

Sociology of Health and Wellness in Buddhist Perspective

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Abstract

In Theravada Buddhism, human being's health is about taking care of both the body and the mind. It's not just about being strong. Real wellness comes from balanced diet, ethical discipline and moral conduct, and practicing meditation to reducing ego, stress, and mental defilements.

Ancient Buddhists believed that the mind and body depend on each other. They believed that our thoughts and feelings affect our health. Buddhism teaches that we can use our minds to control our bodies. When we think about health and illness, we should consider the mind, emotions, and body together. Buddhism stresses that the mind and body are closely linked and influence each other along with the world around us.

Buddhism has influenced health and medicine in the East for a long time. Many Buddhist scriptures referred about health and how our thoughts and feelings can affect our behaviour and health. Buddhism teaches "Metta" love and kindness for all living things. To be healthy, one should live a spiritual life. Meditation is an important part of this spiritual life and helps improve overall health.

In Buddhism, health means a balance of the body, mind, and spirit, not just being free from illness. The main goal is to end suffering (Dukkha). The Buddha is seen as a physician and a healer who understands human problems. To understand health in Buddhism, we look at a few key ideas:

The Mind-Body Connection: The mind can create both health and sickness. Negative feelings like greed, anger, and ignorance can disturb our balance and lead to problems.

The Causes of Illness: Buddhism teaches that sickness can come from six main causes: imbalance of the body's four elements (earth, water, fire, wind), inadequate and improper diet, wrong meditation posture, past actions, and mental issues.

Rejection of Fatalism: While past actions (karma) affect our lives, Buddhism does not believe in fate. Illness is not a curse but a result of our actions, so we should take charge of our health.

The Middle Way: Buddhists should avoid both excess and extreme self-denial. Finding balance in eating, sleeping, and activities helps with meditation and finding peace.

Acceptance and Resilience: Buddhists recognize that aging, sickness, and death are natural parts of life. Accepting this can reduce worry about health issues. **Support for Modern Medicine:** Buddhism supports using modern medicine and caring for the sick.

Meditation Can Change the Brain. A study showed that meditation can change how the brain works. Richard Davidson used brain scans to find that meditation moves activity from the right side of the prefrontal cortex, which is behind our foreheads, to the left side. His research suggests that regular meditation helps the brain move from a stressed state to one of acceptance, which makes people feel happier. People who often feel negative tend to use the right side more, while those who feel positive use the left side more. Left-side users have more self-control, enthusiasm, interests, and tend to relax and be happier.