accomplish in the world.

The Tibetan Buddhist lama [ChögyamTrungpa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ch%C3%B6gyam_Trungpa)emphasizes that cessation is a personal experience. In his words, “The truth of cessation is a personal discovery. It is not mystical and does not have any connotations of religion or psychology. It is simply your experience... It is like experiencing instantaneous good health: you have no cold, no flu, no aches, and no pains in your body. You feel perfectly well, absolutely refreshed and wakeful! “

Such an experience is possible and is experienced by all at some point in life’s hectic schedule. The aim is to experience this always, at all times, places and situations.

Although the Dhamma is profound, it is not inaccessible. Certainly, the profundity of the Dhamma is no excuse for denying yourself that which is best in life. The fact that there have been so many Arahants and noble disciples, thousands upon thousands of them, both during and after the Buddha's time, stands as a testimony to the intelligibility and practicality of the Dhamma. Through his skillful means, the Buddha placed the task of understanding the Dhamma within reach of every interested person such that an opportunity is never denied those who care to seek.

There is more than sufficient teachings of Buddha available to both ends of seekers-for those wanting the Nibana as ultimate realization or householders content to remain involved in the ordinary business of mundane affairs. On more than one occasion, the Buddha eloquently praised his householder disciples, who were diligently practicing the Dhamma by engaging in various meritorious activities. During the time of the Buddha teachings on Dhamma were even imparted to small children and the youngest one who ascended to Arahant status was just seven years old.

He spent almost 45 years roaming in the northern Gangetic belt of India giving discourses in the present day Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Nepal to kings, nobles, commoners and outcaste too. From the start unlike prevailing Hindu norms then, the doors to Buddhism were wide open for one and all with no regard to race, caste, class, and even sex. Buddhism was the first to allow nuns into the monastery and thus enter the inner circle.

At the ripe age of 80, the Buddha announced that he would soon reach Parinirvana, or the final deathless state, and abandon his earthly body. After this, the Buddha ate his last meal, which he had received as an offering from a blacksmith named [Cunda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cunda_%28Buddhism%29). Although falling violently ill, Buddha instructed [Ananda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ananda) to convince Cunda that the meal provided had nothing to do with his health and in fact Cunda would earn great merit for providing a Buddha his last meal.

Consoling his followers he enquired on his death bed if anyone had anything to clarify with regards to his teaching. Since no one had any doubt, the Buddha's final words are reported to have been: "All composite things pass away. Strive for your own liberation with diligence."

Epilogue

**Siddhartha Gautama Buddha**: He was a child born with the destiny to bring balance to the Galaxy and in turn to the universe. Thus he is a savior or purna avatar. Rama broke the bow and fragmented the Blackhole which keeps the cyclic balance of the Milky Way at its centre, in Tretayuga due to Ravana’s passion. Krishna was the epitome of the disturbance due to the dispersed Blackhole and set the balance of the milky-way and ushered Kalyug (meaning past age). Mahavir scaled the galaxy with only the body & Sun or imagination/intuition for reference and gave the matrixes of all the heavenly bodies of Milky Way. Buddha was the guru of the remaining prominent God’s or Blackhole masters in the milky-way for reinstating a galactic balance and harmony. He became a Galactic being and by conquering the moon or logic/system, set out on his purpose for earth dharma or Dhamma through:

***Middle way***: rejecting the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-denial –Let what I deserve reach me

***Impermanence***: whatever has the characteristic to arise, all that ceases- this too shall pass

[***Dependent origination***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prat%C4%ABtyasamutp%C4%81da) : Buddhist view that what we call the "self" does not exist as a singular, independent, permanent entity, but is rather an ongoing process, hence on realizing *selflessness* or *no-self,* Buddha exclaimed*,* "My release is assured. This is the last birth. There is no further becoming.”

# The Passion of the Buddha

The following extract from the book named Siddharth is an actual practice that samanas use to reach the truth which even Buddha did for 6 years before he realized the middle-ground.

“A goal stood before Siddhartha, a single goal: to become empty, empty of thirst, empty of wishing, empty of dreams, empty of joy and sorrow. Dead to himself, not to be a self any more, to find tranquility with an emptied heart, to be open to miracles in unselfish thoughts, that was his goal. Once all of my self was overcome and had died, once every desire and every urge was silent in the heart, then the ultimate part of me had to awake, the innermost of my being, which is no longer my self, the great secret.”

# How to reach Nirvana in a nut-shell

**HONESTY:** The root cause of Dukkha or suffering is denial. If one is denied a single fragment of this universal illusion called reality either by self or universe the cycle begins. It is registered by the mind thru discrimination by intellect in time. The same moment we become prisoners of the entire Maya or both objective reality and subjective too and suffering follows.

(GOD grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change: the Past: association with people, places and situations.)

**OPENMINDEDNESS:** Hence the only way out is acceptance of the fact that I am the cause of all causes because it is my life. Thus adopt a completely subjective outlook to life as it is and become a hologram of the universe. That way no matter what one does it is always in harmony and tandem with the whole universe that the subjective mind can comprehend. This provides a subjective illusion while the universe carries on as chaotic as it always was.

(Courage to change the things I can: Present projection of future, renounce the past)

**WILLINGNESS:** The spiritual progress is encompassing a bigger and better picture of the universe we live in to accommodate the piddle concerns of life. Reality and dreams clash with each other in this race for supremacy. If we keep in the corner of our mind the actual experiences of dream while sleeping we are bound to treat the reality as a illusion of the mind too. At this breakpoint, there are no concerns, worries or suffering. Yes it takes quite an effort where there are innumerable reverts to the starting construct. But a success is guaranteed.

(wisdom to know the difference: that there is no difference because we are all holographic)

**SERENETY:** The final emancipation is experiencing instantaneous good health andyou feel perfectly well, absolutely refreshed and wakeful!. The greatest illusion where wants merge into needs and needs translate into a harmonious universe around you. Then both you and not you is both an illusion and yet real.

(AMEN! So be it for all beings)

**WISDOM:** That’s paradise for one and all. Like the number by **Led Zepplin** echoes in ‘Stairway to heaven’ -To be a rock and not to roll.

(The kingdom of paradise is in our heart)