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Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Teacher: Hao Liu

Topics:

1: Dharma Talk: One of the Five Precepts — refraining from false speech is the baseline of civilization.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Mixed Vegetables

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Stir-Fried Mixed Vegetables

Main content:

1: Dharma Talk: One of the Five Precepts — refraining from false speech is the baseline of civilization.

Hello everyone! Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, I am Hao Liu! Today, I would like to share the Dharma Talk topic: One of the Five Precepts — refraining from false speech is the baseline of civilization.

In many of his sermons, the Buddha warned against the dangers of false speech—lying, deception, gossip, and harsh or divisive language. He taught that false speech arises from unwholesome roots like greed, hatred, and delusion, which cloud the mind and cause suffering.

False speech disrupts trust, which is essential in all human relationships. When trust breaks down, communities fracture, conflict arises, and social cohesion is threatened. The Buddha pointed out that a society where lies and deceit proliferate cannot thrive in peace or justice.

The Buddha's teachings classify false speech into four types:

Lying outright — deliberately saying what is untrue.

Slandering — speaking in a way that causes division between people.

Harsh speech — using words that hurt or offend others.

Idle chatter — engaging in frivolous or meaningless talk that wastes time and attention.

Each form of false speech undermines harmony and breeds negativity. The Buddha urged his followers to cultivate speech that is truthful, harmonious, gentle, and meaningful.

The Buddha did not view truthful speech merely as a social obligation but as a spiritual practice. Mindful communication helps purify the mind, reducing greed, hatred, and delusion. Speaking

truthfully and kindly supports the development of wisdom and compassion—qualities essential for liberation from suffering.

The Buddha praised truthful speech as “the greatest gift,” one that protects others and oneself. He taught that a person who consistently refrains from false speech earns respect, cultivates peace, and lays the foundation for a virtuous life.

In today’s world, where misinformation and deceit can spread rapidly, the Buddha’s teachings on truthful speech are more relevant than ever. The precept to refrain from false speech calls us to be mindful of the impact of our words—whether in conversation, online, or in public discourse.

Choosing honesty, kindness, and meaningful communication strengthens communities, builds trust, and fosters understanding across differences. It helps create a culture where people can live with dignity and security.

Refraining from false speech, as taught by the Buddha, is indeed the baseline of civilization. It upholds the values of trust, respect, and harmony that make social life possible. Beyond a mere rule, truthful speech is a powerful spiritual practice that nurtures peace within and without. By embracing this precept, we contribute to a more honest, compassionate, and enlightened world.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Mixed Vegetables

Among the most essential components of a Buddhist diet are mixed vegetables, which reflect the principles of simplicity, balance, and compassion.

Mixed vegetables provide:

Colorful variety that pleases the senses without overstimulating them.

Balance of elements — from grounding root vegetables to airy leafy greens.

Diverse nutrients — vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber.

This harmony supports the middle way, avoiding both excess and deficiency.

From a modern nutritional standpoint, regularly eating a variety of vegetables offers profound health benefits that align with Buddhist aims of reducing suffering and promoting vitality:

1. Digestive Wellness

Vegetables are high in fiber, aiding digestion and elimination — key for maintaining mental clarity and physical ease.

2. Detoxification

Leafy greens and cruciferous vegetables (like broccoli or bok choy) help the liver and kidneys eliminate toxins gently and naturally.

3. Disease Prevention

Rich in antioxidants, mixed vegetables help fight inflammation and reduce the risk of chronic illnesses, including heart disease and cancer.

4. Mental Clarity and Calmness

A light, plant-based diet supports sattva — the quality of clarity, calm, and awareness — which is conducive to meditation and spiritual practice.

In Buddhism, how we prepare and eat food is just as important as what we eat. Mixed vegetables can be steamed, lightly stir-fried, or simmered into soups — cooked simply, with minimal seasoning, to respect the natural flavor and essence of the ingredients.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Stir-Fried Mixed Vegetables



Ingredients:

Bok choy – 1 bunch (or use napa cabbage, choy sum, etc.)

Carrot – 1 medium, thinly sliced

Bell pepper (any color) – 1, sliced

Broccoli florets – 1 cup

Snow peas or green beans – 1/2 cup

Ginger – 1 tsp, finely grated

Sesame oil – 1 tbsp

Light soy sauce or tamari – 1 tbsp

Mushroom seasoning or salt – to taste

Toasted sesame seeds – for garnish (optional)

Water – 2–3 tbsp (to steam and soften the vegetables)

Steps:

1. Heat sesame oil in a large wok or skillet over medium heat.

2. Add grated ginger and stir for a few seconds until aromatic (avoid browning).
3. Add firm vegetables first — like carrots and broccoli. Stir-fry for 2–3 minutes.
4. Add remaining vegetables — like bok choy, bell peppers, and snow peas. Stir-fry another 2–3 minutes.
5. Splash in 2 tbsp water, cover the pan briefly (30 seconds–1 minute) to lightly steam and soften the vegetables.
6. Add soy sauce and seasoning, stir well to coat. Taste and adjust salt as needed.
7. Turn off heat, garnish with sesame seeds, and serve hot with steamed rice or noodles.