

14 Practices and Responsibilities from  
the *Cūlavagga Vattakkhandhaka* (One of the books of *Vinaya*)

**1. Practice / responsibility for visiting Bhikkhus.**

- If we come wearing shoes, slippers or umbrellas, it has to be removed and kept properly before entering the monastery.
- We must also remove headwear.
- The Abbot and senior Bhikkhus staying in the monastery should be paid proper respect by the visiting Bhikkhu. Only then can one stay suitably at the monastery.

**2. Practice / responsibility for those who are staying in the monastery.**

- When a senior Bhikkhu comes to the monastery, a junior Bhikkhu or Sāmaṇera should offer to carry his robes, bowl etc. One should offer seats and the washing of his feet. To offer drinking water, one can ask, “Do you wish to have some drinking water?”. Or one can arrange another to offer the visitor drinking water.
- If the guest Bhikkhu is junior in rank, one should prepare/indicate a place for him to keep his belongings. One also has to prepare/indicate a place for sitting and a place for rest. And lastly, one should indicate a place for him to wash his feet and a place to find drinking water.

**3. Practice / responsibility for those who are about to embark upon a journey.**

- To keep and secure all property, including dishes, bowls, wooden bed and chair etc.
- To close the window and the door, if it is a kuti where only one person is staying within.
- One has to inform about his destination to his Dhamma friends and senior Bhikkhus in the monastery.
- After performing these duties, one can go on a journey. If these duties were not performed, the Bhikkhu commits a Dukkaṭa offence, while the Sāmaṇera commits a Daṇḍa offence.

**4. Practice / responsibility of one who will give Dhamma talks to the laypeople.**

- The most senior Bhikkhu has to give such talks himself. If he does not have the ability to give Dhamma talks, he has to encourage another, even a Sāmaṇera, to do so. One cannot give Dhamma talks without permission of the most senior Bhikkhu.
- If the most senior Bhikkhu doesn't understand or doesn't have the ability to give Dhamma talks, and he does not encourage others to do so, the junior Bhikkhu with such ability can give a Dhamma talk by first getting permission from the most Senior Bhikkhu.
- If the devotee requests someone whom he venerates to give a Dhamma talk, there is no need to get permission from the most senior Bhikkhu.

**5. Practice / responsibility of the person / Bhikkhu in charge of the alms food eating area.**

- During Buddha's time, that place could be in the guesthouse of the village. The Bhikkhu who travels to and from the eating area in the village has to follow the Sekhiya rules with care.
- In an eating area, it is disrespectful and inappropriate for the Sāmaṇera and junior Bhikkhus to sit very closely with the senior Bhikkhus. On the other hand, a senior Bhikkhu cannot prohibit the junior Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇera from sitting in any particular place. When eating, one has to eat in accordance with the Sekhiya rules. Before and after eating, when one washes his hands and mouth etc., one has to do so quietly. If one spits, or washes his hands, one has to do so in the water-accepting cup, with consideration to the nearest person.

**6. Practice / responsibility of the Bhikkhu or Sāmaṇera who goes round for alms food.**

- One has to keep belongings made of earth and wood securely.
- One has to wash his alms bowl thoroughly.
- Whenever a Bhikkhu eats it has to be donated by the laypeople or a Sāmaṇera. Even eating unoffered food is a fault. Thus if a Bhikkhu thinks that his alms bowl is not clean, laypeople can offer his bowl before the alms round.
- One has to practice according to the Sekhiya rules, like wearing robes evenly whilst in the village.
- When one stands at a place where people donate alms food, one has to stand not too near or far away from others. To stand not too long or too short of a time. One needs to have the judgment to know whether others will donate alms food or not.
- One cannot look up into the face of the person who offers Dana.

- When one leaves a household, one must not leave too slowly or quickly.

**7. Practice / responsibility of one who stays in the forest kuti.**

- One has to store drinking water and water for use, to be ready if thieves and robbers ask for it.
- To keep a fire lit or to prepare matches/fire starter kit for the lighting of a fire.
- To keep a walking stick, to help the Bhikkhu when he goes for walks.
- To try to know about directions and landmarks of the area when thieves ask.

**8. Practice / responsibility of one who stays in a kuti.**

- Keep the resting place away from the sun. Wipe the dust from the chair, table, bed etc.
- Sweep the toilet, bathroom, compound. Before sweeping, sprinkle some water so that dust does not rise up. Before cleaning the room, arrange the chair, table, bed, blanket, pillow, robe, bowl etc. accordingly (to reach into all parts of the room for cleaning).
- When cleaning the kuti, start from the ceiling. Do not touch the insects. Clean the frames of the windows.
- To clean paintings, wet clothes, wring it and clean gently.
- Dispose of the rubbish in a suitable place.
- Dust the bed and robes outside. Do not dust near the Bhikkhu, the kutis or the waterpot.
- One should do these jobs downwind instead of upwind.
- After cleaning and spreading the robes etc. under the sun, they must be kept back inside.
- To know where to store belongings before taking them out of the kuti.
- If strong wind gusts up and brings with it dust, close the window and door that faces the wind.
- Keep the water for drinking and other uses clean.
- When one stays together with the senior Bhikkhus, one should get permission for some actions. Examples include: teaching Dhamma, reciting Dhamma, giving Dhamma talks, switching on the lights, closing and opening the door and window.
- If a senior Bhikkhu has given permission, there is no need to ask for permission to teach.
- Encouragement of a Sayadaw: According to Buddha's teaching, if the monastery is clean, it is a very pleasant place, the best place to be peaceful and happy for those who come to the monastery. But nowadays, some are not clean, cannot get glory. Should try cleaning.

## 9. Bathroom and Sauna (Jantāghara)

- To dissipate coldness and tense bodies, especially in cold climates.
- To protect the face from the heat of the sauna, smear the face with clay.
- More than 1 or 2 Bhikkhus / Sāmaṇeras can take a bath together in that room.
- If there are ashes from the sauna fire, dispose of it. Sweep away the trash.
- Mix soap powder with water to form blocks of soap for easy usage.

## 10. Toilet

- To check if there are people inside the toilet, one should cough. If someone is inside, he should cough back to signal his presence.
- One has to hang his upper robe on a bar or rope outside the toilet.
- When opening the door, one enters not too quickly or too slowly.
- After having stood on the step in the toilet, one can then lift up his lower robe. Before entering the toilet, one must not lift up the robe early.
- While passing motion, one should not make any sound at all, as much as it is possible.
- When passing motion, one should not keep the toothbrush inside the toilet.
- One should pass motion cleanly into the toilet hole.
- In the past, faeces and urine are separated. The urine is passed onto a small canal which then flows away from the toilet hole. One should not spit his saliva and deposit his snot into such a canal.
- One should not use a rough or damaged stick to clean his anus. (Antiquated practices.)
- After using such a stick, one should not throw it into the faeces hole or the urine canal. It should be disposed of properly.
- If one has to wash their body, the washing is done in another room.
- When washing, one needs to take care that they are not too noisy with the splashing of the water.
- One should place the water scoop upside down after use of it, so that it can be kept empty of water.
- Standing up from the step, one should make sure that his lower robe is covering himself before moving off.
- If the toilet is not clean after use, one should wash it.
- If the box of used sticks is full, one should dispose of it in a suitable place.
- If there is rubbish in the toilet, one should sweep and clean it.
- If there is no water in the water pot (separate from the toilet, for the cleaning of the body), one should fill it up.
- Seniority holds no weight at the toilet/bathroom queue. Priority goes to those who come first.

- Note: These rules, if the Bhikkhus do not perform properly, is an Āpatti offence. Need confession to recover from the offence. If Sāmaṇeras do not perform, they will be punished.

### **11. Disciples' Responsibility / Practice towards the Preceptor (Upajjhaya)**

- The Preceptor (Upajjhaya) is like the parent of the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras during Buddha's dispensation. If the disciple is not sick, getting up early, wearing the upper robe properly, one has to offer a toothbrush and water to his Upajjhaya for the washing of his face.
- One has to offer porridge or rice, meaning breakfast.
- The place of the Upajjhāya has to be swept.
- The bedsheets and blankets have to be spread under the sun in a timely manner.
- During this time, when the bedsheets and blankets are being cleaned/sunned, one should offer the Upajjhāya a place to rest.
- Note: If the Upajjhāya has many disciples, and someone takes responsibility to take care of the Preceptor, the others can rest. If the Preceptor says, "I have someone to take care of me, all of you can make effort to learn and practice freely.", the disciples are freed of duty. Otherwise, one must perform such responsibilities diligently.

### **12. Preceptors' Responsibility to his Disciple**

- Giving lectures and admonishments.
- If the Preceptor has such belongings in excess, he may offer a bowl, robe, and other necessities to support his disciple.
- If he doesn't have such belongings in excess, he should help his disciple to look for them.
- If his disciple is sick, he should offer a toothbrush, clean water, porridge and sweep in his disciple's place etc.

### **13. Disciples' Responsibility to other Teachers (other than the Preceptor)**

- Pabbajjhācariya: When ordained as a Sāmaṇera, he is the teacher who teaches and gives the Three Refuges.
- Upasampadācariya: The teacher who recites Kammavācā (ordination recitations) during the ordination of a Bhikkhu.
- Dhammācariya: The teacher who teaches the Buddha's teachings.
- Nissayācariya: The teacher who gives Nissaya; he who takes care of one who stays in dependence of him.

- The 4 Corresponding Disciples have the same responsibilities that a disciple has towards his preceptor.

#### **14. Teachers' Responsibility to other Disciples**

- Note: Mostly, these teachers have the same responsibilities that a preceptor has towards his disciple.
- Note: The young Bhikkhus or Sāmaṇeras who stay separately with the Upajjhāya should take another qualified teacher by saying, “Ācariyo me Bhante hohi. Āyasmato Nissāya Vacchāmi.” Venerable sir, please be kind to be my teacher, I will stay in dependence of you.” (3 times)
- Teacher: “Pāsādikena sampādehi (or sampādetha, for more than one person.)”.
- These are called Khandhakavatta because these rules come from the Cūlavagga Kandhakha. If one does not follow these rules, one cannot complete his morality training. If one cannot complete his morality training, one cannot complete his concentration training. If one cannot complete his concentration training, one cannot attain Nibbana.

#### **Upajjhāya**

- If the Upajjhāya travels to another place for a short time, relocates to another place (may not have the intention to return), disrobe, die or have driven said disciple away, then the Preceptor ceases to hold a relationship with his disciple. That disciple then has to look for another teacher.
- Young Bhikkhus (less than 5 Vāssas) and Sāmaṇeras cannot be without a teacher.

#### **Teachers that we are in dependence to**

- If the teacher that we are in dependence to travels to another place for a short time, relocates to another place (may not have the intention to return), disrobe, die, have driven said disciple away or the said disciple has found his Upajjhāya, then the teacher that we are in dependence to ceases to hold that relationship with his disciple. That disciple then has to look for another teacher.