

Brief Introduction To Buddhism

Notes By Roosh V

<http://www.rooshv.com>

In Spring of 2009 I picked up [*What The Buddha Taught*](#) by Walpola Rahula and after reading each chapter I went on the internet for more explanation on concepts mentioned in the book. I took notes on everything so that I could consult with them later, as the beliefs espoused by Buddhism matched very closely to my own. Below are the notes that I took. I never planned on making these public so unfortunately I didn't add sources to each quote and paraphrase, but everything you're about to read has come from one of the following places:

- ✓ Walpola Rahula's [*What The Buddha Taught*](#)
- ✓ Buddhapadipa Temple: <http://www.buddhapadipa.org/>
- ✓ Buddhism and Insight: <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/buddhism/dhmasami.htm>
- ✓ Buddhist Studies: <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/>
- ✓ Dharma Notes: <http://www.geocities.com/tribhis/dharmanotes.html>
- ✓ Fundamentals Of Buddhism: <http://www.buddhanet.net/fundbud.htm>
- ✓ The Path To Freedom: <http://www.accesstoinight.org/ptf/>

Enjoy...

- Belief & Faith

- “It is an undeniable fact that as long as there is doubt, perplexity, wavering, no progress is possible. It is also equally undeniable that there must be doubt as long as one does not understand or see clearly. But in order to progress further it is absolutely necessary to get rid of doubt. To get rid of doubt one has to see clearly.”
- More faith (“I believe”) will not resolve doubt.
- If you know and see, there is no need for a belief. See through knowledge and wisdom, not faith
- “To the seeker after Truth it is immaterial from where an idea comes. The source and development of an idea is a matter for the academic. In fact, in order to understand Truth, it is not necessary even to know whether the teaching comes from the Buddha, or from anyone else. What is essential is seeing the thing, understanding it.”
- “It is quite clear that the Buddha's teaching is meant to carry man to safety, peace, happiness, tranquility, the attainment of Nirvana. The whole doctrine taught by the Buddha leads to this end. He did not say things just to satisfy intellectual curiosity. He was a practical teacher and taught only those things which would bring peace and happiness to man.”

- The Four Noble Truths

- Dukkha
 - Definition: whatever is impermanent or changing
 - There is a dark side to pleasure when it is removed. Detachment and objectivity is true liberation. Detachment brings freedom from suffering
 - “Pleasurable experiences are also dukkha because they contain the seeds of dissatisfaction within them. A gardener can get great pleasure from his garden only if he accepts the fact that seasonal conditions vary.” Don't rely on circumstances.

- The concept of a permanent self is a prime source of mental pain.
- The search for happiness is a cause of unhappiness. Nothing is capable of reliably providing it.
- When desire ceases, as does pain.
- Even the most delightful sensations are painful/tedious if they continue for very long.
- “It is not correct to say that life is moving, but life is movement itself. Life and movement are not two different things. In other words, there is no thinker behind the thought. Thought itself is the thinker. If you remove the thought, there is no thinker to be found.”
- “What is necessary is not anger or impatience, but the understanding of the question of suffering, how it comes about, and how to get rid of it, and then work accordingly with patience, intelligence, determination, and energy.”
- Samudaya: The Arising Of Dukkha
 - Pain is caused by craving (you become unsatisfied without something), and by ignorance (not seeing the word as it is, living with fears and hopes that are false).
 - Attachment and identification of things cause suffering.
 - Craving can be aversion (what we don’t want)—it is a desire for something other than what is.
 - Many people try to escape suffering with temporary pleasures, but the suffering always returns.
 - “Whatever may be the sensation, pleasant or unpleasant, he experiences it without being bound to it, and knows it will be pacified with dissolution of body, like a flame being blown out.”
- Nirodha: The Cessation of Dukkha
 - “The Absolute Truth is that there is nothing absolute in the world, that everything is relative, conditioned and impermanent, and that there is no unchanging, everlasting, absolute substance like self or soul.”
 - “He who has realized the Truth, Nirvana, is the happiest being in the world. He is free from all ‘complexes’ and obsessions, the worries and troubles that torment others. His mental health is perfect. He does not repent the past, not does he brood over the future. He lives fully in the present. Therefore he appreciates and enjoys things in the purest sense without self-projections. He is joyful, exultant, enjoying the pure life, his faculties pleased, free from anxiety, serene, and peaceful. As he is free from selfish desire, hatred, ignorance, conceit, pride, and all such ‘defilements’, he is pure and gentle, full of universal love, compassion, kindness, sympathy, understanding and tolerance. His service to others is of the purest, for he has no thought of self. He gains nothing, accumulates nothing, not even anything spiritual, because he is free from the illusion of Self, and the ‘third’ for becoming.”
 - Nirvana is a natural result, not a cause, not a result of anything, not produced or conditioned, not an effect, not spiritual, mystic, or mental. Nirvana is. Truth is. You can only see or realize it. It is the ultimate end.
 - Dukkha arises because of thirst, and ceases because of wisdom.
 - There is an endless cycle of wanting—not getting—being sad—wanting again.
 - Five Aggregates
 - Definition
 - Form – hearing something
 - Consciousness – becoming aware of the sound

- Perception – identification of words
 - Feeling – responding with pleasure, displeasure, or indifference
 - Mental formation or volition – Sitting in attention, yawning
- Consciousness is dependent on an object and sense organ
- Aggregates show world is not constructed upon the idea of self. Once accepted, this drives you away from alternating between hope and fear, and eventually seeing personal experiences for what they really are, as processes.
- Karma – evolution in action, where what you do now sets up future events (e.g. save money now for opportunity later, or lie & cheat now to be mistrusted and friendless later)
- Magaa – The Noble Eightfold Path (to moral, spiritual, and intellectual perfection)
 - Avoids the search for happiness
 - Ethical Conduct – for a man to be perfect he has to develop wisdom and compassion equally
 - Right speech – abstain from lies, hatred, harshness, rudeness, impoliteness, abusive language, useless babble and gossip
 - Right action – abstain from destroying life, stealing, dishonesty, illegitimate sex
 - Right livelihood – abstain work that harms others
 - Moral Discipline
 - Right effort – to prevent evil and bring about good states in man
 - Right mindfulness – to be aware of body (sensations, feelings, ideas, thoughts), whether positive, negative, or neutral, and how they appear and disappear
 - Right concentration – eventual goal for all sensations to disappear, only equanimity and awareness to remain
 - Wisdom
 - Right thought – thoughts of selfless detachment, love, and non violence (not how this is grouped under wisdom)
 - Right understanding – of things as they are
 - “Knowing accordingly” – intellectual memory and knowledge
 - “Penetration” – true nature, without name and label
 - The Middle Path
 - In between hedonism (pursuit of pleasures) and asceticism (extreme deprivation)
 - Avoids extremes of indulgence and denial, of seeking endless pleasures, of tormenting self with pain, lacking, and self torment
 - Craving, ignorance, and delusions disappear gradually as progress is made on the path
- Anatta (No Soul)
 - Thinking there is a separate self is harmful, producing harmful thoughts of ‘me’ and ‘mine,’ selfish desire, craving, attachment, hatred, ill-will, conceit, pride, egoism, and other problems. It can be traced to all the evil in the world.
 - There is no soul, nothing is permanent and stable, as all beings are subject to continuous change, death, and decay.
 - “...it is wrong to hold the opinion ‘I have no self’ (which is the annihilationist theory) as to hold the opinion ‘I have self’ (which is the eternalist theory), because both are fetters, both arising out of the false idea ‘I AM’. The correct position with regard to the question of Anatta is not to take hold of any opinions or vies, but to try to see things objectively as they are without mental projects, to see

that what we call 'I', or 'being', is only a combination of physical and mental aggregates, which are working together interdependently in a flux of momentary change within the law of cause of effect, and that there is nothing permanent, everlasting, unchanging and eternal in the whole of existence."

- Nothing of self is an illusion, an obstacle to the realization of Truth
- Instead of focusing on self, become aware of process of continuous change and "becoming"
- "When a man realizes that he has been changing continuously every moment, he grieves neither for what he has lost nor for what he has gained."
- The Buddhist self is merely the five aggregates. Emancipation from suffering can only be attained once this is understood.
- There is no separate existence if everything is interconnected and interdependent.
- What people think of as their essence is impermanent and subject to other conditions
- Death is like a candle flame going out, when the "fuel" has changed into other conditions. Existence is an endless flux
- "Human life is beginningless and endless shifting of energy which for a time is expressed as a person."
- "In his ignorance, weakness, fear, and desire, man has created God (self protection), and the immortal soul (self preservation)." These are psychologically deep rooted.
- Conditioned genesis - everything is conditioned, relative, interdependent, which means there is no such thing as free will. Will cannot arise without conditions, away from cause and effect.
- Accepting soul theory also accepts grief, lamentation, suffering, distress
- Better to take the body as idea of self since it changes much more slowly than mind
- Truth and reality cannot be negative, only false beliefs.
- Meditation
 - "As long as you are conscious of yourself, you can never concentrate on anything."
 - Sit erect but not stiff. Close eyes. Hands on lap. Breathe normally, but concentrate on it. 5-10 minutes twice daily. This makes you calm, tranquil, relaxed, and better able to concentrate.
 - Be more mindful of daily actions, to be more able to enjoy them. Be in the now, not thinking of memories of the past or desires/speculations of the future. Get rid of the "I am." Just feel it, forgetting the false idea of "I"
 - "One who lives in the present moment lives the real life, and he is happiest."
 - "Sometimes you see a man in a restaurant reading while eating—a very common sight. He gives you the impression of being a very busy man, with no time even for eating. You wonder whether he eats or reads. One may say that he does both. In fact, he does neither, he enjoys neither. He is strained, and disturbed in the mind, and he does not enjoy what he does at the moment, does not live his life in the present moment, but unconsciously and foolishly tries to escape from life."
 - Buddha says: "One may conquer millions in battle, but he who conquers himself, only one, is the greatest of conquerors."
 - Five Hindrances to Clear Understanding
 - Lustful desires – sensory desire is like taking out a loan... you have to pay it back through unpleasantness of separation
 - Ill-will, hatred, or anger
 - Torpor and languor
 - Restlessness and worry
 - Skeptical doubts
 - Seven Factors Of Enlightenment

- Mindfulness – to be aware/mindful in all physical/mental tasks
- Investigation and research into various problems
- Energy – to work with determination until the end
- Joy – no pessimism, gloom, melancholy
- Relaxation of body and mind
- Concentration
- Equanimity – to be able to face life in all its vicissitudes with calm of mind, tranquility, without disturbance
- Four Things That Are Conducive To A Man’s Happiness
 - Be skilled, efficient, earnest, energetic in whatever profession you are doing, and know it well
 - Protect your income from thieves
 - Have good friends that are faithful, learned, virtuous, liberal, intelligent, who will help you on path away from evil.
 - Spend reasonably, neither too much or too little, as one shouldn’t hoard
- Four Virtues Conducive To Happiness
 - Have faith and confidence in moral, spiritual, and intellectual values
 - Abstain from destroying and harming life
 - Practice charity, generosity, without attachment and craving for wealth
 - Development of wisdom which leads to destruction of suffering (Nirvana)
- Four Kinds Of Happiness
 - Enjoying economic security acquired by just/righteous means
 - Spending that wealth liberally on himself, his family, friends, and good deeds
 - Being free from debts
 - Living a faultless, pure life without committing evil
- “To talk of maintaining peace through the balance of power, or through the threat of nuclear deterrents, is foolish. The might of armaments can only produce fear, and not peace. It is impossible that there can be genuine and lasting peace through fear. Through fear can come only hatred, ill-will and hostility, suppressed perhaps for the time being only, but ready to erupt and become violent at any moment. True and genuine peace can prevail only in an atmosphere of amity, free from fear, suspicion and danger.”
- Quotes by Buddha
 - “Being dispassionate, he becomes detached; through detachment he is liberated. When liberated there is knowledge that he is liberated. And he knows: Birth is exhausted, the holy life has been lived, what has to be done is done, there is no more left to be done on this account.”
 - “For a person who reflects unwisely there arise cares and troubles which have not yet arisen, and (in addition), those which have already arisen increase. But for him who reflects wisely, cares and troubles which have not yet arisen do not arise, and (in addition), those already arisen disappear. “
 - “If a soiled and dirty (piece of) cloth is dipped by the fuller in any dye at all—blue, yellow, red or pink—it will still be of bad and dirty colour. Why? Because the cloth is not clean. Even so, Bhikkhus, when the mind is impure, a bad future life must be expected.”
- Selections from the Dhammapada
 - “As a beautiful flower that is full of hue but lacks fragrance, even so fruitless is the well-spoken word of one who does not practice it.”

- “If, as one fares, one does not find a companion who is better or equal, let one resolutely pursue the solitary course; there can be no fellowship with the fool.”
- “Even as a solid rock is unshaken by the wind, so are the wise unshaken by praise or blame.”
- “From lust arises grief; from lust arises fear. For him who is free from lust there is no grief, much less fear.”