

The Ten Precepts

1. Panatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from destroying living creatures.

2. Adinnadana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from taking that which is not given.

3. Abrahmacariya veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from sexual activity.

4. Musavada veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from incorrect speech.

5. Suramerayamajja pamadatthana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness.

6. Vikalabhajana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from eating at the forbidden time (i.e., after noon).

7. Nacca-gita-vadita-visuka-dassana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from dancing, singing, music, going to see entertainments.

8. Mala-gandha-vilepana-dharana-mandana-vibhusanattana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from wearing garlands, using perfumes, and beautifying the body with cosmetics.

9. Uccasayana-mahasayana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place.

10. Jatarupa-rajata-patiggahana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami

I undertake the precept to refrain from accepting gold and silver (money).

In the Abhisandha Sutta (AN 8.39), the Buddha said that undertaking the precepts is a gift to oneself and others:

... In (undertaking the five precepts), he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the ... gift, the ... great gift — original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning — that is not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and is unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & priests. This is the ... reward of merit, reward of skillfulness, nourishment of happiness, celestial, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven, leading to what is desirable, pleasurable, & appealing; to welfare & to happiness.(8)

VERSES ON THE PRECEPTS: BODHIDHARMA, DOGEN

First Precept: No Killing Life

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of the constantly abiding dharma,
not to produce the view of extinction
is called the Precept of Not Taking Life.

Life is non-killing,
In refraining from taking life,
you allow the Buddha seed to grow,
and thereby inherit the Buddha's wisdom.
Do not destroy life.

Second Precept: No Stealing

The Self-nature is sacred and profound.
In the realm of unattainable Dharma,
not to raise a mind of attainable
is called 'No Stealing or Robbing.'

When mind and objects are just this,
The Gate of Liberation has opened.

Third Precept: No Misusing Sexuality

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
In the truth of no attachment,
not creating a veneer of attachment
is called Not Indulging Sexual Desire.

When the three wheels are empty,
there is nothing to desire:
this is the way of the buddhas.

Fourth Precept: No Lying

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of the unutterable dharma,
not to utter a single word
is called the Precept of Not Lying.

From the beginning, the Dharma wheel has turned
with nothing in excess and nothing lacking.
The sweet dew of perfection saturates all;
everything is true, and everything is real.

Fifth Precept: No Use of Intoxicants, No Clouding the Mind

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of the originally immaculate dharma,
not to produce ignorance
is called the Precept of Not Giving or Taking Drugs.

Do not introduce intoxicants;
do not make others defile themselves:
this is great awareness.

Sixth Precept: No Speaking of Faults of Others

The Self-nature is sacred and profound
In the midst of flawless Dharma,
not expounding upon error
is called the precept of Not Speaking of the Faults of
Others.

Within the Buddhadharma,
it is the same Way, the same Dharma, the same Realization,
the same practice.

Do not speak of the shortcomings of others;
Do not corrupt the Way.

Seventh Precept: No Praising Self While Abusing Others

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of equality, of identical dharma,
not dwelling upon I against You
is called the Precept of No Praise or Blame.

Buddhas and ancestors have realized
the emptiness of the vast sky and the great earth.
When they manifest as the great body,
they are like the sky, without inside or outside.

When they manifest as the Dharmakaya,
there is not even an inch of earth on which to lay hold.

Eighth Precept: No Hoarding Materials or Teachings

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of all-pervading truth,
not being stingy about a single thing
is called the Precept of No Hoarding.

Even one phrase, one gatha, is ten thousand things.
One Dharma, one realization is all the Buddhas and ancestors.

From the very beginning, nothing has been withheld.

Ninth Precept: No Being Angry

The Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the realm of selfless Dharma,
not contriving reality for the self
is called the Precept of Not Indulging in Anger.

Not proceeding, not retreating, not real, not unreal,
there is an ocean of bright clouds, there is an ocean of
sublime clouds
when there is no anger.

Tenth Precept: No Abusing the Three Treasures

Self-nature is sacred and profound;
in the midst of the dharma of one suchness,
not to give rise to two views of Buddha and sentient beings
is called No abusing the Three Treasures.

To expound the Dharma with this body is the refuge of the world.
Its virtue returns to the ocean of omniscience.
It is inexpressible.
Wholeheartedly revere and serve it.