

## Discourse on the five ways to end anger

On that day, the Venerable Sariputra said to the monks,

*"Dear friends, today I would like to share with you the five ways to end anger and hatred. Please listen to me carefully and meditate on what I am about to say."*

*"Thus have I heard the Buddha say one day while staying at Anathapindika Monastery in Jeta Park, not far from Sravasti," Venerable Sariputra told the monks.*

The monks agreed to listen carefully.

*"What are these five methods for ending anger and hatred?" asked the Venerable Sariputra.*

### ***"Here is the first method, dear friends:***

*"If a person's actions are not kind but his words are and he makes us angry, because we are wise, we should know how to meditate to end our irritation or anger.*

*"Dear friends, let's imagine a monk who practices asceticism and likes to wear a robe made of pieces of cloth. One day he passes a disgusting dump with excrement, urine, pus and other filth and sees a piece of cloth still intact. With his left hand he picks up the cloth and with his right hand he spreads it out. Seeing that the piece of cloth is not yet punctured or soiled by excrement, urine, pus and other filth, he immediately folds it, keeps it and takes it home to wash it and then sew it with other pieces to make a dress."*

*"Dear friends, in the same way, when a person does not act with kindness but still speaks kind words, let us not pay attention to his actions. Instead, let us think only of his words so that we can put an end to our irritation or anger. A wise man should practice this way."*

### ***"Here is the second method, my dear friends:***

*"If a person does not speak kind words but acts kindly, and he makes us angry, as we are wise, we should know how to meditate to end our irritation or anger.*

*"My dear brothers, let us say that not far from the village there is a deep lake. But its surface is covered with algae and grass. At that moment, a person tortured by hunger, thirst and heat approaches the lake. He undresses, puts his clothes on the edge of the lake, dives into the water, pushes aside the algae and weeds with his two arms, quenches his thirst and enjoys the swim.*

*"Dear friends, it is so when someone does not speak kind words but acts kindly. Let us not pay attention to his words but pay attention only to his kind acts in order to stop our anger. A wise man should practice like this."*

### ***"Here is the third method, dear friends:***

*"If a person does not act or speak kindly but still has some kind thoughts and makes us angry, as we have deep insight, we should seek to meditate so that we can end our anger.*

*"Dear friends, suppose a person who is at the end of his strength and suffering from thirst, poverty, heat and afflictions, comes to a crossroads where there is a footprint of a buffalo in which a little rainwater is still standing. The person thinks: 'As there is very little water in this buffalo footprint, if I take the water with my hand or a leaf, I may stir it up and make it cloudy, muddy and undrinkable. In that case, I would not be able to quench my thirst, put an end to my misery, heat and afflictions. Saying to himself 'Kneel down, put your arms and knees on the ground and drink the water directly from your mouth', this person immediately kneels down with his arms completely on the ground and drinks by putting his mouth right on the hole made by the imprint.*

*"My dear brothers, in the same way, when a person does not act or speak kindly, but still has some kindness in his thoughts, let us not pay attention to his unkind actions or words, but instead pay attention only to his few kind thoughts so that we can stop our anger or hatred. A wise man should practice this."*

### ***"Here is the fourth method, dear friends:***

*"If a person does not act or speak kindly and in his heart there is nothing left that can be called kind, if we are angry and we are wise, we should seek to meditate so that we can put an end to that anger.*

*"Dear friends, suppose a person travels far and falls ill along the way. The last village he left long ago, and the one he is heading for, are still far away. Suffering, exhausted, alone, she falls into despair knowing that she will die on the way. At that moment, someone appears, finds her in this state and helps her immediately. He supports her with his arms to take her to the next village, takes care of her, heals her and provides her with all the necessary food and medicine. With his help, the person is saved. If that person is saved, it is because of the love and compassion of the other.*

*"In the same way, dear friends, when we see someone who does not act or speak with kindness and who has nothing in his or her heart that resembles kindness, we should think this:*

*'A person whose actions, words and thoughts are not kind is a person who is suffering greatly. He is certainly going down an extremely dangerous path. If he does not meet a friend, he will have no chance to transform himself and go on the path that leads to happiness.'*

*"By thinking like this, we can open our hearts to compassion and love, end our anger and help the other person. A wise person should practice like this."*

***"Here is the fifth method, dear friends:***

*"If someone acts and speaks kindly, if he is also kind in his thoughts, and yet we are angry or jealous of him, as we are wise, we should seek to meditate so that we can end our anger.*

*"Dear friends, suppose that not far from a village there is a beautiful lake. The water of the lake is clear and soft. The bottom is deep and flat. The shore is even and covered with fresh grass and the four sides are shaded by lush green trees. A person who is thirsty, suffering from afflictions, heat and covered in sweat, comes to the lake. He undresses, lays his clothes on the edge of the lake, plunges into the water, quenches his thirst and fully enjoys the swim. His heat, thirst and afflictions dissipate. So it is, dear friends, when we see someone acting, speaking and thinking kindly. We should recognise this reflected friendliness in all three areas, actions, words and thoughts, without allowing anger or jealousy to take over. If we don't know how to live happily with such a cool person, we are really not living in wisdom."*

*"My dear brothers, I have shared with you the 'Five Methods to End Anger."*

After hearing the Venerable Sariputra, the monks were happy to receive these teachings and put them into practice.

*Madhyama Agama.*

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