

Inner Peace and Liberation: The Role of Mental Cultivation in Early Buddhism

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Abstract—This study examines early Buddhism's views on inner peace and its relationship with liberation (nibbāna), understood through practices of mental cultivation (bhāvanā). Drawing on foundational Pāli texts from the Nikāyas, this study sheds light on the relationships between peace (santi, upasama, passaddhi) and the end of suffering, as understood in the Four Noble Truths. It posits that inner peace results from transforming the psyche through morality, mental concentration, and wisdom, as inner peace is not merely psychological ease or the alleviation of mental suffering. First, the study examines how sīla (moral discipline) serves as the foundational peace (in mitigating remorse, fear, and conflict among persons). This, in turn, prepares the mind for even deeper practices. Second, the study assesses the contribution of mindfulness and concentration (sati, samādhi, jhāna) in achieving an integrated mind which is temporarily purged of all unwholesome elements and tranquil. Third, the study underscores the importance of vipassanā (insight) and paññā (wisdom) in undoing the bondage of craving and clinging, thus opening the door to deeper, more abiding peace (nibbāna), which is termed upasama dhātu (the element of quiescence). The discussion examines the superior peace that exists alongside true liberty in all its disciplines, distinct from the temporary calm of meditative states. This inner peace and transformation express as non-violence, social harmony, compassion and concord.

Index Terms—Mindfulness, Concentration (Samādhi) Insight (Vipassanā), Detachment (Non-attachment) .Nirvāṇa (Liberation)

I. INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness applications, wellness programs, and therapies that promote calm, focus, and reduced stress have contributed to the recent increase in interest in 'inner peace.' Although these advancements have made peace of mind and contemplative practices

easily obtainable, they obscure the goal of early Buddhism. In the Nikāyas, peace is not a comforting feeling, but rather a state of disconnection and suffering, and is the calm that comes from the loss and the emptying of defilements. Terms like upasama and passaddhi, obiter, denote a conscious and enlightened state rather than simple relaxation. There is an enduring confusion that the exposition seeks to address: a blend in modern discussions that presents the peace of Buddhism as just a secular stress-relief technique. Such a view lifts these practices from the ethical and wisdom contexts that give them the (important anytime) meaning of saving the practitioner. This view of the mind, or bhāvanā, as mere technique, of fields of sīla and paññā, can give legitimacy to that which keeps craving and clinging intact. This confusion also aims to clear how peace, in the alone functioning, of the un.

The proposed analytic distinctions aim at recovering the meaning of 'peace' within the early Buddhist horizon. This paper attempts to reframe inner peace in relation to 'nibbāna' and disengage contemporary misunderstandings from core commitments of the tradition, as well as provide potential guidelines within which secular adaptations may assist the practitioners in relation to the Buddhist project, which, for secular adaptations, is almost always devoid of its ethical and emancipatory dimensions.

II. INNER PEACE AND LIBERATION IN EARLY BUDDHISM

Inner calm in early Buddhism is not seen as a temporary state; it is an end state formed through understanding and reason, free of anything that influences one's state of mind. Regular inner calm is easily influenced, arises from positive settings, and is

easily disturbed once inner stress is removed. The inner calm in Buddhism, on discrimination and relinquishment, is influenced by an inner understanding. These streams of thought from the Pāli show us what it means to have inner calm and what Buddhism is. Upasama, the stopping of movements of the mind and the stilling of unwholesome actions, is the concept of quiescence. The general evaluative peace that comes from the sudden detachment from hostility and fear represented the concept. The sudden calm that comes from the mental and physical structures formed through self-control is the last concept. These streams of thought deny that peace is merely the elimination of negative emotion and show that peace is a positive influence on the mind.

According to the discussed framework, liberation is regarded as *nibbāna*, the ultimate peace. During the peace discourse, the state of liberation is described as *santa*, "peaceful," as the roots of suffering have ceased, although there is no guarantee of pleasant feelings. The element of peace, *upāsama-dhātu*, that names this unconditioned stillness as peace of no agitation, the peace of no bonds, the peace of no continuing reactive becoming. This is *nibbāna*. It is also referred to as cessation (*virāga*), the unmade (*nirodha*), and other terms that pivot around the same original intuition, which speaks to the fact that peace and freedom always remain when craving and delusion cease. This liberation, however, is the calm of meditative peace which remains only if one is joined with the deep insight that phenomena, the wheels of impermanence, unsatisfactory, and not-self.

In discussing disturbances, early Buddhism considers suffering as a process arising from *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, *kilesa*, and ignorance (*avijjā*). Craving (*taṇhā*) pursues satisfaction, and creates pressure; clinging (*upādāna*), fastening identity to an experience; and defilements, such as greed, hatred, and delusion, agitate the heart. These factors strengthen each other and proliferate disturbances, internally as restlessness and remorse, and externally as aggression and fear. Thus, peace of conflict is the ceasing of all the factors, or lasting pacification, which the Noble Eightfold Path sets out to achieve. Ethical conduct (*sīla*) removes remorse and harm, bearing a blameless foundation of joy, and ease of disengagement (*passaddhi*). Collectedness (*samādhi*) fosters steadied attention and *passaddhi*, and control, where impulses lose momentum rather than dictate action. Craving is undercut by ignorance

that feeds the nexus of the compound, fabricated essence of experience. As ignorance recedes, craving eases; as craving eases, clinging softens; as clinging softens, defilements wane. The result is *upasama* and *santi*, not temporary sedation, but stability born of understanding. Thus, inner peace is the consummate stillness of *nibbāna*, and within the suffering peace is the gradual calming that accompanies suffering. The quality of inner peace increases not through pleasant feelings, but through a lack of feeling, paired with the absence of compulsive reactivity and the capacity to act reflectively.

The ordinary and the liberative are also clarifications of method, for the Mindfulness of clear comprehension (*sati-sampajñā*), body, feelings, mind, and patterns are observed without ownership, revealing their coming and going. That peace and deepened attention (*jhāna*) merged together to strengthen *passaddhi* and give a temporary suppression of the *kilesa*. Then, calm insight looks at this very peace. Then, the nature of it is seen, and attachment to it is relinquished. So, for irritability, insight is protected by peace; for lethargy, peace is protected by insight. Where craving is, peace is disturbed. Where relinquishment operates, there is *upasama* and *santi*. It is not numbness. It is a kind of peace that is freely sustained, compassionate, and unreactive in a self-protective way.

III. THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION OF PEACE: *SĪLA* (MORALITY)

Early Buddhism consistently presents *sīla*, or moral discipline, as the indispensable foundation for genuine inner peace. Before the mind can be calmed through concentration or illuminated by wisdom, it must be unburdened of the turmoil generated by unwholesome conduct. Actions rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion do not end when the outward deed is finished; they reverberate inwardly as remorse, fear, and restlessness. Harmful speech and actions plant seeds of anxiety: one worries about being exposed, retaliated against, or judged. Even if no one else knows, the mind itself becomes a witness and judge, replaying events and generating unease. This is why the texts frequently connect unwholesome behaviour with *kukkucca* (remorse) and agitation. By contrast, *sīla* is portrayed as the condition for "blameless happiness" (*anavajja-sukha*): the quiet satisfaction of knowing that one's

conduct is harmless and upright. A clear conscience becomes a subtle but powerful form of inner peace, creating a mental environment in which more profound meditative stillness can arise more easily.

The basic framework for this ethical foundation is articulated in the five precepts, which function as a minimal but profound structure for non-violence and trust. Refraining from killing protects life and undercuts the roots of fear and hostility. Refraining from stealing safeguards property and nurtures mutual confidence. Avoiding sexual misconduct protects the vulnerability of intimate relationships and prevents the deep resentments that follow betrayal. Truthful speech supports reliable communication and prevents the web of lies that binds the mind in constant tension. Abstaining from intoxicants preserves clarity and self-restraint, reducing the likelihood of reckless harm. These precepts are not merely social rules; they are practical strategies for reducing the causes of both outer conflict and inner fragmentation. Where they are observed, relationships become less threatening and more predictable, and this external stability feeds back into the practitioner's inner sense of safety. Conversely, when one repeatedly violates these precepts, the resulting conflicts, guilt, and broken trust disturb the mind, making meditative calm and sustained attention extremely difficult.

Thus, inner peace is not an isolated, purely internal state but is closely tied to the way one moves in the world with others. A person who lies, exploits, or harms will find their meditation haunted by unfinished business and unresolved tensions. The Buddha's emphasis on *sīla* underscores that mental peace cannot honestly be separated from ethical responsibility. When conflict with others is reduced through non-violence, honesty, and restraint, the mind is no longer constantly mobilized for self-defence or manipulation. The absence of quarrels, grudges, and secret shame becomes a kind of silence in which subtler forms of tranquillity can be heard. In this sense, ethical discipline is already a form of peace, even before formal meditation begins.

At the same time, early Buddhism understands morality not merely as external restraint, but as a training that gradually reshapes character. The factors of right speech (*sammā-vācā*), right action (*sammā-kammanta*), and right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*) within the Noble Eightfold Path show how everyday life is to be aligned with the aspiration for liberation. Right

speech involves abandoning lying, divisive talk, harsh speech, and idle chatter in favour of truthful, harmonious, gentle, and meaningful words. Right action consists of refraining from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct, while cultivating deeds that are compassionate and honest. Proper livelihood guards against professions that cause harm or deceit, encouraging ways of earning a living that are compatible with non-violence and integrity. At first, these disciplines may feel like imposed limits. Still, over time, they become expressions of an inner orientation: the mind no longer wants to harm or deceive, because such acts are clearly seen as sources of suffering for self and others.

In this way, *sīla* evolves from external rule-following into internal transformation. Ethical conduct purifies the relational and psychological field in which meditation takes place. When one sits in meditation after a day of honest work, harmless actions, and careful speech, the mind does not immediately erupt in regret or fear; it is inclined toward ease. The texts make this progression explicit: *sīla* leads to freedom from remorse, freedom from remorse to gladness, gladness to joy, joy to tranquillity (*passaddhi*), tranquillity to happiness, and happiness to *samādhi* (concentration). Moral discipline is therefore not an optional ornament added to an otherwise "purely mental" practice; it is the soil from which higher mental cultivation grows. Without it, any peace achieved in meditation will be fragile, repeatedly undermined by the unresolved consequences of one's conduct. With it, the mind enjoys a stable, blameless happiness that naturally supports more profound calm and, ultimately, the liberating wisdom that completes the Buddhist path to peace.

IV. MENTAL CULTIVATION AS THE PATH TO INNER PEACE

In early Buddhism, mental cultivation is not merely an optional support to inner peace; it is the very path through which peace is discovered and stabilized. Central to this cultivation is *sati-sampajañña*—mindfulness combined with clear comprehension—which allows the practitioner to meet experience without confusion or clinging. The classical framework of *satipaṭṭhāna*, the four foundations of mindfulness, outlines how this is done: by systematically contemplating body, feelings, mind,

and mental objects. Attention is brought to breathing, posture, and bodily activities; to pleasant, painful, and neutral feelings; to states of mind such as greed, aversion, or distraction; and to patterns like the hindrances, aggregates, and noble truths. This contemplative attention is not cold observation, nor is it an attempt to control everything. Rather, it is a careful, receptive knowing that sees phenomena as they arise and pass away, without immediately turning them into "mine" or "me."

Crucially, this mode of observation is practiced without clinging. When sensations, emotions, or thoughts are taken as self or as inherently lasting, the mind reacts with grasping and resistance, generating agitation. *Satipaṭṭhāna* teaches one to remain present with these same phenomena as processes: the body as just body, feeling as just feeling, mind as just mind. In staying close to experience in this way, reactivity naturally begins to soften. The mind learns that it does not have to follow every impulse or identify with every story. This loosening of automatic identification is already a form of peace: the storm of experience may continue, but the heart is less swept away.

Mindfulness is inseparable from the insight into impermanence (*anicca*) and non-self (*anattā*). As one observes body and mind over time, everything is seen to be in flux—sensations flicker, moods shift, thoughts appear and vanish. What seemed solid and reliable is revealed as conditioned and unstable. Recognizing this, craving and aversion lose some of their force: it is harder to cling tightly to what is known to be transient, or to hate what is seen as a passing event rather than a fixed enemy. Likewise, the sense of a permanent "I" at the center of experience is questioned; instead of "I am angry," there is simply anger arising and ceasing. This shift undermines ego-centered struggle and allows a more spacious, non-defensive awareness.

Moment-to-moment awareness thus becomes both stabilizing and calming. Rather than being tossed between past regrets and future anxieties, the mind returns to the immediacy of this breath, this step, this feeling. In that simple, clear presence, the mental noise gradually quiets. Calm (*passaddhi*) and collectedness (*samādhi*) emerge as natural consequences, and inner peace is experienced not as something imposed from outside but as the intrinsic ease of a mind that sees clearly and no longer needs to cling.

V. CONCENTRATION AND TRANQUILLITY (*SAMĀDHI* AND *SAMATHA*)

In early Buddhism, *samādhi* is the collectedness of mind in which distraction, scattering, and wavering are temporarily stilled. Rather than drifting among memories, plans, and fantasies, the mind becomes unified around a chosen object, such as the breath. This unification is not a rigid forcing but a steady gathering of attention, so that awareness becomes clear, bright, and pliant. In such collectedness, the usual currents of craving, aversion, and restlessness lose much of their strength, and a distinctive kind of experiential peace emerges. The practitioner feels protected from inner turbulence: thoughts may still arise, but they no longer dominate. Thus *samādhi* functions as both a refuge and a tool, offering a taste of inner calm while providing the stability needed for deeper insight.

The classical expression of this tranquillity is found in the four *jhānas*, or meditative absorptions. In the first *jhāna*, applied and sustained attention to the object brings forth rapture (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*), born of seclusion from unwholesome states. In the second, thinking subsides, and joy and happiness deepen on the basis of more refined unification. The third *jhāna* softens rapture into a quieter happiness, accompanied by profound tranquillity and mindfulness. In the fourth, even this happiness is relinquished, giving way to equanimity (*upekkhā*) and purity of mindfulness. Across these stages, the mind becomes increasingly subtle, still, and inwardly peaceful. The defilements are not uprooted here, but they are held in check; this is sometimes called *tadaṅga-upasama*, a "peace by suppression" or "pacification by opposition," in which unwholesome tendencies are temporarily absent due to the strength of concentration.

Yet early Buddhism is careful to stress the limitations of *samādhi* when pursued alone. Deep absorption can be extraordinarily pleasant, and the meditator may become attached to the rapture, serenity, or refined equanimity it provides. If this attachment is not understood and relinquished, *jhāna* itself can become a subtle form of bondage, a sanctuary that one does not wish to leave, even for the sake of insight. Moreover, concentration by itself does not necessarily reveal the impermanent, unsatisfactory, and non-self nature of phenomena; it can stabilize attention without transforming understanding. For this reason, the

tradition emphasizes the integration of tranquillity (*samatha*) with insight (*vipassanā*). Tranquillity calms and collects the mind, making it fit for investigation; insight, in turn, examines even the calm and joy of *samādhi*, seeing them as conditioned and unreliable. When these two work together, the peace of concentration becomes a stepping stone toward the more profound, irreversible peace that comes with wisdom and liberation, rather than an end in itself.

VI. INSIGHT (*VIPASSANĀ*) AND WISDOM (*PAÑÑĀ*)

In early Buddhism, inner peace reaches its most whole meaning not in temporary calm but in the clarity that comes from seeing things "as they really are." This vision is the domain of *vipassanā*, insight, which culminates in *paññā*, liberating wisdom. The discourses point to three marks that characterize all conditioned phenomena: impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anattā*). Insight practice turns attention directly toward these features. Bodily sensations are watched as they arise, change, and disappear; feelings and mental states are seen to flicker and dissolve; even refined meditative experiences are recognized as unstable processes. What once appeared solid is disclosed as a flow. This undercuts the assumption that anything conditioned can provide lasting security. At the same time, *anattā* challenges the belief in a fixed, controlling "I" at the centre of experience. Instead of an inner owner, insight reveals an aggregation of processes dependent on conditions. In this light, clinging to "me" and "mine" is seen as a misreading that leads to tension.

By exposing the mismatch between how things are and how they are usually perceived, *vipassanā* deconstructs the false views that sustain inner conflict. Views that treat what is impermanent as permanent, or what is not-self as self, generate unrealistic demands and fears. We demand from relationships, possessions, or status a stability they cannot provide; we fear their loss as if it were the loss of our very being. These distorted expectations generate anxiety, jealousy, and aggression. When insight reveals phenomena as contingent and impersonal, such reactions no longer feel compelling; it becomes easier to relate to experience as a passing pattern rather than as a threat to a core identity. In this way, wisdom is not an

abstract understanding but a therapeutic seeing that loosens the knots of suffering.

From this perspective, the movement from insight to non-clinging is natural. As *paññā* matures, it weakens craving (*taṇhā*) by undermining its justification. Why grasp at what cannot be kept, or defend a self that cannot be found? Cravings may still arise from old habits, but they lose their authority. Repeatedly seeing the stress built into attachment, the mind becomes willing to let go. This letting go is not forced renunciation but an intelligent relinquishment, born of understanding. As clinging (*upādāna*) relaxes, the defilements (*kilesa*) that depend on it—greed, hatred, and delusion—also subside. Inner peace appears not as something added to the mind but as what remains when compulsive grasping is absent. The heart feels lighter, less entangled in stories of gain and loss, praise and blame. There is room for equanimity, kindness, and compassion because attention is no longer monopolized by self-concern.

The early Buddhist tradition presents this liberating wisdom as intertwined with tranquillity (*samatha*). Calm and insight are not rival paths but mutually supportive aspects of a single process. Tranquillity practices such as mindfulness of breathing or loving-kindness stabilize the mind, reduce agitation, and make attention steady enough to observe phenomena closely. Without some degree of calm, insight practice easily devolves into restlessness or intellectualization. Conversely, insight also protects tranquillity from stagnation. If one rests in pleasant concentration without examining it, attachment forms, and the practitioner may resist going further. When *vipassanā* turns its lens even on the peace of *samādhi*, seeing it as conditioned and impermanent, attachment to meditative states loosens, allowing practice to move toward non-clinging. This mutual reinforcement is described as *samatha-vipassanā yuganaddha*, the "yoking together" of calm and insight. In an integrated path, moments of tranquillity provide a base from which insight can investigate, and moments of insight, in turn, clarify the mind, making subsequent calm more stable and profound. Over time, this dynamic produces a deep, flexible peace: not dependent on special conditions, yet capable of meeting any condition with clarity and composure. Here, inner peace is no longer just an interval but the expression of a mind that understands, does not cling, and is therefore free.

VII. INNER PEACE AND THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

Early Buddhism does not treat inner peace as a purely private achievement, sealed off from social life. Instead, the transformation of the mind is expected to flow outward into non-violence, patience, and harmonious relations with others. When greed, hatred, and delusion are weakened, the impulses that fuel harsh speech, retaliation, and exploitation are also diminished. A peaceful mind does not need to defend a fragile ego or win every argument; it can afford to listen, yield, and forgive. Thus, *mettā* (loving-kindness), *karuṇā* (compassion), and *upekkhā* (equanimity) are not merely inner moods but relational dispositions that shape how one responds to conflict and vulnerability. In this perspective, outer harmony is the natural expression of inner transformation, not a separate goal.

The Buddha himself is presented as the paradigm of this unity between inner and outer peace. Having realised Nibbāna, he is depicted as unshakable in the face of praise and blame, gain and loss. Stories tell of him remaining calm when insulted, responding not with anger but with patient instruction or dignified silence. His non-violence is not simply a rule he follows but the spontaneous conduct of a mind free from ill will. Even when confronted with political tensions or threats, the texts portray him as avoiding coercion, instead appealing to reason, empathy, and the long-term consequences of unwholesome action. For followers, this figure provides a concrete image of what it might mean to embody peace in speech and action, not just in meditation.

Conflict resolution episodes in the early texts highlight how inner cultivation supports social peace. In the dispute among the monks of Kosambī, for instance, the Buddha repeatedly encourages reconciliation and reminds the parties of the dangers of division, criticizing attachment to being "right" over the value of concord. In other narratives, disciples such as Sāriputta or Mahākaccāna intervene in quarrels, using calm reasoning and gentle admonition to de-escalate tension. These examples underscore that the capacity to handle disputes peacefully depends on mental qualities forged in practice: mindfulness to avoid impulsive reactions, compassion to see others' perspectives, and insight to recognize the futility of clinging to views. Social peace is not secured by rules

alone; it rests on individuals who have learned to tame their own minds.

From this vantage point, early Buddhism offers a critique of attempts to build harmony solely through external structures—laws, agreements, or punishments—without attending to the inner roots of aggression and fear. While institutions are essential, they cannot substitute for the slow work of mental cultivation. If people remain dominated by craving, aversion, and ignorance, they will eventually find ways to turn any system to divisive ends. The tradition, therefore, links durable social peace to widespread practice of *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (concentration), and *paññā* (wisdom). These are not only "religious" virtues but skills in managing desire, emotion, and perception that have clear interpersonal consequences. The implications for contemporary society are significant. Modern problems such as chronic stress, interpersonal violence, and political polarisation are often addressed with technical or legal solutions, but their emotional and cognitive roots remain largely untreated. Early Buddhist mental cultivation suggests another dimension: training attention, emotion, and understanding so that people can respond less reactively to frustration and difference. Practices of mindfulness, loving-kindness, and ethical reflection can support resilience, reduce hostility, and open space for dialogue across divides. In workplaces, schools, and families, simple habits of pausing, listening, and observing one's own reactions can prevent conflicts from escalating and encourage more thoughtful responses.

At the same time, there are limits to "importing" Buddhist practices into secular contexts. When techniques such as mindfulness are used solely for stress reduction or productivity, detached from ethics and wisdom, their capacity to foster genuine peace is diminished. A person may become calmer yet still pursue harmful goals; a corporation may use meditation to make employees more efficient without questioning exploitative structures. Early Buddhism would regard this as a partial and potentially distorted use of its tools. For inner peace to reliably support social harmony, practice must be oriented toward non-harm, honesty, and the gradual letting go of ego-centred craving. Secular adaptations can benefit individuals and communities, but if they ignore this ethical and liberative orientation, they risk turning a path of peace into a technique of adjustment. The

Buddhist vision thus offers both a resource and a challenge: it invites contemporary societies to cultivate inner transformation as a basis for outer harmony, while warning against superficial appropriations that leave the deeper causes of conflict intact.

VIII. AIM OF THE ARTICLE

This article aims to clarify how early Buddhism conceives inner peace and how this peace is intrinsically bound up with the goal of liberation (*nibbāna*) through mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*). It seeks, first, to offer a careful conceptual analysis of key Pāli notions such as *santi* (peace), *upasama* (quiescence), and *passaddhi* (tranquillity), showing how they function within the doctrinal framework of the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. By doing so, the study intends to distinguish clearly between ordinary, contingent calm and the spiritually grounded peace that arises from the weakening and cessation of defilements.

Second, the article aims to demonstrate the structured role of *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (concentration), and *paññā* (wisdom) in generating this deeper form of peace, highlighting how ethical discipline, mindfulness, concentration, and insight work together to transform the mind. A further aim is to show that, in the early Buddhist vision, inner peace is not a purely private or therapeutic state but has an essential social dimension, naturally expressing itself in non-violence, compassion, and harmonious relationships. Finally, the article seeks to engage critically with contemporary uses of "inner peace," especially in secular mindfulness and wellness discourses, assessing how these appropriations resonate with, or diverge from, the ethical and liberative orientation of early Buddhist thought.

IX. CONCLUSION

The foregoing discussion has argued that, in early Buddhism, inner peace and liberation are inextricably linked through the comprehensive training of mind and conduct. Peace is not an isolated psychological state, nor a by-product of technique alone, but the cumulative fruit of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā* working together. Moral discipline purifies one's relational world and inner landscape, weakening remorse, fear,

and hostility. Concentration gathers the scattered mind into a unified, pliant attention in which agitation can subside. Insight and wisdom then penetrate the conditioned, impermanent, and selfless nature of phenomena, undermining craving and clinging at their roots. In this integrated process, inner peace emerges not as a fragile mood but as a durable stability grounded in understanding and relinquishment; it is the experiential texture of a mind gradually freed from compulsion.

Theologically and philosophically, this yields a distinctive conception of peace. Early Buddhism does not define peace primarily as harmony of feeling, but as the cessation of defilements and suffering. Terms such as *santi*, *upasama*, and *passaddhi* describe not only calm but a quiescence grounded in the extinguishing of greed, hatred, and delusion. *Nibbāna*, as the "element of quiescence" (*upasama-dhātu*), is thus the consummation of this process: peace as unbinding, the stilling of reactive becoming. Such a view challenges modern tendency to psychologize peace as stress reduction, reminding us that for early Buddhism genuine peace is inseparable from ethical purity and ontological insight.

These conclusions open several avenues for further research. Comparative studies could illuminate convergences and contrasts between the Buddhist vision of peace and that of other religious or philosophical traditions—whether Christian, Hindu, Stoic, or contemporary humanist—in order to clarify what is truly distinctive in the Buddhist linkage of peace, non-self, and liberation. Additionally, empirical and interdisciplinary work could explore how specific forms of Buddhist mental cultivation affect measures of well-being, aggression, and pro-social behavior, and under what conditions secular adaptations retain or lose the tradition's ethical and liberative thrust. Such inquiry would not only deepen academic understanding but also inform responsible applications of Buddhist-derived practices in contemporary therapeutic, educational, and social contexts.

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