

Key concepts

The Buddha	One who has gained enlightenment. 'The awakened'.
The Middle way	Living in a middle way free from extremes: no luxury, no poverty.
Four Noble truths	The four truths about life that the Buddha discovered when he reached enlightenment.
Meditation	The act of clearing and focusing the mind.
Enlightenment	An awakening; understanding the truth of reality
Samsara	Cyle of birth, life, death and rebirth
Sangah	Community of Buddhist monks and nuns
Eightfold path	The path to help you to become enlightened
Dharma	The Buddha's teachings
Mandalas	Detailed pictures made of sand



Karma and After life

For Buddhists they believe that you get good or bad karma depending on your actions in this life. It effects your rebirth and reincarnation as you have a better next life if you get good karma. However, the ultimate aim is to completely escape the cycle of rebirth. No longer suffer, no longer attached, no longer trapped in the cycle, no longer bound to your karma. You don't go to heaven or a better place, instead it is just the end of consciousness, so no more suffering.

The Four Noble Truths

When the Buddha reached enlightenment, he discovered:

1. There is suffering in the world.
2. Suffering is caused by attachment and craving.
3. Suffering can be stopped if the craving stops.
4. There is a path out of suffering- if you follow the Buddha's teaching (Dharma), the Eightfold Path and the Middle way.

The Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama was a prince born 2,500 years ago in India. He became the first Buddha. When he was born, a wise man prophesised that if he saw suffering, he would leave the palace (where he lived) in search of answers. To prevent Siddhartha from leaving, his father tried to hide all suffering from his son. However, Siddhartha snuck out of the palace and saw the **Four Sights**.

1. An old man
2. A sick man
3. A dead man and people mourning
4. A Holy Man



Year 8 Buddhism



Eightfold path	What does it mean?
Right View	Accept Buddha's teachings. Understand the four noble truths; know the truth of the Buddha.
Right Intention	Do things with the right motivation - Control emotions, no anger or hate
Right Speech	Avoid saying things that hurt others. No name calling/no lying
Right Action	Don't harm any living thing (no violence, for example)
Right Livelihood	Earn a living in a way that is good and makes others happy. There should be no greed and selfishness.
Right Effort	Put effort into a good life. Help people who are suffering.
Right Concentration	Be aware of those around you and aware of suffering. Be aware of your own actions and do not be ignorant.
Right Mindfulness	Train your mind to be positive, calm and full of wisdom.

Meditation and Mandalas

Both are done to calm the mind and help practice the 8 Fold Path like Right Concentration. They help you stop being attached to things and help control your craving, especially as Mandalas are destroyed as soon as they are finished. There are also health benefits such as lowering BP, relieving stress and anxiety etc.

After seeing the Four Sights, Siddhartha renounced his family, belongings and life in the palace (gave them up) in search of the meaning of life and answers to questions that he had such as 'Why do we suffer?' To reach his answers, he tried extreme methods: starvation and extreme indulgence but neither worked.

Enlightenment

Eventually, Siddhartha meditated under a Bodhi tree for 46 days. During this time, he truly focused his mind. He struggled with temptation, desire, craving, attachment, anger and jealousy. In the end, he understood what caused people's sadness and suffering. He had discovered the truth. It was like waking up. Siddhartha became the first 'enlightened one' or the Buddha. Buddha said that it cannot be described just experienced.



The Sangha

Some Buddhists chose to give up everything and move to live in a Sangha. Here they will meditate, study the Buddha's teachings, and do alms rounds. This is when people give them food but they cant beg or crave. As monks they shave their hair, cant handle money, have relationships, wear perfume, jewellery. This helps them not get attached or crave anything.