

Ten Skillful Actions

From *Middle Length Discourse #41*

1. **Abandoning the killing of living beings**, abstaining from killing living beings; with rod and weapon laid aside, gentle and kindly, one abides compassionate to all living beings.
2. **Abandoning the taking of what is not given**, abstaining from taking what is not given; one does not take by way of theft the wealth and property of others in the village or in the forest.
3. **Abandoning misconduct in sensual pleasures**, abstains from misconduct in sensual pleasures; one does not have intercourse with people who are protected by their mother, father, mother and father, brother, sister, or relatives, who have a spouse, who are protected by law, or with those who are garlanded in token of betrothal.
4. **Abandoning false speech**, abstaining from false speech; when summoned to a court, or to a meeting, or to ones relatives' presence, or to his guild, or to the royal family's presence, and questioned as a witness thus: 'So, good man, tell what you know,' not knowing, one says, 'I do not know,' or knowing, one says, 'I know'; not seeing, one says, 'I do not see,' or seeing, one says, 'I see'; one does not in full awareness speak falsehood for his own ends, or for another's ends, or for some trifling worldly end.
5. **Abandoning malicious speech**, one abstains from malicious speech; one does not repeat elsewhere what one has heard here in order to divide [those people] from these, nor does one repeat to these people what one has heard elsewhere in order to divide [these people] from those; thus one is one who reunites those who are divided, a promoter of friendships, who enjoys concord, rejoices in concord, delights in concord, a speaker of words that promote concord.
6. **Abandoning harsh speech**, one abstains from harsh speech; one speaks such words as are gentle, pleasing to the ear, and loveable, as go to the heart, are courteous, desired by many, and agreeable to many.
7. **Abandoning gossip**, one abstains from gossip; one speaks at the right time, speaks what is fact, speaks on what is good, speaks on the Dhamma and the Discipline; at the right time one speaks such words as are worth recording, reasonable, moderate, and beneficial. That is how there are four kinds of verbal conduct in accordance with the Dhamma, righteous conduct.
8. **One is not covetous**; one does not covet the wealth and property of others thus: 'Oh, may what belongs to another be mine!'
9. **One's mind is without ill will** and one has intentions free from hate thus: 'May these beings be free from enmity, affliction and anxiety! May they live happily!'
10. **One has right view**, undistorted vision, thus: 'There is what is given and what is offered and what is sacrificed; there is fruit and result of good and bad actions; there is this world and the other world; there is mother and father; there are beings who are reborn spontaneously; there are good and virtuous recluses and brahmins in the world who have themselves realised by direct knowledge and declare this world and the other world.'