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Dhammapada.

The World:

Blind is the world;
here only a few possess insight.
Only a few,
like birds escaping from the net,
go to realms of bliss.

Follow not the vulgar way;
live not in heedlessness;
hold not false views;
linger not long in worldly existence.

Lead a righteous life;
lead not a base life.
The righteous live happily
both in this world and the next.



Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure that I write this editorial for our newsletter. Let me congratulate the Board of Directors and the newsletter committee for the untiring effort, time and hard work put in to compiling Maya Puwath. The bi-monthly newsletter has become an essential feature of our alumnae association, since it records all the outstanding events of our association and provides opportunities for the members to be creative in writing.

Celebrating the 8th anniversary in 2012, MGCAANA has done much to keep in touch with our alma mater and alumnae. It is a proud Sri Lankan tradition we are all fond of- that of building and sustaining a strong relationship with the school that nurtured and empowered us to become what we are today. Often the school authorities and the students that benefit from the projects and fund raisers are very grateful to the past pupils for the support extended graciously. No school can rule out the support and empowerment provided by the alumnae-a valuable asset to every school.

Also, when it concerns our school, we feel proud of her achievements and the level of students she produces. You must also be able to feel proud of what you have given back to your school, not because you want your way, but because it has been and always will be the right thing to do. Therefore, in this 21st century, where there is a "explosion of knowledge", I appeal to all Mayans to keep to this "right thing" and help our alma mater meet the challenges of the modern era.

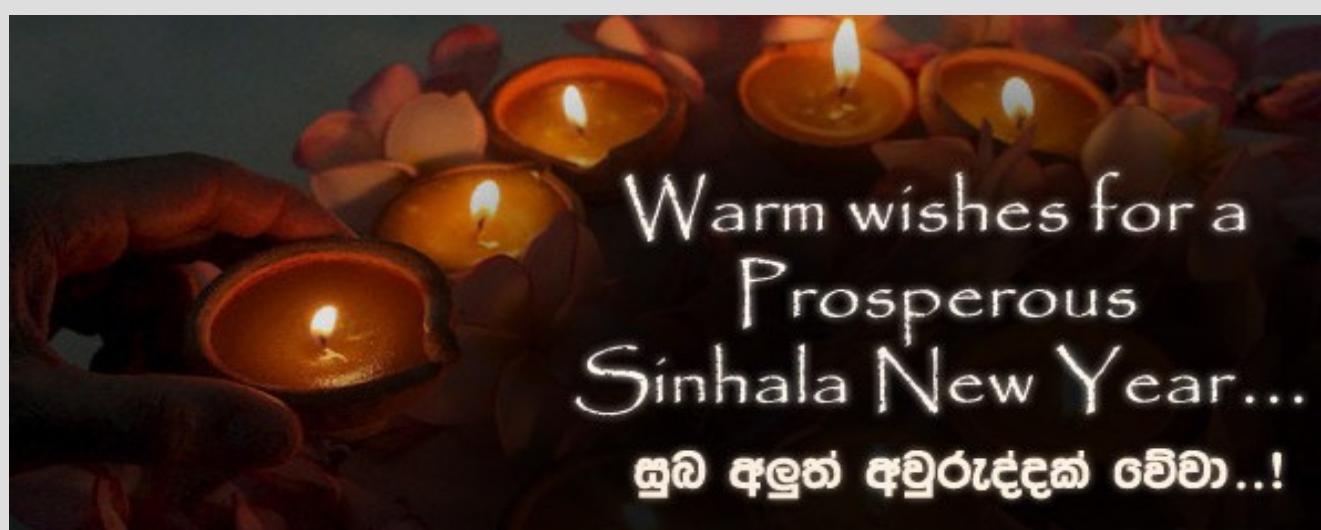
Last but not least, as the newest member of Maya Puwath, I would like to invite you and your families to the 8th Annual general Meeting which will be held in Bloomfield Michigan on the 27th of May 2012. This would be one opportunity to rekindle lost ties and meet our fellow Mayan sisters who live all across North America. A great big thank you goes out to Dr.Parakrama and Mrs.Deepthi Weerappuli for taking on the great big task of hosting a remarkable yet a challenging event.

With the onset of Sinhalese & Tamil New Year, on behalf of the newsletter committee, I wish you all good health, happiness and prosperity! With the blessings of the triple gem....

Asha Ranatunga



When the sun moves from the Meena Rashiya (House of Pisces) to the Mesha Rashiya (House of Aries) in the celestial sphere; Sri Lankans begin celebrating their New Year or Aluth Avurudhu (in Sinhala) and Puththandu (in Tamil). It marks the end of the harvest season and also coincides with one of 2 instances when the sun is directly above Sri Lanka. On the day of celebrations, the sun is directly above Koggala (where a sun devale can be found). A new year of the Saka era begins with each festival.



Warm wishes for a
Prosperous
Sinhala New Year...
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MGCAANA ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES



The 8th Annual General Meeting

We have the pleasure of inviting
all Mayans, their families, honorary members and well wishers to
The 8th Annual General Meeting
of
Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America
hosted by Dr.Parakrama and Mrs.Deepthi Weerappuli

Held at
32500 West 13 Mile Road
Farmington Hills
MI 48334
on Sunday, the 27th of May , 2012, From 2pm to 5 pm
Dinner Dance
consorted with music by Pahan Silu
from 7 pm at the same venue
If you have any questions, please email us at
mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

More information :
The official AGM invitations, agenda and the ballot infor-
mation about electing your 2011/2012
board members will be mailed to you soon.
Closest Airport,
Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport
Rogell Drive
Detroit, MI 48242
Airport Code : DTW

Accommodation
Note : We can arrange to get a group rate if at least 10 rooms are
booked in the same hotel.
● Fairfield Inn & Suites, Detroit, Farmington Hills, MI
27777 Stansbury Blvd, Farmington Hills, MI
Tel. 248-442-9800
● Courtyard Detroit, Farmington Hills, MI
31525 W 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI
Tel.248-553-0000
● Extended Stay America, Detroit, Farminton Hills, MI
27775 Stansbury Blvd, Farmington Hills, MI
Tel.248-471-9220
● Comfort Inn
30715W 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI.
Tel.248-473-4000



Mackinac Island



Sleeping Bear Dunes



Mackinac Island



Henry Ford Village

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A religion helps to build and shape one's ethical and moral values to transform him into a better person. Among many, Buddhism is a religion rooted in Asia and branched around the world. The third largest religion in the world, Buddhism is estimated to have over 300 million followers. Although it is widely followed in western countries there are not as many temples or monasteries as there are in Asia, especially countries like Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, etc. As a result, Asian immigrant parents find it difficult to bestow the good virtues of Buddhism and the teachings of Lord Buddha on their children—a task usually carried out by Buddhist monks successfully with wholesome and advanced knowledge of Buddhism who are resided in temples and monasteries. These parents, who are faced with an upheaval battle of spiritually guiding their children in Buddhist way of life, often say, ‘unfortunately we do not have a temple in our area.’!

Aiming to fill this gaping spiritual void, the Mahamaya Girls College Alumnae Association in North America (MGCAANA) has decided to take the advantage of the digital age to unveil an Internet Dhamma School with the help of her valued members. The website can be accessed at,

<http://mahamaya-alumnae-dhamma-school.wikispaces.com/>

Our plan is to add one page every month, starting from the basics and moving on. Members' feedback is immensely valued to improve the page. Anyone who is interested in, can become a member of the page and actively work taking a part in the team or help us by sending reliable information, videos, links, images etc. to upload in the page.

" Ehi passiko" - come and see...., this is an open invitation to all parents. Finally we thank our own Mrs. Werake for bringing this wonderful idea of Dhamma school to our attention and standing by us along the way.

Hashini Mohottala

GEM UNDER DUST

By Sirisoma Wanigathunga

A Sri Lankan Expatriate rediscovers himself and Sri Lanka

“Gem Under Dust is a story about discovering the greatness inside oneself. There is a gem inside each one of us that is radiating its beauty and greatness. But its often covered with clutter that is difficult to get rid of.

The author claims that he discovered his essence using an approach that has been known in Sri Lanka for over 2000 years. Through this approach, he claims that he was able to see who he really was, and more importantly, who he really could be.

According to him, this transformation has given him an ability to see a renaissance in Sri Lanka. This renaissance will cause Sri Lanka to find her wholesomeness, completeness and perfectness. Such a renaissance will occur through a profound transformation within each and every Sri Lankan. Result will be greatness in each and every Sri Lankan and magnificence in the society.

Why Sri Lanka? That is because Sri Lankans are very familiar with this approach. They have lived with it for over 2000 years. The author is just showing how that could be applied, in a new way, to their own lives and to Sri Lanka.”

I have enjoyed this book very much and it simply describes about the human thought process and what is important in our lives and what is really insignificant.

Priyanka Jayakody

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Sung by Victor Rathnayake :

emusic@ananmanan.com

“How to teach Buddhism to Children”

The Problem:

How can Buddhist Parents best teach their own children Buddhism in the Western World?

A child brought up in the Western world who is exposed to Christian or materialistic environment, is in need of a carefully considered Buddhist education. In a Buddhist country, steeped in its centuries-old Buddhist tradition, the position of a Buddhist child is far easier. In the Western world Buddhist education cannot be taken too lightly. The Buddha himself has taught us to see for ourselves, to examine and draw our own conclusions, and not to believe blindly in others.

Imitation:

The educational program depends very much on the age of the child. The good example of the parents in their everyday life is the most important part of any education, making Buddhism a living thing. If the parents live in accordance with the Dhamma this will be the surest guide to the children, whatever their age. Children observe and imitate the parents.

External Help:

No Buddhist household should be without a Buddha-rupa ((image), or at least a picture of the Enlightened One. It is a good idea to let each child have a small Buddh-rupa of its own before which s/he can offer regularly flowers, incense and light (in our part of the world a bulb would be safer.) It is vital that the child by worshipping the Buddha image, pay devotion to the Buddha as the greatest teacher of mankind. A simple ceremony brings Buddhism closer to the hearts of children. The philosophical aspects of Buddhism can be too deep for children to grasp. Children love the spectacular, and the regular offering the flowers, incense and lights, help to develop such good habits as veneration and respect.

The Use of Festivals:

Children always enjoy festivals. Buddhist children may be allowed their Uposatha day once or twice every month. This day should be made quite different from an ordinary day. In Western countries to keep the new or full moon day itself, parents may choose the Sunday nearest to it and make that day a festival. Workday life must stop on this Uposatha Day, observe the Silas and teach the children the Dhamma. The age of the children should be taken into consideration. Parents with younger children may simplify, and those with older

children can expound the Dhamma little more deeply. A lot depends on the children’s abilities.

Tales:

From time to time the parents can read one of the Buddhist legends or a story from the Jatakas, the tales of rebirth. The moral of the story be stressed and the amoralties carefully explained. These stories will introduce them to the concept of Kamma and rebirth and will find a natural place in their minds. In fact the

teaching of the Buddha can be taught to children. We must present it the right way. If you are Buddhists, neglecting to give your children a Buddhist upbringing is a great mistake.

Buddhist Education a Duty:

In any other religion, the education of children in their belief takes a predominant place. Buddhism is more of a philosophy than a religion, and it is a way of living. It is the way of living that we impart to our children. Buddhist education in Western countries is possible. We as lay people must give our share towards upholding the Dhamma. We must help ourselves as much as we can in the most efficient way.

Buddhist History:

In addition to the Jatakas, we should tell our children about the life of the people during the time of the Buddha, their social structure, the historical background of early Buddhism, history of Buddhism in general, and how Buddhism spread the whole of India and beyond.

Explain the Dhamma:

The children’s mind will gradually grow into the spirit of Dhamma, while developing an understanding of the basic doctrines of Buddhism.The parents can then read some easy suttas to the children, such as the basic five silas, what a lay Buddhist ought to do and ought not to do, more particularly the discourses of the Anguttara, the “layman’s nikaya.”. This is all within the grasp of children. In addition, some easy stanzas from the Dhammapada may be read.

“To refrain from all evil, to cultivate the good,

To purify one’s thoughts—This is the Teaching of the Buddha.”

Learning by Heart:

The more a child learns by heart from the Pali Canon, the more it will profit from this knowledge, when the child can understand the deeper meaning.

Uposatha Day:

Uposatha Day is the day for the children to recite the stanzas they have learnt, and the parents to explain the teachings of the Buddha. The capability of children to pay attention for any length of time is very limited and we must be careful not to over-exert them. The Uposatha Day we can take the children for a walk, or even an excerstion. While walking through the woods and fields, we may teach them to observe nature and see life as it really is. When Prince Siddhartha drove out of his palace, he saw an old man, a sick person, a corpse, and a monk. The excursions will give ample opportunity little by little for our children to see what life is really like. Children will learn how hard the living conditions for most people, what it means to be sick, old or dying. We should teach them at the same time to practice Metta and Compassion towards our fellow sufferers. The children will learn cruelty to animals or humans is not right. The Buddhist child should always respect an animal as a living-being and not merely as a source of food. On these excursions, we should have many opportunities to show children how to be sympathetic and full of loving kindness towards both humans and animals, not only by words, but by deeds. Our children can practice loving kindness by helping others whenever they can and saving lives even in a small way such as saving an ant that has fallen into a puddle. The knowledge and conduct has to go together. We need to teach our children Metta, Karuna, and Muditha.

The Buddha as Our Model:

We should not make the path for our children too difficult. We who wish to teach Buddhism must first learn it thoroughly ourselves. Teach Dhamma to each child the most effective way. The Buddhist parents are the best teachers who can teach Buddhism to their own children. There is no better gift we can give our children than the gift of Dhamma. We must point out to our children that the teaching of the Buddha as the middle way between two extremes and make our children immune to outside influ-ences in this material society.

Self-Responsibility

Self-responsibility is a focal point of Buddhism and we must stress its importance over and over again. Every evening Buddhist children should spend a little time in medi-tation and in reflection over the things they have done that day. If they find they have not thought, spoken and acted in conformity with the Teaching they should see how to avoid this mistake another time. If they find they cannot get rid of some bad thought or action, then their parents should help them so that they can go to sleep with the resolution to do better tomorrow. In the morning they can begin the new day by reflecting again over their resolution. In this way, the children will be able to develop the powers of their own mind, purifying them by the cultivation of good or skillful thoughts, words, and deeds.

When our children develop self-responsibility in themselves, it will prove him/her be the safest guide through life. At meal time, Buddhist children can reflect there are many people who don’t have enough food to eat. Children should learn to appreciate what they have and eat what is on the table in the same way as Bhikkus who eat what-ever is put in their bowl merely to nourish the body.

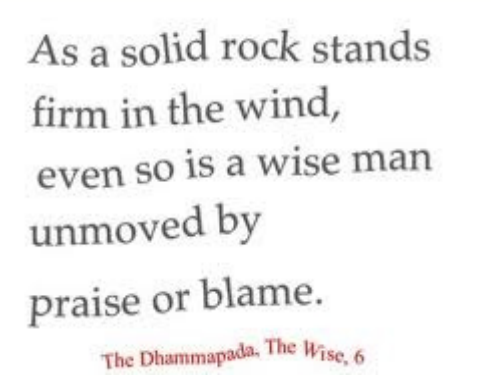
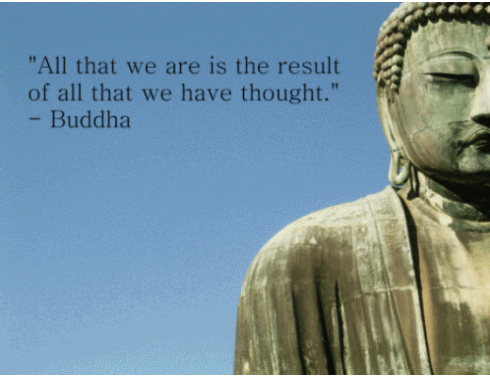
Duty of the Parents:

It is the duty of the Buddhist parents to influence their children in the Buddhist way of thinking. The best gift to your children is the gift of Dhamma.

By Sujatha Werake

Bodhi Leaves No. B. 9 – By Dr. Helmuth Klar, Heidelberg, Germany

Excerpt's from "How to teach Buddhism to Children "



AVURUDU SPIRIT - 2012 -- AROUND -- USA



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MASSACHUSETTS



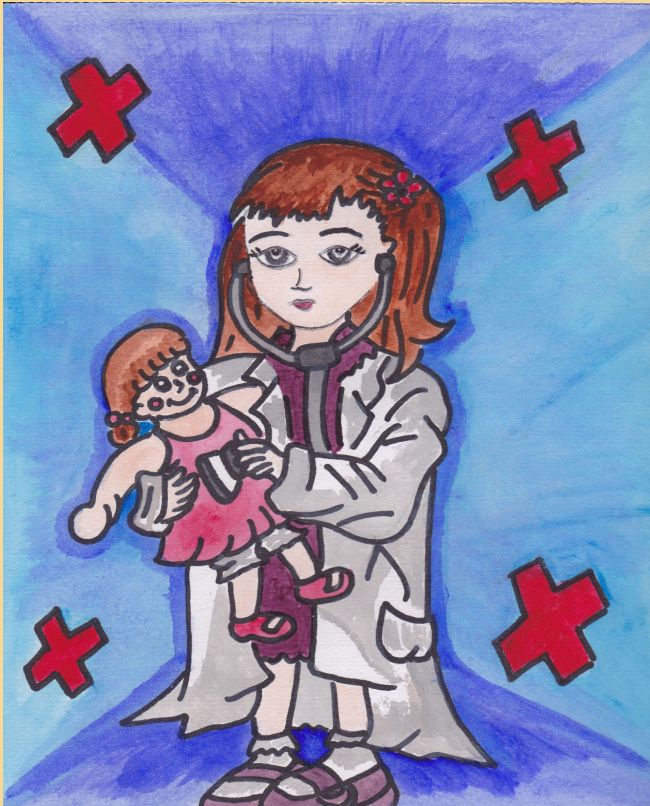
IOWA



CONNECTICUT



Kids' Corner



MY AMBITION (water color painting)

These beautiful creations were sent by Dulani Sandanayaka , age 12

Attend Melican Middle School Nothboro, MA



BEAUTY OF THE SPRING (pencil art)

Sri Lankan Independence Day Celebration in NY

Every year we celebrate Sri Lankan Independence Day on February 4th. This year we went to New York to celebrate Sri Lankan Independence Day. It was in a theater in Staten Island. There were a lot of Sri Lankan people wearing beautiful sarees and suits. Everybody sang the Sri Lankan National Anthem to start the celebrations. Then we listened to a speech of president of Sri Lanka. I, my sister, and my friends sang a song called “when I get older” while other people were dancing. We wore special cloths and the shirt had a Sri Lankan flag on it. We watched other dancing and singing too. I felt very happy and proud to be a Sri Lankan. It was a great day filled with excitement and happiness!



Samadhi Ranaweera
5 yrs.

*Behalf of the Newsletter Committee, I would like to acknowl-
edge and appreciate Dulani Sanadanayaka and Samadhi
Ranaweera for contributing their creativity to share with all
the members.*

Creativity is more than a product– it’s a process.

As you reflect upon how best to promote your child’s innate creativity, consider the following five tips. Let them guide you in your own exploration, and perhaps inspire tips of your own.

- 1. Creativity is not a pastime.** It’s an essential part of who we are, finding countless expressions in our life each day. Therefore, support your child in their creative endeavors. Let them know that you value their creativity, and help them grow and explore by modeling creativity yourself.
- 2. Withhold judgment.** You may wish to help through critique, but creativity flourishes in a non-evaluative atmosphere. Despite personal preferences, you can show respect for each of your child’s creations, recognizing that everything they express comes from a part of themselves, and is therefore worthy of your love and attention.
- 3. No surveillance.** Hovering over a child, however good our intentions, has been proven to stifle their creative juices. Instead, create a safe environment where they can explore creativity on their own. You may be amazed at what your child comes up with, without help of any kind.
- 4. Offer guidance sparingly.** They will receive more than enough throughout their lives. And constant reminders to improve themselves can undermine a child’s self-esteem, sending out the unintended message: You need to change. You aren’t good enough as you are. Remember, we don’t always need to teach our kids to be better. Just encourage them to be themselves.
- 5. Cultivate originality.** Let your child know how great it is to be different, and that they bring something unique to this world. The greatest innovators have always been those who thought differently from the rest. Here’s a brief list of famous people who owe their success to creativity, each of them renowned for thinking outside the box

[http://www.creativity-portal.com/articles/tyler-enfield/
encouraging-creativity-in-children.html](http://www.creativity-portal.com/articles/tyler-enfield/encouraging-creativity-in-children.html)

Sent By Priyanka Jayakody

**Happy
Wesak Day**



***The stages of the Noble Path are: Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech,
Right Behavior, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and
Right Concentration. - Buddha***

**A PUBLICATION OF THE MAHAMAYA GIRLS' COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA
NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

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HASHINI MOHOTTALA & PRABODANI SAMARAKOON**