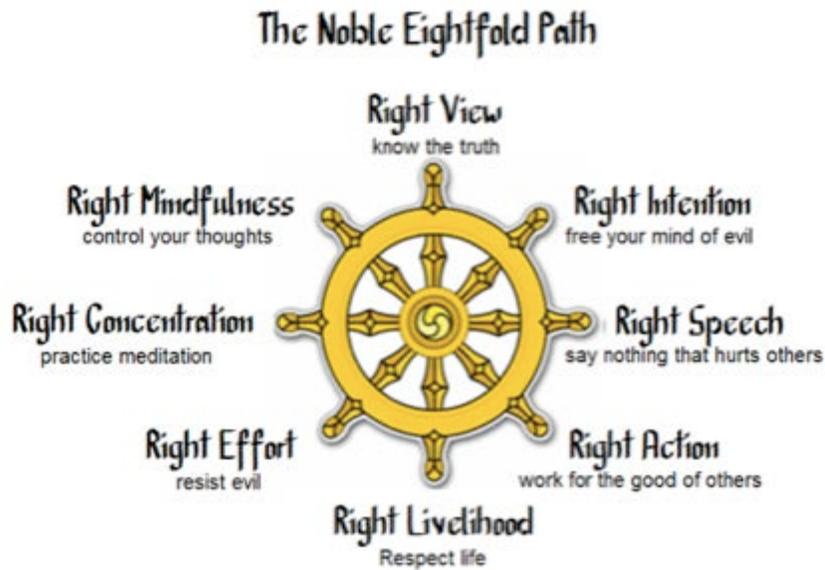


## Noble Eightfold Path / The Threefold Learning

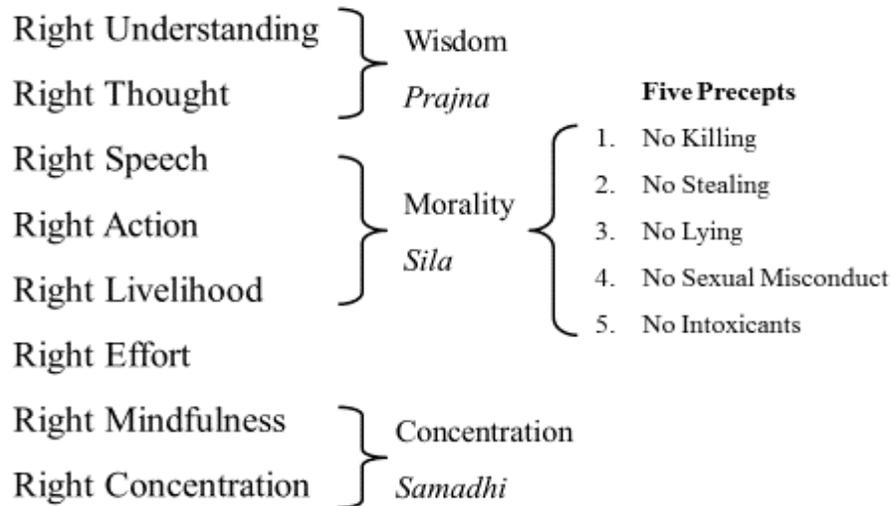
The Noble Eightfold Path is the fourth Noble Truth, which is the path that the Buddha taught us leading to the cessation of suffering and the achievement of self-awakening. It is used to develop insight into the true nature of phenomena and to eradicate greed, hatred, and delusion. The Noble Eightfold Path is made up of eight factors broken down into three sections: Paññā (wisdom), Sīla (ethics), and Samādhi (concentration).



### Threefold Training

<u>Morality-Sila</u>	<u>Concentration-Samadhi</u>	<u>Wisdom-Prajna</u>
Right Speech	Right Effort	Right View/Understanding
Right Action	Right Mindfulness	Right Thought/Intention
Right Livelihood	Right Livelihood	

## Noble Eightfold Path (Middle Path)



### 1. Right View (know the truth)

A person's ideas go a long way in determining if they succeed or fail in life. The Buddhist "right view" means having the right kinds of ideas, and right understanding. Right view is formed through having faith in the Dharma, and having the right view of cause and effect, positive and negative karmic results, impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and the enduring quality of the Buddhist teachings. Only when armed with the right knowledge and right view can we see the life and the universe as they are and avoid having mistaken or biased ideas and conduct.

### 2. Right Intention/Right Thought (free your mind of evil)

Right intention is having thinking based on true principles. In the Buddhist sutras, the mind is commonly compared to a field: good thoughts are like grain seedlings, and delusional thoughts are like weeds. Just as grains will not grow unless weeds are removed, Buddhahood cannot be attained unless delusion is removed. Therefore, those studying Buddhism should take good care of their thoughts and make sure they are aligned with the Dharma. The mind should be flexible, compassionate, pure, and without anger, so that our thoughts do not become tied up in arguments or disputes with others.

3. Right Speech (say nothing that hurts others)  
Speaking good words is the best form of practice for creating karmic connections with others. Conversely, by speaking in a sarcastic and vindictive tone or resorting to dishonest, harsh, divisive, or idle speech, language becomes a weapon to harm others. Students of Buddhism should speak constructive words that benefit others, words that are true and compassionate so that they awaken faith in others, and words that praise and gladden others.
4. Right Action (work for the good of others)  
Right action refers to creating positive karma with the body, which means turning away from unwholesome conducts like killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. This also means having good living habits, such as getting the appropriate amount of sleep, food, drink, exercise, rest, and work.
5. Right Livelihood (respect life)  
Right livelihood means engaging in proper work to obtain the necessities of life. For example, this means not opening a gambling parlor, a bar, a slaughterhouse, a fishing tackle store, a gun shop for hunting, or traffic in human beings or drugs, and so on. Right livelihood also means having a respectable moral life, harmonious social relations, and a pure emotional life.
6. Right Effort (wholesome cultivation)  
Right effort is the exertion of diligence, so that one remains focused on advancement and does not lose ground. Right effort also means striving to do good and refraining from doing bad. In the Great Perfection of Wisdom Treatise, this goal is broken down into four components: developing wholesome qualities that have not yet arisen, strengthening wholesome qualities that have already arisen, preventing unwholesome qualities that have yet to arise, and renouncing unwholesome qualities that have already arisen.
7. Right Mindfulness (control your thought)  
Right mindfulness refers both to having pure ideas that accord with the Dharma, as well as the practice of the “four bases of mindfulness.” Just before the Buddha’s final nirvana, he taught the gathered disciples to abide in the following four contemplations: contemplating the impurity of the body, contemplating the suffering of feeling, contemplating the impermanence of the mind, and contemplating the non-selfhood of phenomena. It is through these four bases of mindfulness that one can

come to understand the reality of suffering, emptiness, and impermanence in order to realize nirvana, which is permanent, blissful, pure, and has a universal Buddha nature.

8. Right Concentration (practice meditation)

Right meditative concentration is the focusing of one's mind and body to foster a moral character. "Meditation" should not be constrained by the formalities of sitting meditation, for any form of meditation that can ease the body and mind, enhance concentration, end confusion, and manifest the Buddha nature can be called "right meditative concentration."

**Discussion:**

1. Discuss what you think about the balance of the physical and mental activities that would be able to help you in a peaceful state of calm and happy mind.
2. Consider the analogy of a pot of water stirred by the wind. When you are agitated and in the grip of worry and fear, how can any of the practices you have considered help you in that moment?
3. If someone has a poor understanding of life, he/her will most likely be disrespectful to the lives of others and find it difficult to discover a sense of dignity within his/her own. How can you help him/her to show proper respect for his/her own life and those of others?
4. How do we enhance the value and significance of a full life?

**Next Class March 22 Reading Assignment:**

1. Harmony Six Points of Reverence, Perfection Six, Practice Four stages of, Five Precepts and Eight Precepts, Mindfulness -Four Bases of Text -. FaXiang
2. Nirvana, Humanistic Buddhism Text-The Core Teachings