

Holistic Well-beings Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology



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ABSTRACT

This article aims to understand the balanced way of life with holistic well-beings promotion according to Buddhist Psychology. The findings show there are four elements of well-being that when combining together, they will arise the holistic well-beings. The Holistic Well-beings characterize the innate body, social moral, calm mind, and the awakening wisdom, respectively. They are the fourfold outcome of the holistic well-beings. Such outcomes are the result of the Balanced Way of life when the human's needs according to the Maslow's hierarchy of Needs; Physiological, Safety, Social, Esteem, and Self-actualization Needs, are fulfilled. There are four ways of Well-beings promotion, which are, (1) practicing contentment to promote the physical well-being; (2) observing the Five Precepts, having good friends, practicing the principles of service, to promote the moral well-being; (3) practicing tranquil meditation and the Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) to promote the mental well-being; and (4) augmenting the wisdom by the practice of the four foundations of mindfulness and the fourfold paths. As a result, the "Well-beings" and "Balance Way", the highest purpose will be finally achieved.

Keywords: Balanced, Buddhist, Holistic Well-beings, Promotion, Psychology, Way of Life.

Introduction

Based on the principle “sound mental health leads to sound physical health” the mental side of humans life demonstrates the concept of accepting the existence of the mind with characteristics of the conditioned (*sankhata-lakkhaṇa*) from its arising appears (*uppāda*), persisting (*aññathatta*), to its passing away or subsidence appears (*vaya*) (A.I.152). The point is that Buddhism considers that mentality can be improved to the high potential, high performance and high quality. By developing and training according to the principle of the Middle Way (*majjhimā-paṭipadā*), in which we call the principles associated with these mental states “Buddhist Psychology” These two factors contribute to living reflect the balance of life. That is a normal and happy life requires the right proportion of support, the body and mind which finally lead to a holistic health in the way of life (norm and form) to a perfect equilibrium.

From such points the balanced way of life of human beings thus can be manage. The term “equilibrium” here refers to balancing relationship is balance (*samatā*) (Phra Dhammakosacara (Prayoon Dhamacitto). 2555: 107). This implies a balance between the body systems and the life supporting factors, both internal and external. The Pali term “*samatā*” can literally be translated as “balance” (Gerry Melino. 2010: 1) or “equilibrium” (Talcott Parsons. 1991: 364; Ilya Prigogine and Isabelle Stengers. 1988: 270; Kara Rogers. 2011: 112, 114) which means a state where things are of equal weight or force (Vidya Thiengburanadham. 2556: 366). These relationships need to work together in a balanced way to make life happy. The “equilibrium” thus has a role in life as normal. For example, loss of breathing balance will cause illness as respiratory disease and may cause death. Loss of posture balance will cause paralysis and cause death. Heat and cold imbalance will cause illness and temperature failure. The loss of the four great elements will cause the element disorder. Loss of nutriment balance will cause weakness of the body, illness, etc. Lastly, loss of consciousness balance will cause suffering, grief, physical and mental sickness and life termination. These are the results of an imbalanced relationship.

Holistic well-beings thus mean the normal happiness that occurs in both the physical and mental dimensions which can arise from all physical, mental and intellectual development. And will reduce the overall risk factors leading to the enhancement of development efficiency at both individual and social levels

Objectives of the Research

1. To study the holistic well-beings and the balanced way of life according to Buddhist Psychology.
2. To analyze the balanced way of life with holistic well-beings promotion according to Buddhist Psychology.

Definition of the Terms used in the Research

1. Holistic Well-beings refer to a state of happiness or the completion of life in terms of both physical and mental happiness. The holistic well-beings arise only when all of the four minor elements have been promoted, namely: (1) physical well-being, (2) mental well-being, (3) moral well-being, and (4) intellectual well-being.

2. Holistic Well-beings Promotion refers to the ways of practice in promoting the holistic well-beings for the purpose of a balanced way of life. They are (1) A Balanced Way of life with the Promotion of Physical Well-being; (2) A Balanced Way of life with the Promotion of Moral Well-being; (3) A Balanced Way of life with the Promotion of Mental Well-being, and (4) A Balanced Way of life with the Promotion of Intellectual Well-being.

3. Balanced Way of Life refers to a state of balance of way of life, according to Buddhist Psychology, of individuals who are complete with the five dimensions of needs based on the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, namely: - (1) Physiological needs, (2) Safety needs, (3) Social needs, (4) Esteem needs, and (5) Self-actualization needs. Those are in accordance with the Buddhist four developments are physical, moral, mental and wisdom development.

4. Buddhist Psychology means an integrative method by integrating together two major sciences named Buddhism and Psychology, particularly to the Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

5. Buddhism refers to Theravāda Buddhism in which its evidences are based on the Tipiṭaka or the Pāli Canon.

6. Psychology means psychology from the modern sciences with special references to Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

Research Methodology

This is a qualitative research was conducted by collecting data from both primary and secondary sources of scriptures primarily based on Buddhism and psychology. The research tools employed in the research include in-depth interview, which covers the use of in-depth interview questions, as well as the use of various devices in the process of collecting data such as voice recorder, camera, etc.

Research's Findings

1. Physical Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology

The Buddhist metaphysical truth describes that the life of human beings comprised of the five aggregates (*pañca-khandhas*), the four primary elements (*dhātus* or *mahābhutarūpas*), and the six sense based (*saḷayatanas*). These physical entities simply require physical materials in proper use. In addition, vital signs such as blood pressure and body chemistry also affect human emotions significantly. Phillip D. Stanley views:

Human emotion effects the physiological side. When your blood pressure goes up, the tension in your body goes up either. This is about the chemical matter that is associate within the physical body. If one gets angry, this negative mental state has a significant physically imply (Phillip D. Stanley. 2018).

Since the balanced way of life relating to physiological needs directly concern with things that are essential to human life, particularly to the physical side. Such are the basic needs that nourish the human's physical body in order for the smoothly continuing process of the five aggregates, the four primary elements, and the six sense based.

Therefore the promotion of physical well-being may be done wisely by using adequately the four requisites or necessities (*paccaya*) consisted of four things, i.e. 1.clothing (*cīvara*), 2.food (*piṇḍapāta*), 3.lodging (*senāsana*), and 4.medical equipment (*bhesajja*). These are called in Buddhism as *Santosa* in which sometimes they are referred, particularly to the *saṅgha*, as *nissaya* which means of support on which the monastic life depends: - 1.*piṇḍiyālopa-bhojana*, 2.*paṃsukūlacīvara*, 3.*rukhamūlasenāsana*, 4.*pūtimuttabheshajja*. (Vin.I.58).

2. Moral Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology

The morality (*sīla*) is a dwelling place both for *Saṅgha* and the householder. It is a matter of human behaviors that are directly expressed by bodily and verbally. If one has morality, various behaviors which one expressed would be desirable because they have been audited, screened and refined by a moral system. In contrary all undesirable behaviors would be controlled by abstinence, not being shown by that person. Therefore, those who have morality are those who deliver their own desirable behaviors to society.

The morality or desirable behaviors of human beings can be classified into two dimensions; both individual morality and social morality. The former one represents behaviors of individual context itself, while the latter one represents the connected impact to society in terms of social context.

Since the balanced way of life relating to safety and social needs directly concern with human's safe feelings, behaviors, and social engagement, particularly to the moral side where social dimension is concerned. Therefore the promotion of moral well-being should be carried out by the following three ways: - (1) The Five Precepts Observance (*pañca sīla*), (2) Having Good Friends (*Kalyāṇamittatā*), and (3) Practicing Principles of Service (*Saṅgahavatthu*). Peter Harvey discusses:

Morality (*sīla*) is physical conducts, health, which is not scope only the physical body (*kāya*) but something more than that. This is because *kāya* can means more than how you feel in the body, like the description in absorption (*jāna*). When you practice meditation, you can either feel rapture (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) within the *kāya* (Peter Harvey. 2018).

The morality thus related closely to the physical acts that is part of common sense in the good part of humans.

The strengthening of morality reflects the strengthening of the desirable behavior of individuals to be exposed in each society. Even though it starts firstly at the individual level, but it will gradually deliver a positive impact on society in the context of sociology. All of them are for the balance of human's way of life.

3. Mental Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology

Mental Well-being defines an abstract state that shows the three attributes of the mind: mental quality, mental efficiency and mental potentiality. These mental states arise from the mind that being developed spiritually according to the principles of Buddhism.

Pahalawattage Don Premasiri views “The calmness comes to settle down of the emotions and this is what the meditation theory maintains the said three attributes [mental quality, mental efficiency and mental potentiality], when the mind gets away from those distraction.” (Pahalawattage Don Premasiri. 2018).

Since the balanced way of life relating to esteem needs of human beings, an inevitable part of life, the worship of a person who is worthy of worship is a culture that each country must pay attention to. Because in every society, it consists of both members who are good and evil mixed together. In which society where good people are respected is a society in which life is balanced. On the contrary, if any society that the evil person is respected that society is a society with a way of life that lacks balance. This is due to the collapse of the human’s ethical system. Therefore the promotion of mental well-being may be done by practicing the tranquil meditation, the forty meditation objects, and mindfulness based cognitive therapy.

4. Intellectual Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology

Holistic health is what human beings seek for. In order to attain it is not easy, but it requires the development of life in all respects of its meaning. The definition of “life” with a blurred interpretation will eventually lead to the unhealthy life. On the contrary, realization of the true meaning of life is the dawn of wisdom that will eventually develop the life system to be holistic well-beings. Intellectual well-being is closely related to the attainment of enlightenment in Buddhism, the emancipation of humanity from all sufferings.

Since the balanced way of life relating to self-actualization needs directly concern with intellectual side. These kind of needs represent the human ability to realize their maximum potential that is the wisdom to seek right way to overcome the fetters that have been binding man to suffering. This suffering is inherent completely in the life system, from the form-and-norm (*rūpa-nāma*), the five aggregates (*pañca-khandā*), physical body (*kāya*), behaviors and mind (*citta*). Therefore, in promoting intellectual well-being, it relates to the growth of wisdom is the development of the ability of one’s intelligence to the ability to realize the four noble truths from suffering; the cause of suffering; the cessation of suffering; and the way leading to the cessation of suffering. It may be done by augmenting one’s wisdom by practicing the four foundations of mindfulness as appeared in the Satipatṭhāna Sutta (M.I.55-63; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, Bhikku Bodhi. 2001: 145-155) and also following concept of the Fourfold Path for ultimate liberation as suggested by Venerable Ānanda, namely: - (1) *Samatha-pubbaṅgama*, (2) *Vipassanā-pubbaṅgama*,

(3) *Samatha-vipassanā*, and (4) *Dhammuddhaccā-viggahita-mānasa*. (A.II.157; Ps.II.92-93). Venerable Phrarajapariyattikavi view:

Indeed, concentration and mindfulness are the same. In practicing the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, first practitioner to do is consider the mind. When there is a distraction (*uddhacca*), he would have to draw his mind back by having mindfulness. Or may not draw the mind back, but have to mindfully know or aware of those ideas. This practice will make the mind to have a grip while being full of distractions. There are some relation between concentrate and mindfulness in supporting manner. Only when the practitioner really aims to move on to *Nibbāna*, the use of concentration alone is not enough. He must further use the wisdom to direct him to the *Nibbāna* (Venerable Phra Rajapariyatkavi (Somjin Wanjan). 2018).

From the passage, he points out both *samatha* and *vipassanā* meditations are suitable for those who wish to be free from sufferings and attain to the *Nibbāna* by enlightenment as a way to direct *Nibbāna*. What we have truly learned from this teaching is both serenity (*samatha*) and insight (*Vipassanā*) are equally important. They mutually support each other. Lacking of one thing, the fruit will never be achieved.

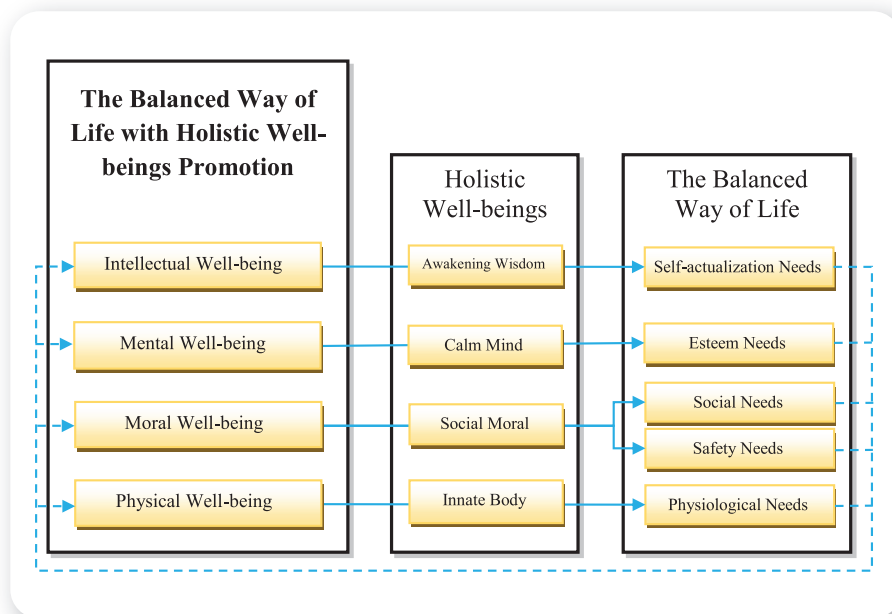


Fig. 1: Shows the Connections among Holistic Well-beings, the Balanced Way of Life, and the Promotion of Holistic Well-beings

From the figure, the first rectangular standing at the left side is the ways of promotion the well-beings. By such ways of promotion, the expected outcome “the holistic well-beings” and “the balance way of life” come to be, as marked by the two rectangular standing next on the right hand side. Finally, when a person is fulfilled with those needs, physiological, safety, and so on, he or she yet needs to continually promote the well-beings as connected by the dashed arrows.

At the end, the researcher presents a figure “The Balanced Way of life with Holistic Well-beings Promotion according to Buddhist Psychology” as follows:

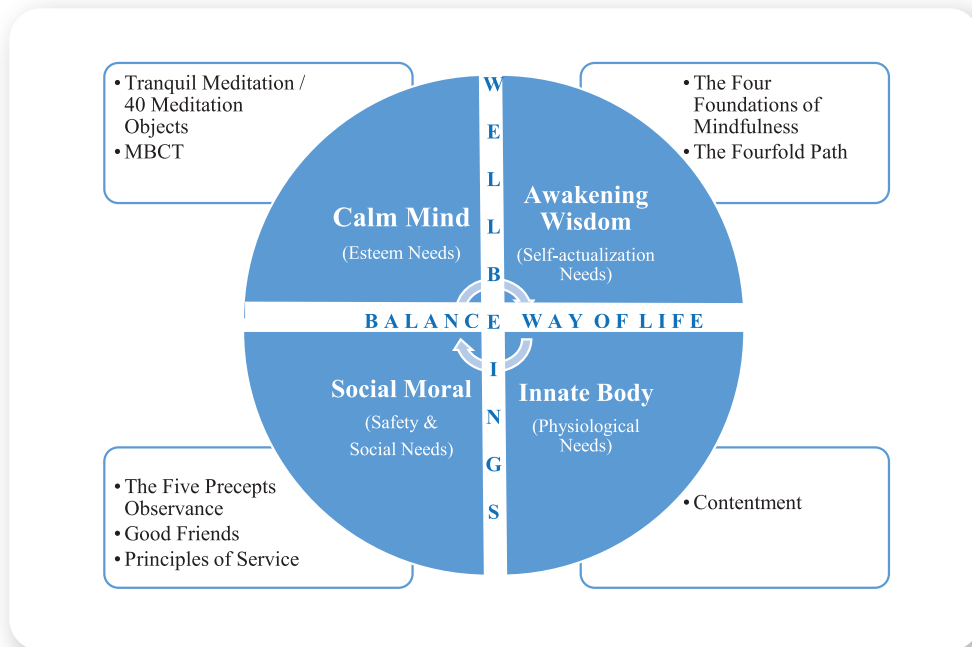


Fig. 2: The Balanced Way of life with Holistic Well-beings Promotion according to Buddhist Psychology

From the figure, there is a circle located in the middle of the figure. Surrounding with four rectangular boxes. The circle is divided into four main parts within, in which representing the four dimensions of Holistic Well-beings (Innate body, Social Moral, etc.) and the Balanced Way of life with the Maslow’s Needs (Physiological, Safety & Social Needs, etc.). Such those dimensions are causes and effects to each other, are marked with spinning arrows at the center. While the four rectangular boxes representing the ways

of Well-beings promotion from contentment, the Five Precepts observance, having good friends, principles of service, etc.). At last the two words “Well-beings” and “Balance Way” are at the core of center to mark the highest purposes of this study “Holistic Well-beings Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology”.

Conclusions

There are four ways of promotion of holistic well-beings for balanced way of life according to Buddhist Psychology, namely: - (1) Physical Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology, (2) Moral Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology, (3) Mental Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology, and (4) Intellectual Well-being Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology

First, the promotion of physical well-being may be done by contentment, using adequately the four requisites or necessities (*paccaya*) consisted of four things, i.e. clothing (*cīvara*), food (*piṇḍapāta*), lodging (*senāsana*), and medical equipment (*bhesajja*). Second, the promotion of moral well-being should be carried out by the following three ways; The Five Precepts Observance (*pañca sīla*), Having Good Friends (*Kalyāṇamittatā*), and Practicing Principles of Service (*Saṅgahavatthu*). Third, the promotion of mental well-being may be done by practicing the tranquil meditation, the forty meditation objects, and mindfulness based cognitive therapy. Last, the promotion of physical well-being may be done by augmenting one’s wisdom by practicing the four foundations of mindfulness, and the fourfold path.

The Holistic Well-beings characterize the innate body, social morality, calm mind, and the awakening wisdom, respectively. They are the fourfold outcome of the holistic well-beings. Such outcomes are the result of the Balanced Way of life when the Maslow’s Needs are fulfilled. (Physiological, Safety, Social, Esteem, and Self-actualization Needs). There are ways of Well-beings’ promotion; practicing contentment, the Five Precepts observance, having good friends, principles of service, etc.). As a result, the “Well-beings” and “Balance Way”, the highest purposes will be finally achieved.

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In Depth Interview:

- Interview with Emeritus Professor Dr. Pahalawattage Don Premasiri, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, January 30, 2018.
- Interview with Emeritus Professor Dr. Peter Harvey, University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, May 13, 2018.

Interview with Professor Dr. Phillip D. Stanley, Naropa University, Colorado, United States, January 12, 2018.

Interview with Venerable Professor Dr. Phra Rajapariyatkavi (Somjin Wanjan), Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wang Noi, Ayutthaya, Thailand, January 15, 2018.