

## **THE MEDICINE BUDDHA - FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING**

**By Pierre Zimmerman**

The Buddha is often depicted as the great physician in blue lapis lazuli, the color of wisdom. His major discourse was on the **four noble realizations** that are relevant to this day for anyone wishing to move towards well-being and well-flourishing, daily.

### **The first realization:**

There is dis/ease; a deep malaise caused by suffering of body, mind and heart. Suffering includes physical, mental, and emotional elements, disappointment, not wanting certain things and wanting what we don't have. There is the suffering of change, impermanence or stimulus-driven states of gratification that depend on and are conditioned by others, events and circumstances, which are always subject to change. Our reactions to the circumstances and afflictions are the underlying cause.

And then there is the pervasive suffering of existence and conditioned thinking, the profound vulnerability, which derives from the habitual ways we identify closely with the elements of our body, thoughts, emotions and ambitions. We have been brought up to "become someone" only to have to deconstruct it.

### **The second realization is that there is diagnosis:**

The root causes for suffering are unwholesome thoughts and desires: craving, hatred, delusion, pride and envy.

### **The third realization is the remedy:**

Cessation of suffering is realized through wholesome thoughts and actions, possible through meditation, discipline, lovingkindness, equanimity, compassion and wisdom.

### **The fourth realization is that there is a remedy and prescription:**

The Dharma teachings lead to refraining from things and thoughts that cause harm by abiding to the eightfold path: beneficial view, thoughts, speech, action, livelihood, diligence, mindfulness and concentration.

Don't squander this precious life!

Whenever this precious supreme spirit of awakening has not arisen, may it arise.

And when the spirit of awakening has arisen, may it never decline, but grow stronger and stronger.

PZ-10/11/20