

THE FIRST SERMON

by Nawrahta Win

PROLOGUE

It was a pleasant evening. The sun had just called it a day after a hard day's work. No longer a blazing furnace that it was during the day, it now appeared to be in a relaxing mood, and was all sweet and smiling. Resting on the heaving bosoms of the foothills of the Himalayan Ranges, it was cheerfully bidding farewell to the world before retiring for a good night's rest.

The sunset glow was an awe-inspiring eye feast. The sunrays played magic effects on the sky and a few scattered clouds on the western horizon, and lit them up in varying colours of gold, orange, crimson and purple, each colour gradually shading off into another. The brilliant golden orb of the setting sun, framed against the colourful background of the radiant sky and clouds, presented an acme of the breathtaking beauty of the twilight scenery.

In the eastern sky, the full moon of the month of July was peeping through the craggy peaks of the foothills. She would soon ascend the sky to embark on her nocturnal journey.

The forest was very dense. Its emerald-green foliage was most luxuriant, and projected leafy, canopies over the footpaths, meandering through the forest. This particular forest area was, in fact, a famous deer sanctuary, where deers lived a fearless life in complete peace and tranquillity. No wonder that the forest scene was alive with abundant deer life. Feeding and frolicking deers could be seen here and there, weaving their ways through the lush green bushes.

It was a spectacle that could raise the heart of any soul, young or old.

A cool gentle breeze was blowing through the forest.

The sweet and restful silence of nature prevailed, except for the soothing sounds of the whispering breeze and the bubbling near-by brook.

Peace and serenity reigned supreme.

The stage was now set for the inaugural address by Lord Buddha. The time was the evening of the Full Moon Day of July in the year of B.C. 588 (the Full Moon Day of Waso in the year 103 by the Great Era). The place was the Migadaya Deer Park in a locality called Isipatana near Benares in northern India.

Lord Buddha was seated under a leafy tree, and five hermits were sitting on the lawn, facing him. Lord Buddha addressed the five hermits, and delivered his first sermon.

"THE WHEEL OF LAW" (Dhammacakka)

The Four Noble Truths

"Monks, these two extremes are not to be practised by monks. What are the two extremes?"

They are: -

- (1) the practice of enjoying sensual pleasures and luxury --- low, vulgar, mundane, ignoble and unprofitable; and**
- (2) the practice of self-mortification --- painful, ignoble and unprofitable.**

Monks, there is the Middle Way, avoiding, the two extremes, discovered by me through the Supreme Enlightenment --- a path that brings you vision, knowledge and peace of mind and leads you to higher wisdom, to Enlightenment and to the realization of Nibbana (Nirvana).

It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely,

**right view,
right thinking,
right speech,
right action,
right livelihood,
right effort,
right mindfulness, and
right concentration.**

This, monks, is the Middle Way that brings you vision, knowledge, and peace of mind, and leads you to higher wisdom, to Enlightenment and to the realization of Nibbana (Nirvana).

- I. This, monks, is the Noble Truth of Suffering¹; birth is suffering; old age is suffering; disease is suffering; death is suffering; association with those one does not like is suffering; separation from those one loves is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in short, the five aggregates (mind and body), which are the mental objects of clings are suffering.**
- II. This, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering- it is the craving that gives rise to fresh rounds of rebirths; it goes together with lust and greed, and is characterized by strong desires for all and sundry pleasures and mental objects. What is this craving? It is three-fold: -**
 - craving for sensual pleasures;**

¹ The word "suffering" does not stand only for physical pain and suffering. It has a much broader and deeper meaning; it denotes the unsatisfactory and undesirable nature or characteristic of all phenomenal states.

- craving for one's existence; and
- craving for the termination of one's existence.

- III. This, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering. It is the total extinction of this craving; it is forsaking and relinquishing it, and liberation and detachment from it.
- IV. Now this, monks, is the Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely:-

right view,
right thinking,
right speech,
right action,
right livelihood,
right effort,
right mindfulness, and
right concentration.

- (1) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this is the Noble Truth of Suffering, --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Truth*).
- (2) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of Suffering must be understood by me --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of Function i.e. the function that needs to be performed with regard to this particular truth*).
- (3) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of Suffering has been understood by me --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of Completion of the Function that the above- mentioned function has been performed and completed*).
- (4) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this is the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Truth*).
- (5) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering must be got rid of --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Function*).
- (6) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering has been got rid of by me --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Completion of the Function*).
- (7) Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Truth*).

- (8) **Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering must be realized --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Function*).**
- (9) **Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering has been realized by me --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Completion of the Function*).**
- (10) **Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this is the Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Truth*).**
- (11) **Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering must be practised --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Function*).**
- (12) **Monks, there arose in me vision, knowledge, insight, wisdom and light that this Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering, has been practised by me --- a thing that I have never heard of before (*Knowledge of the Completion of the Function*).**

Monks, so long as my knowledge and insight into these Four Noble Truths in three phases and twelve ways were not fully purified. I did not profess to have attained the Incomparable Supreme Enlightenment in this world, in the midst of all the gods, the King of Maras, the Brahmas and the much-respected wise hermits and learned men.

Monks, now that my knowledge and insight into these Four Noble Truths in three phases and twelve ways, have been fully purified, I hereby declare that I have attained the Incomparable Supreme Enlightenment to the world, in the midst of all the gods, the King of Maras, the Brahmas and the much-respected wise hermits and learned men.

An insight of retrospection arose in me:- "Unshakable and indestructible by any opposite forces is my freedom; this is my last existence and there will be no more rebirth for me".

Thus, Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon. The five hermits were delighted. They rejoiced in the first sermon of Lord Buddha.

Upon the completion of the exposition of this first sermon by Lord Buddha, there arose in Reverend Kondanna the vision: "Whatever has the nature of arising also has the nature of passing away" (First Level of Enlightenment).

When Lord Buddha has set in motion this Wheel of Law (Dhammacakka), the ground-dwelling gods proclaimed in unison: "The Incomparable Wheel of Law has been set in motion by Lord Buddha in the Deer Park, in Isipatana near Benares. None of the Gods, the King of Maras, the Brahmas and the much-respected hermits and learned men or anyone else in this world can proclaim it".

Upon hearing the proclamation of the ground-dwelling gods, Catumaharajika celestial gods repeated the same proclamation in unison. Similarly, Tavatimsa celestial gods, Yama celestial gods, Tusita celestial gods, Nimmanarati celestial gods. Paranimitavasavatti celestial gods and Brahmas in the Brahma worlds repeated the same proclamation in unison, one after another.

At that moment, this proclamation reverberated all the way through as far as the Brahma world.

The ten thousand world systems trembled and quaked. A boundless sublime light appeared, surpassing the radiance of celestial gods.

At that moment, Lord Buddha uttered this oration: "Monks, Kondanna has indeed realized the Four Noble Truths. Kondanna has indeed realized the Four Noble Truths. "

Thus it was that Reverend Kondanna came to be known as Annasi Kondanna.

Thereupon, Reverend Kondanna,
 having realized and understood the Four Noble Truths,
 having attained the Sotapatti Fruition,
 having been established in the knowledge of the Truths,
 having overcome any doubt,
 having put away any wavering thoughts,
 having reposed full confidence in Lord Buddha's teachings,
 having been convinced that there was no one else but Lord Buddha
 in whom one should seek spiritual refuge,
 requested Lord Buddha to confer monkhood upon him.

"Come on, monk," said Lord Buddha. "I have proclaimed the Law (teachings) well. Practise well the Noble Path for the Cessation of Suffering." This utterance by Lord Buddha constituted the ordination rite for Kondanna who thereupon attained his monkhood.

(Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, Mahavagga Book. Khuddaka Nikaya, Vinaya Pitaka.)

EPILOGUE

Commentary

The first sermon, delivered by all Buddhas after their attainment of Buddhahood, is invariably the sermon of the Four Noble Truths. This may well be likened to the policy statement of a newly-formed government. By this key-note sermon, Gautama Buddha set in motion the Wheel of Law, and thereby launched his life-long mission of the propagation of his teachings. Hence, its name the Wheel of Law (Dhammacakka).

The Four Noble Truths can be compared to the hub of a wheel. As all the spokes of a wheel radiate from the hub, all Buddha's teachings radiate from this sermon. If one is asked to pick out a single sermon or discourse that epitomizes all the teachings of Lord Buddha, one should certainly lay one's finger on the sermon of the Four Noble Truths.

In fact, the Four Noble Truths is nothing but a problem-solving methodology in its most sophisticated and subtle form. It is also an exposé of the four fundamental ethical principles. In the final analysis, our life is nothing but a series of problem-solving exercises. All conscious and purposive actions of all living beings are governed by the four fundamental principles of problem solving: -

- (1) identification or awareness of the problem;
- (2) finding out the cause of the problem;
- (3) realization of the solution to the problem; and
- (4) executing the solution to the problem.

Analogy of a physician

Perhaps, the best analogy is to liken Lord Buddha to a physician and his sermon of the Four Noble Truths to the physician's diagnosis and prescription of remedy for the patient.

- First, the physician has to diagnose the disease the patient is suffering from.
- Second, he has to find out the cause of the disease.
- Third, he has to attack and remove the cause of the disease in order to cure it.
- Fourth, he has to do this by prescribing and administering an efficacious remedy to the patient.

Let me give an illustration to further elucidate how these four steps are actually carried out by the physician. Let us suppose that the physician receives a patient, running a high fever.

- The first step is for the physician to diagnose the disease. Fever can be caused by one of several diseases --- common cold, typhoid, dengue haemorrhagic fever, cancer, dysentery, heat stroke, malaria etc. The physician diagnoses the disease, say, as malaria.
- The second step is for the physician to find out the cause of the disease, malaria. The physician concludes that the cause of malaria is the presence in the patient's body system of plasmodium parasites, transmitted by *anopheles* mosquitoes.
- The third step is the decision by the physician to remove the cause of the disease. In this case, the decision and objective of the physician is to attack and eliminate plasmodium parasites in the patient's body system.
- The fourth step is the remedy. The physician administers quinine to eliminate plasmodium parasites in the patient's body system. As a result, the patient is cured of malaria.

Let me offer yet another illustration. The physician receives a patient with an animal bite wound. The patient does not know what animal has bitten him.

- The first step is for the physician to diagnose the disease. In this illustration, the physician has to find out whether the patient has been bitten by a snake or some other insect or animal and, in the case of a snake bite, whether the snake that has bitten the patient is poisonous or non-poisonous.
- Supposing that it is established that a poisonous snake has bitten the victim, the second step is for the physician to find out the cause of the poison effects. In other words, he must find out what snake --- viper, cobra or banded krait --- has inflicted the snake bite. Different snake poisons require different antidotes. Unless one can identify the snake poison, one cannot administer the right antidote. In this case, let us suppose that it is the snake bite wound, inflicted by a viper.
- The third step is the decision by the physician to remove the cause of the life-threatening snake poison. In this case, the decision and objective of the physician is to neutralize the viper's poison in the patient's body system.
- The fourth step is the remedy. The physician gives the patient an injection of anti-snake bite serum to neutralize the viper's poison. As a result the patient is cured of the snake bite wound, and his life is saved.

Let us now draw points of analogy from these illustrations.

- Identification or awareness of the Truth of Suffering bears analogy with the diagnosis of the disease by the physician.

- Investigation into the Truth of the Cause of Suffering bears analogy with the physician's investigation into the cause of the disease.
- Realization of the Truth of the Cessation of the Suffering bears analogy with the physician's decision to remove the cause of disease.
- Practicing or executing the Eightfold Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering bears analogy with the remedy administered by the physician to the patient to cure the disease.

Four fundamental principles

It must be noted here that Lord Buddha is the pioneer who is the first to accurately formulate these four fundamental ethical principles. Furthermore, he alone has underlined the great importance of these principles, and has applied them to resolve the ultimate question of the Four Noble Truths. These principles constitute the mainspring of animal behaviours as well as all our human endeavours to solve various types of problems in life --- be it progress of the human civilization, scientific and technological development, war fighting, settlement of international disputes, management and business administration or personal problems or any other problem one may encounter in one's daily life. Hence, the more we can master and fulfil these fundamental principles, the more we can accomplish our well-being.

Mainspring of animal behaviours

Let us begin with an analysis of animal behaviors. Let us take the example of a deer feeling pains of a thirst. By instinct, it knows that its thirst is caused by its body system not having sufficient amount of water. It also knows that drinking sufficient amount of water will quench its thirst. With this end in mind, it tries to find a water hole through a maze of game paths in the forest. We can put this in the form of a system analysis of the four fundamental problem-solving principles as follows:-

- (1) Thirst is the problem facing the deer.
- (2) Its body system not having sufficient amount of water is the cause of the problem.
- (3) Drinking the sufficient amount of water will be the solution to the problem.
- (4) Finding the nearest water hole in the forest is the way to secure a solution to the problem.

The deer will be able to quench its thirst if it can fulfil these four principles, and find a water hole in the forest.

It must be noted here that the performance of the four principles has different levels and stages. An animal like a deer knows nothing better or more sophisticated than to look for a water hole in the forest. But man --- the most intelligent animal on earth --- reaches a much higher level of the performance of

the four principles. Man will not be content with the primitive means of relying, on random and insecure sources of water such as water holes. Man, instead, ensures a regular supply of clean and hygienic water by digging wells and by building rain water storage tanks, reservoirs and dams and by putting in place modern and efficient water supply systems.

Science and technology as well as human civilization also progress through the performance of these four principles. Take the example of the invention of electricity. During the stone age, man had to spend the nights in darkness. He did not consider spending the night in darkness as unsatisfactory or as a problem. He did not, therefore, know the cause of the problem. Nor did he realize the solution to the problem (i.e. utilizing a light source such as candles and oil lamps). Nor was he aware of the way to execute the solution to the problem.

As man learnt to use tools, he also came to know how to utilize light sources. Hence, the use of candles and oil lamps in later ages, leading up to the 18th century.

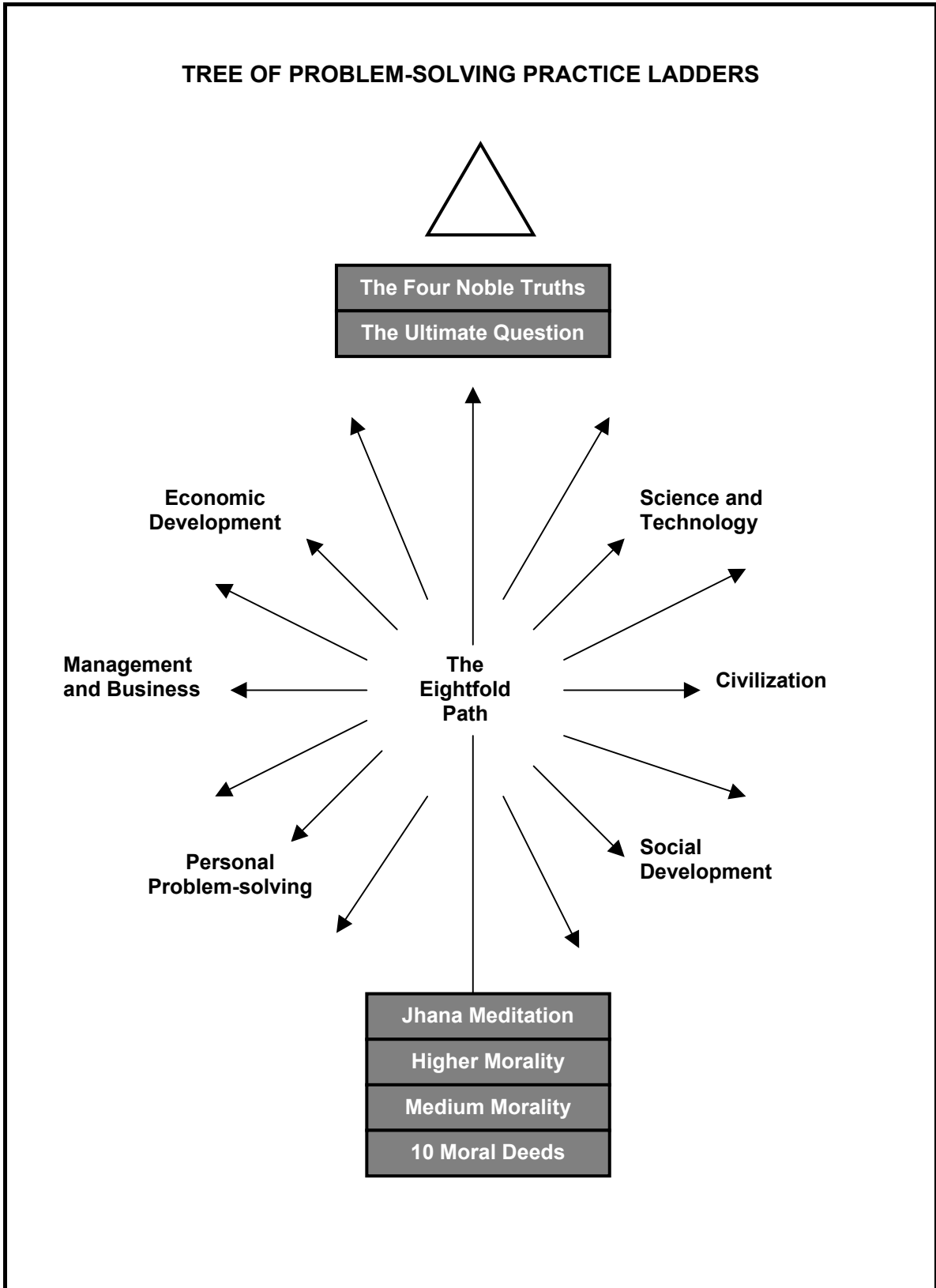
Since the discovery of the electricity in the 18th century, man has utilized the electricity for lighting as well as for other industrial and home utility purposes. We can put this in the form of a system analysis of the four principles as follows:-

- (1) ***Identification of the problem:*** At that point in the history of human civilization in the 18th century, man considered the use of candles and lamps at night as unsatisfactory and as something that needed to be improved upon.
- (2) ***Finding out the cause of the problem:*** The cause of this unsatisfactory lighting conditions was the lack of technical know-how to develop a better and more advanced lighting source. When man discovered electricity in the 18th century, he became aware of this cause and realized that electric lighting was a better lighting system.
- (3) ***Solution to the problem:*** The solution to that problem could be achieved by the replacement of the primitive means of lighting with the modern electric lighting system.
- (4) ***Executing the solution to the problem:*** This was accomplished by developing technology and equipment to generate and utilize electricity for lighting.

In fact, the means of generating electricity and other sources of energy and utilizing them for other purposes keep on improving as our mastery of the four principles advances.

One noteworthy aspect of the four principles is that one should always find out the shortcomings of the existing state of affairs, and should seek better options and alternative ways of improving one's conditions. Hence, a practitioner of the four principles will find himself on a rung of a ladder which he may ascend as far as he wishes. This shows the voluntary nature of the basic principles of the Four Noble Truths. There is nothing compulsory about it. Everybody has freedom of choice.

To give a clear idea of the system of problem-solving practices, let us visualize the tree of problem-solving practice ladders. Please see the diagram.



In every area of human endeavour, there is a problem-solving practice ladder. There are indeed a countless number of problem-solving practice ladders, as there are a countless number of human endeavours. At the apex of those countless number of problem-solving practice ladders lies the Four Noble Truths. For the four fundamental principles that form the backbone of the Four Noble Truths run through all our conscious and purposive actions. The Four Noble Truths constitutes the highest, the most sophisticated and the most subtle form of the problem-solving methodology. Hence, it represents the culmination and the final crowning achievement of all those countless number of problem-solving practice ladders.

As shown in the diagram, a countless number of problem-solving practice ladders --- science and technology, human civilization, social problems etc.--- all branch off from the main trunk. All of them are, therefore, connected to the main trunk leading to the Four Noble Truths through the common denominator of the four fundamental principles.

But one very important point must be noted here. One cannot reach the summit of the Four Noble Truths by following any of those countless branches. For these branches are not pointing in the direction of the summit; they go out in their own respective directions that are different from the direction of the summit. One can reach the summit of the Four Noble Truths only by following the main trunk of the Eightfold Path. Please see the diagram.

Tackling the ultimate question

Let us now turn to the ultimate question --- the question of the Four Noble Truths that lies at the apex of the problem-solving ladder tree.

Here, I should like to further elucidate the fundamentals of the Four Noble Truths by using the analogy of a dream.

Analogy of a dream

A man has a long dream. In his dream, the man meets a charming pretty lady; falls in love with her; and spends many happy moments with his lover. All of a sudden, a big male tiger comes out of the forest, and chases the man and the lady. The two lovers run for their lives.

Once he wakes up, he realizes that it is merely a dream. He will not care for the dream any more; nor will he feel strongly about it; his only reaction will be disillusionment.

The awakened man's realization that it is only a dream and his disillusionment with it can be compared to the realization of the Truth of Suffering.

In the analogy, the man finding himself, extricated from the dream, is the reality. The love story in the dream is merely an illusion. Likewise, Nibbana is an ever existing reality and our perception of this phenomenal world is an illusion.

Truth of Suffering (identification of the problem)

In order to tackle this ultimate question, one must turn one's investigation deep into one's very life, one's very existence, this phenomenal world itself.

Visible symptoms --- birth, old age, disease, death, association with those one does not like and separation from those one loves --- tell us that something is seriously wrong with our life and that our life i.e. the five aggregates or mind and body, in short, are fatally flawed, diseased and undesirable. This is the first step in our quest for the Four Noble Truths, and it can be realized by deep reflection and logical reasoning.

The next step is the meditation of mindfulness to gain an insight into the true characteristics of mental and material states. The meditation of mindfulness is nothing but the introspective observation of mental and material events as they occur.

Through this practice of meditation, one will make startling discoveries. One will now find out that this phenomenal world is, in fact, neither solid, nor concrete, nor real. There are no such things as "I", "You", "Mr. Y", "Miss X", "City A", or "Country Alpha". All these things are merely series of mental and material events, arising and passing away. They seem to us to be solid, concrete and real, because the built-in process of our sensory perceptions is so framed and our association of ideas work is such a way that these sensory perceptions deceive us as if they were solid, concrete and real.

Mental and material events are indeed in a constant state of flux. They are impermanent. One will then realize that one's very life and this phenomenal world are unreal and impermanent and that they are, therefore, unsatisfactory, undesirable and are not something one should cling on to. This is the Truth of Suffering.

Truth of the Cause of Suffering (finding out the cause of the problem)

Through meditation, one realizes that our own cravings for various things tie us down to the rounds of struggles and suffering, connected with those things. These cravings can be grouped into three categories:-

- craving for sensual pleasures;
- craving for one's existence; and
- craving for the termination of one's existence.

It dawns upon one that mental and material events, arising and passing away, are unsolid, non-concrete and unreal. Hence, one's existence or this phenomenal world itself is not something one should crave for or one should cling on to.

The above-mentioned three types of cravings are unjustified and unwarranted in the sense that, in reality, there exist no worthy objects to crave for. There arises in one an insight that these cravings must indeed be relinquished. Thus one attains the knowledge concerning the function to be performed with regard to the Truth of the Cause of Suffering.

This can be likened to the disillusionment of the man who has woken up from the dream in the above-mentioned analogy. Knowing that it is merely a dream and an illusion, he will not enjoy the dream anymore: he will not crave for it anymore; his reaction will only be disillusionment.

But so long as the dreaming man thinks that the dream is real and so long as he enjoys it, he will be caught up in the dream; and he will continue to drift in the dream. Similarly, so long as one has three types of craving (or at least one of them), one will be caught up in the rounds of rebirths: one will continue to drift in their rounds.

Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (realization of the solution to the problem)

Through meditation, one realizes that, by relinquishing cravings for anything, one attains sublime peace of mind and spiritual well-being which is, in fact, much superior to the enjoyment of the crude sensual pleasures. It is not so easy for an average person to recognize that not craving for anything is better than craving for something and getting it. Only the enlightened ones realize this. They, of course, prefer sublime peace of mind and spiritual well-being to the crude sensual pleasures, and opt for the former. It must also be noted here that relinquishing cravings for anything is synonymous with the Cessation of Suffering.

Such relinquishing of cravings bears analogy with that of a man who has woken up from a dream in the above-mentioned story. While dreaming the man enjoys the happy moments with his lover, but he also experiences a mortal fear when he is chased by a tiger. Once he has woken up, he is immensely relieved, and he enjoys great peace of mind. He no longer finds the dream interesting or attractive. He will only enjoy his liberation from that turbulent dream. This attitude of the man bears analogy with the realization and enjoyment of the Cessation of Suffering. In this way, there arises in one the knowledge of the function that the Cessation of Suffering, i.e. the extinction of one's craving must be realized or attained.

Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (executing the solution to the problem)

As one's meditation of mindfulness advances one's mental faculties and factors also develop. At the time of Enlightenment, the Eightfold Path arises in one, resulting in a change in one's outlook of the world and in one's personality.

In fact, Enlightenment or Magga (Path-consciousness) constitutes the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering. All the Four Noble Truths and the four principles are important. It must be noted, however, that, in practice, the Path Leading to the Cession of Suffering or executing the solution to the problem

proves to be the most difficult task. Hence, the Eightfold Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering holds the key to the realization of the Four Noble Truth. By the same token, executing solutions to problems hold the key to all problem-solving exercises.

In practical terms, what one has to do is to practise the meditation of "mindfulness". Development of other mental faculties and spiritual attainments will follow automatically. The practice of the Eightfold Path bears analogy with the man's endeavours to wake up from his dream. This wakening-up process will be completed at the time of being fully awake. Similarly, the practice of the Eightfold Path is completed fully and in the proper sense of the word only at the time of Enlightenment.

I wish to add here one more interesting and noteworthy aspect concerning Enlightenment. In the case of other problem-solving exercises, four steps (i.e. identification of the problem, finding out its cause, realization of its solution and executing its solution) are performed as separate acts, and one step after another. It is an entirely different experience with Enlightenment. At the time of Enlightenment (Path Consciousness --- Magga), one realizes the Four Noble Truths at one stroke, in one instant: all the four steps are performed at one stroke in one instant. It is due to the quickness of the process of consciousness and due to the nature of Enlightenment that all the four functions with regard to the Four Noble Truths are all performed and completed at one stroke, in one instant.

As noted above, the practice of the Eightfold Path is completed fully and in the proper sense of the word only at the time of Enlightenment (Magga). In other words, the full and proper practice of the Eightfold Path is synonymous with the attainment of Enlightenment (Magga). Hence, those who aspire to perform the Eightfold Path fully and properly and to realize the Four Noble Truths should develop their knowledge through the practice of mindfulness (vipassana).

The Four Noble Truths or these four principles are indeed applicable mutatis mutandis to solving any problem or any question one may encounter in one's daily life, provided that one knows how to do it. The ultimate and the greatest endeavour in problem-solving exercises is the realization of the Four Noble Truths. One may engage oneself in simple or complex, elementary or advanced problem-solving exercises, or one may undertake even the ultimate endeavour for the realization of the Four Noble Truths, according to one's own aspirations and capabilities.

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