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The Four Noble Truths

A Clear and Practical Guide to the Buddha's First Teaching

FOUNDATION

The Buddha's First Teaching

- **The Four Noble Truths** describe the core nature of human suffering
- **Root Causes:** They explain precisely why suffering arises in daily life
- **Possibility of Cessation:** They show that suffering can definitively end
- **Practical Path:** They outline the actionable path leading to that liberation

FIRST NOBLE TRUTH

1. The Truth of Dukkha

Dukkha Means:

- Stress & Friction
- Unsatisfactoriness
- Instability
- Feeling that things never "hold still"

Universal Examples:

- Aging & physical decline
- Illness & bodily discomfort
- Loss of what we cherish
- Impermanence of pleasant states

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DAILY EXPERIENCE

How Dukkha Shows Up

- Wanting things to be different
- Fear of losing what we love
- Frustration when plans change
- Anxiety about the uncertain future

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SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

2. The Truth of the Origin of Dukkha

Dukkha Arises From:

- **Craving (Taṇhā):** Thirst for results
- **Aversion:** Resistance to reality
- **Ignorance:** Unawareness of true nature

Three Primary Forms of Craving:

1. Craving for sense pleasure
2. Craving for becoming (identity)
3. Craving for non-becoming (avoidance)

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INNER DYNAMICS

Craving Creates Tension

"I want this."

"I don't want that."

"I want things to stay the same."

"I want things to change."

Craving constantly pulls the mind out of natural balance.

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THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

3. The Truth of the Ending of Dukkha

Nirodha: The Cessation of Suffering

When craving is understood and relinquished, suffering naturally dissolves—revealing an unshakeable, inherent peace.

NIRODHA MEANS:

- Letting go of craving
- Releasing mental clinging
- Seeing reality clearly
- Experiencing genuine peace
- Freedom from the push-pull of desire

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STATE OF MIND

The Experience of Nirodha

Calm

Settled, tranquil awareness

Clarity

Unclouded perception

Non-Reactivity

Freedom from automatic triggers

Compassion

Natural warmth toward all beings

Unbinding

Freedom from compulsive wanting

Inner Stability

A stable, peaceful mind

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FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH

4. The Truth of the Path

The Noble Eightfold Path:

01 Right View	02 Right Intention	03 Right Speech	04 Right Action
05 Right Livelihood	06 Right Effort	07 Right Mindfulness	08 Right Concentration

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THREEFOLD STRUCTURE

The Path Is a Training



Wisdom (Paññā)

View • Intention



Ethics (Sīla)

Speech • Action • Livelihood



Meditation (Samādhi)

Effort • Mindfulness • Concentration

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PRACTICAL APPLICATION

How to Apply the Teachings

1. Notice stress as it arises
2. Identify the underlying craving
3. Relax the craving
4. Return to clear mindfulness
5. Cultivate active compassion
6. Strengthen ethical habits

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RELEVANCE

Why This Teaching Still Matters

Helps with Anxiety

Addresses stress at its perceptual root

Reduces Reactivity

Creates space between stimulus and response

Improves Relationships

Fosters deep understanding and empathy

Builds Resilience

Equips us to handle life's natural changes

Encourages Clarity

Clears mental noise and confusion

Inner Stability

Establishes enduring peace of mind

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OVERVIEW

The Four Noble Truths in One View

1. There is suffering (Dukkha)
2. It has causes (Craving & Ignorance)
3. It can end (Nirodha / Peace)
4. There is a path to that end (Eightfold Path)

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A Path of Clarity and Peace

"May this teaching support your practice and bring benefit to all beings."