

## PATIENCE – Buddhist View



Patience (khanti) is the ability to remain calm and uncomplaining in the face of slowness, ineptitude or delays. The Buddha also sometimes called this virtue forbearance (adhivàsanà), endurance (titikkhà) or long-suffering (khama). Being impatient makes one harsh and a prey to regret, the Buddha observed (A.III,254-5). The Jàtaka counsels having patience with everyone: 'People do not retaliate to a superior out of fear. For the sake of peace they avoid arguments with equals. But being patient with an underling is, so say the good, genuine patience. But how can we know from appearance alone who is above us, our equal or an underling? Therefore be patient with everyone'(Ja.V,141-2).

During his time, some non-Buddhist ascetics used to deliberately create hardships for themselves (austerities) in order to test their endurance and detachment. The Buddha considered this to be rather silly, and believed that it would be far better to try to be patient with and detached from all the little annoyances we feel towards the people we come into

contact with during the normal course of living. Thus he admonished: 'Being patient is the highest austerity' (Dhp.184). The Milindapaṭha says: 'Just as water is even and cool by nature, like this, the meditator, out of compassion for all beings and desiring their welfare, should develop patience and harmlessness, love and sympathy'(Mil.183).