

# THE ADVANTAGES OF RADIATING LOVING-KINDNESS

*Phra Rajsuddhinanamongkol*

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Five to six years ago, I had a rosary of one hundred and eight meditation beads that I liked very much. I chanted the verse "Ratana Mala" by counting the bead of this rosary. One day, a rat began chewing on my pillow, mats and other belongings. I woke up and found chewed bits of fabric, kapok, and other things, scattering all over my lodging. I was upset when I saw such a mess. With an upset feeling, I said aloud:

"Bad rats! I have to get rid of these bad rats. I will have someone buy a trap and get rid of them tonight."

However, I did not really mean that. I had just said it because I was a bit angry. That night, the rat chewed on my favorite rosary that I put beside my sleeping mat. It broke the string and took some beads away. After inspection, I found that eight to nine beads were missing. I asked other monks and my student to help look for them. He saw the beads under the floor of my lodging, but he could not reach them. He told me that we had to pull up the flooring in order to get the beads. I said that we could not do that because the lodging was old and the nails were firmly in place. We were not sure what we should do.

That night, if anybody had seen what I did they would have thought that I had lost my mind. I lit a candle and incense sticks, then I practiced walking meditation and sitting meditation. After that I said aloud:

"Dear rats, last night I said we should kill the bad rats, I apologize for what I said. Please forgive me. I am dedicating my good deeds and loving-kindness to you. Tomorrow I will give you some bananas. Please do not chew on our pillows, mats and carpets for they belong to the Sangha. It is bad karma to destroy Sangha property. I radiate my loving-kindness to you. Will you please help cancel out my karma that I had caused out of careless control of my mindfulness?"

Do you know what happened the following morning? I got all the missing beads because the rats returned them to my sleeping mat. I called Doctor Yaun Chalopatam, who had retired from the Police Department and was staying at the temple and volunteered to help in the temple activities to inspect those beads. He knew about this event well because I had asked him to help look for the missing beads the day before. I also called my assistant, Phra Palad Prasit, to inspect the beads.

They knew that I had not move the rosary or retrieved the missing beads from under the floor before I went to bed. The following morning, the beads were returned to me.

“Oh! How come the beads showed up here?” Doctor Yaun exclaimed.

Using the flashlight, they looked under the floor and found all the beads were gone. We inspected the beads and found that the rat had chipped four to five beads. However, the core was still usable for stringing. Please remember, the rat returned the beads because of radiating loving-kindness.

Finally, I bought a cord and resting all the beads. Two or three months after the accident, Doctor Yuan wanted to leave the temple and return home. He asked if I would be kind enough to give him my favorite rosary as a souvenir. All of my other students all wanted to have this rosary. For example, Director Somporn also wanted to have it. I had to consider to whom I should give the rosary. Doctor Yaun had been assisting me for many years, so I gave them to him. To this day he still treasures it. The rats have never chewed on anything in my lodging since then. This story shows the power of kindness. There are many rats here. I have to give them bananas and radiate loving-kindness to them. Please try to radiate loving-kindness and rats will not bother you.

### **Mrs. Phing and a Cat**

Mrs. Phing was an old widow whom was deserted by her child. Actually, I had helped her in supporting her son through school. After graduation and having made good progress in his career, he got married, but he expelled his mother from his home. He was such a bad person. He got a wife and forgot his own mother. Mrs. Phing had to stay at this temple and look after my lodging. She has passed away.

I am going to tell an event that happened when she was alive. One day a cat walked into my lodging. Mrs. Phing scolded the cat, hit and kicked it. Later it came back and left its droppings in my lodging. Mrs. Phing had to clean the dirty mess. One day I came downstairs and saw what the cat did. Not only it had left its droppings, but it also led other cats to do the same. The cats just walked into my lodging, left their droppings and ran away. Mrs. Phing was mad. She cleaned the floor, the carpets and scolded those cats. The following day the cats came around and left another mess. This time not only the cats did, they also invited the dogs to do the same. How naughty the cats were. This is a true story.

I had to get this situation under control. When all visitors had left my lodging, I call Mrs. Phing to see me, and told her that she was quite old, therefore she should make merit.

“Mrs. Phing comes here. We have to talk. You madly scolded the cat. The more you did, the more it left droppings. Not only one cat did, but also it brought its

friends to do the same. Do you see that? You should be kind to them instead of scolding them.”

Yes, sir. I see. What should I do? I can't radiate loving-kindness to them, but I want to kick them. I think I will catch them, put them in a container and dump them in the town of Promburi.”

“Never do that! You should follow my suggestion, that is practice vipassana meditation and radiate loving-kindness.”

Even though Mrs. Phing has stayed at this temple for many years, she never practiced vipassana meditation and did not want to do it. She had just provided service for other people who came here to meditate.

“Do you practice vipassana meditation?” they asked.

“No, I have never practiced,” she answered.

Can you see how ignorant she was? Many people are so near a good thing that they never realize the value. Please think about it.

Finally, I had another suggestion to her.

“Mrs. Phing, let's do this way. You should talk to the cats nicely. “Cats, please don't leave your droppings here. I have a hard time cleaning your mess. Please do it somewhere else. From now on I will not scold you nor kick you. I promise. Please leave you droppings at other places. Can you talk to the cats nicely? Cats are living beings and can understand kindness. Do you know why some people have to leave the cats at the temple? It is because the cats did not properly behave and left their droppings on the stove. Why is it? The owner has no manners, so he does not train his cat. When it does not properly behave, he dumps it at the temple. There are many dogs at this temple. They do not leave their droppings on the sidewalks or the roads, but they do it at the far away end of this temple, near the bank of the river. We do not hit or kick them. If we do, they will soon badly behave. Well, you may see some droppings. It is because some dogs were just left here two days ago, and we have not trained them yet.”

Finally, Mrs. Phing talked nicely to the cat and did not hit or kick it. The cat must have understood and told its friends that she was good to them and they should not leave droppings in the lodging. From that time, cats and dogs have never left droppings in my lodging.

“I have never had to clean cat droppings since then. It is hard to believe that only one cat could cause a lot of trouble because it told its friends to leave droppings here.” She said to me.

Another example happened to me when I was young and had not yet ordained as a monk. There was a pretty girl whom I liked. One day I visited her at her house. There were so many dogs; I threw rocks at them. From then, they barked at me every time I visited that house. They did not bark at others, only me. Many years passed, but they remembered that I was bad to them. Here is the technique. If you want to visit a girl's house, you should carry meatballs and give them to the dogs. They like meatballs very much. They will remember and like you. Next time you visit, they will gladly greet you by licking you and ask if you have brought them meatballs. You should try this. It is up to you whether you believe it or not.

Everybody likes beauty and nice things. Not only humans, but also animals do. Cats and dogs hate it when people chase, scold, kick or throw things at them. Mrs. Phing liked pretty people. She would serve drinks or coffee to visitors who dressed nicely, but she ignored those that looked plain. Therefore, you are welcome to use this technique: good manners and nice speech.

In conclusion, nothing is as good as radiating loving-kindness. From practicing vipassana meditation, you are able to have compassion, purify your mind and to be unselfish. You will be kind to everybody, especially animals.

There was a forest-dweller monk whom was called Somdej Phra Sanharaj Kai-Thuen (the name means that wild roosters were tame by him). Whenever he set up his sunshade in a forest, wild roosters came to greet him because he radiated loving-kindness to them.

If the owner is unkind and kicks his cats, it will be bad to him in return. The owner has no manners, so does his cat. It makes the house dirty. If he is kind, it will bring good luck to him. For example, a couple in Singhburi heard that the cats in this temple produced special offspring with diamond eyes. They believed that it brought good luck to the owner. They wanted to have a cat, so they asked for my permission to take a cat and adopted it. Later, the cat produced special offspring, but it delivered its special offspring at their neighbor's house. It never gave the special offspring to its owner because they had no grace and no manners. The owner was so angry that they returned the cat and its kittens to this temple. They put all the cats in a container, wrapped the container and put it in a taxi-boat that passes this temple. As a routine, we normally get donated food from Buddhist people who put part of their harvest of vegetables and fish in the taxi-boat and have the food delivered to the temple. After we received that container, we found fourteen cats instead of vegetables. We remembered the cat. Later, we received a letter, apologizing for returning the cat. The letter contained this message: "I fed the cat, but it delivered the special offspring at our neighbor's. Now, they are rich. We cannot tolerate this thing, so we are sorry that we have to return this cat and its kittens to you."

Do you know why this thing happened? The owner scolded the cat every day. They are immoral and had no manners. The neighbor was good and religious. They woke up at 4 a.m. and chanted Buddhist verses every morning. The owner did wake up

at 4 a.m., but scolded everybody in his house. The cat could not give the special offspring to its owner, but delivered it to the neighbor who is now prosperous in his business.

This is another example of kindness. If you can radiate loving-kindness, every living creature likes you.