

OUTLINE OF THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

The First Discourse given by the Buddha 2500 years ago to the first five disciples explains the Four Noble Truths.

1. The Noble Truth of **Dukkha** - (Unsatisfactoriness/Suffering)
2. The Noble Truth of the **Origin** of Dukkha (Craving)
3. The Noble Truth of **Cessation** of Dukkha (Nibbana)
4. The Noble Truth of the **Path** leading to liberation, **The Middle Path** or **The Noble Eightfold Path**



THE NOBLE EIGHT FOLD PATH

1. Right View	Wisdom (<i>panna</i>)
2. Right Intention	
3. Right Speech	Virtue (<i>sila</i>)
4. Right Action	
5. Right Livelihood	
6. Right Effort	Meditation (<i>samadhi</i>)
7. Right Mindfulness	
8. Right Concentration	

Right View – necessary to start on the path and stay on it.

- An understanding of Law of Kamma – wholesome and unwholesome volitional actions lead to corresponding results in the cycle of birth and death (samsara). Unwholesome Kamma is rooted in greed, hatred and ignorance.
- An understanding of Four Noble Truths – at the start a basic understanding needed. Later matures into wisdom of Enlightenment.

Right Intention-

renunciation, (to overcome greed, seeing desire -> suffering)

loving kindness (goodwill or Metta) (to overcome hatred)

harmlessness (compassion or Karuna) (to overcome hatred)

Right Speech – avoids false speech, slander, harsh & idle chatter

Right Action – See Five Precepts – basic ethical guidelines for lay people.

Right Livelihood – Not causing injury to self and others or deception

Avoid trading in - meat production (butcher, hunter, fisherman)

living beings (slavery prostitution)

intoxicants

poisons

weapons

Right Effort-

To increase wholesome mental states, decrease unwholesome states.

Right Mindfulness –

Clear awareness - of body/feelings/mind states/phenomena, without grasping or rejecting.

Right Concentration – steady one pointed focus on wholesome object such as Breath, Loving Kindness etc. (40 subjects of meditation described)

Deep absorption states (Jhana), access concentration or moment by moment concentration is required to experience deeply the nature of existence.

The Eightfold Path is not a sequential path but all aspects are to be developed with enhancing effect on all the other path factors. Initially experience mundane benefits/ happiness in this life.

When the path factors gradually develop and mature it leads to Awakening or Liberation, through direct insight into the three characteristics of existence (Impermanence, Suffering and Non Self) and penetration of the Four Noble Truths.

NOTES

The Three Characteristics of Existence

Impermanence – Anicca

Suffering, Unsatisfactoriness – Dukkha

No permanent Self – Anatta

Five Aggregates of clinging

Form	(MATTER)	<i>RUPA</i>
Feelings (pleasant, unpleasant, neutral)	(MIND)	<i>NAMA</i>
Perceptions		
Thoughts		
Consciousness		

References

Bhikkhu Bodhi – A Short Introduction to Buddhism, by Bhikkhu Bodhi: 2018 YouTube

[#1 Introduction to Buddhism – Path to Inner Freedom](#)

[#2 The Four Noble Truths](#)

[#3 Core doctrines of Buddhism](#)

[#4 Noble Eightfold Path \(part 1\)](#)

[#5 Noble Eightfold Path \(part2\)](#)

[#6 Buddhism and the world today](#)

Bhikkhu Bodhi – Ten Lectures on core teachings of Theravada Buddhism (Audio, free download from website)

Ajahn Brahm - What the Buddha Taught (free download, BSWA website)

Samyutta Nikaya, SN 56 :11 – Translation of the Buddha’s original Discourse - by Bhikkhu Bodhi