

Buddhism Worldview

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NUR301: World Perspective

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December 22, 2021

What is Buddhism?

Buddhism is one of the four major religions of the world. This religion originated about 2500 years ago with Siddhartha Gautama who is the founder of Buddhism. Buddhism focuses on the state of enlightenment, the inner peace, and knowledge. It is considered a way of life, rather than spiritual tradition. Buddhism is atheistic religion i.e., they do not believe in existence of god. They do not acknowledge any sort of higher power or deity. Buddhists follow, 'the Noble Eightfold Path' which was established by Buddha when he got enlightenment. The noble eightfold path is the way to overcome the process of life and the misery that comes along with it (Karla et al., 2018). The noble eightfold path are as follows: right view- know the truth, right intention- free your mind of evil, right speech- say nothing that hurts others, right action- work for the good of others, right livelihood- respect life, right effort- resist evil, right concentration- practice meditation, and right mindfulness- control your thoughts (Buddhism 2017).

Their philosophy is based on the 'Four Noble Truths' which was taught by the Buddha himself to his followers after he attained enlightenment. The Four Noble Truths are as follows: the truth of suffering (dukkha), the truth of the cause of suffering (samudaya), the truth of the end of suffering (nirhodha), and the truth of the path that frees us from suffering (magga) (Buddhism 2017).

Who is Buddha?

Buddha also known as Siddhartha Gautama is classified by the Buddhists as an extraordinary being, but not as a god. Although Siddhartha Gautama achieved his enlightenment in Bodhi Gaya, India, he was born and raised in a royal family of Shakya clan in Lumbini, Nepal. He was born in 623 B.C. in the Terai plains of southern Nepal. As a royal prince, he was born into many luxuries and pleasures. He was unaware and far from touch of harshness and reality of life. Once when he was young, he went outside of his palace on a chariot ride where he, for the first time saw human sufferings, old age, illness, and death (a corpse), and an ascetic renouncer (Karla et al., 2018). The difference between his life and others suffering made him realize that pleasures on the earth are transitory, and only masks human suffering; suffering never goes away. He left his wife and new born son, tried severe renunciation in the forest until the point of starvation. At the end, he realized that starving too was suffering, so he ate food and sat down beneath a tree to meditate. After meditation for up to several months, he attained Nirvana (enlightenment); this provided the answers he was looking for i.e., about causes of suffering and permanent release from it.

Who is a person?

In Buddhism, a person is viewed as ever-changing, impermanent parts of a whole. A person's value is in-tuned with achieving their enlightenment and inner peace. They believe that meditation can help contribute to this awakening. "They believe that the Buddha and all human beings have their

origin in what is variously called Buddha Nature, Buddha Mind, or Emptiness.

This is not "nothing," but is the completely indescribable Source of all Existence; it is at the same time Enlightenment potential (Vail)."

"Mahayana canon says that finally there is no distinction between "self" and "other," nor between samsara (transmigration, rebirth) and Nirvana! Because of this the bodhi sattvais capable of taking on the suffering of others in samsara and of transferring his own merit to them (Vail)."

What do they consider as health and wellbeing?

Buddhist, consider health as wholeness – expression to be one with the environment and nature. Health and wellbeing is the state of harmony with one's self, relationships, and the environment. Health and disease are part of suffering of life, and are interwoven with many non-medical factors, such as economics, education, social and cultural factors, and ethics or morality. Illness and death are part of life that which is inevitable. They accept them as it is, and believe in rebirth and reincarnation after death.

How the world is seen or considered in Buddhism?

According to Buddhist belief system, the whole world is important, no one part is better than the other. Life is full of suffering, a person's environment and background will bring change and suffering to his or her life. It is about how you react to these changes. One must live their life simply, respect the cycle of life, and balance in nature.

What is nursing?

In Buddhism philosophy, the science of art, medicine, language logic the inner science of mental training, and healing. Holistic care is a big key in Buddhist medical care. Mental care is considered equally as important as the physical care. They believe that awareness is important in Buddhist practice, and especially around the dying process. Many of them will be concerned to ensure that pain relief does not leave them completely disconnected from what is happening to them. It is an essential part of Buddhist practice to discuss thoroughly the range of possible pain relief options being offered, especially if the drugs are likely to cause excessive drowsiness or confusion. The doctors and nurses are generally regarded in high esteem in their cultures because helping others and relieving suffering of others is important practice of Buddhism.

Comparing Buddhism and contrasting with Biblical worldview

Who is God?

In Buddhism, god is ignored but spirits are feared. Basic Buddhism is atheistic, rejecting gods and supernatural powers as inconsequential, though majority Folk Buddhists still fear the spirits, both the ancestral and the natural ones. In Buddhist understanding all is transitory, changing and illusionary—so nothing is permanent—except suffering! Universal suffering is caused by *kiletsa* (craving and lust), *rakha tanha* (passion and desire: both

good and bad), and attachment to illusion. For Buddhists, eliminating all desire and passion is the solution to escape endless cycles of rebirth (Smith, 2021).

In the Bible, Creator God is a permanent, never-changing reality. His heaven is eternal and hell also endures for eternity. Human beings possess an everlasting soul-spirit entity. (Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." NIV)

Heaven or life after death?

According to Buddhist philosophy, nirvana is release by extinction. Nirvana is a state of escape from the cycle of rebirths and all impermanence and suffering. It is achieved by one's own self-efforts to overcome the accumulated karmic consequences of multiple past rebirths. Nirvana is like an unblissful state of bliss, an unconscious state of consciousness, a non-existing existence, like the dissipating smoke after a candle has been blown out (Smith, 2021).

In Christianity, heaven is a place with its total lack of suffering, curses, tears and death; totally differs from nirvana. Heaven is the eternal abode of life everlasting and therefore loftier than the temporary pleasures in 26 Buddhist purgatory-type heavens, the abodes of gods, *bodhisattvas* and *devas* (Smith, 2021). "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Rev. 21:4 (ESV).

Is salvation possible in Buddhism?

In Theravada Buddhism only monks have any possibility of attaining nirvana, through rigidly keeping 227 or more laws perfectly. Mahayana Buddhists recognized this as being too strict. They liberalized teachings so their “larger vehicle” made provision for the average person to progress toward nirvana—primarily with the help of Bodhisattvas—high-level beings, who delay their entry into nirvana in order to assist others along the way (Smith, 2021).

By comparison, Jesus Christ, as God’s Son, provided redemption for all tribes and peoples through his unique sacrifice. In Christ saving, eternal life is available to all who repent, trust and obey him. The gospel of John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” NIV).

Followers practice the Eight-fold Path and produce counter-karmic good works through massive merit-making, hoping to attain *nirvana*. This Buddhist way is totally dependent on self-effort and self-works, not relying on anyone else for help, not even the Buddha. Because of this, Christ’s offer of salvation by grace through faith in his sacrificial substitution is inconceivable to millions of Buddhists.

Conclusion

As nurses, our goal is to make sure my patient feels comfortable and valued, especially when it comes to what religion they believe in. One must make

sure I have good communication, a good attitude towards my patient, I know how to time and stress manage, my goal is always towards the patients' needs and not any material gain, and I have the right knowledge from my education to help better my patient's needs. A complete wholesome nature.

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