

# The Story Behind the Fifth Precept I A Buddhist's View of Using Drugs

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Sep. 18th, 2021. How are you doing? As you know, drug using is rising quickly these years, especial, marijuana is legalized in some states. There are many different kinds of drugs, and people know drugs could lead to both mental and physical issues including thinking obstacles, improper judgement and different diseases. Drug using not only affects the drug user one person, it also affects their children, their family, the society, and the country. Today, I would like to share with you drug using from the Buddhist.

Drug using breaks the fifth precept. When the Buddha lived in the world, the fifth precept was simply refraining from alcohols. But in this modern society, in general, the fifth precept refers to no gambling, no alcohol drinking, no drug abusing, no tobacco using. Though in the sutra, drug is not seen anywhere because it was not available at that time, we can still learn about drug usage from what the Buddha said about alcohols. Now I would like to share with you how the fifth precept was made. There was a story behind it. A couple weeks ago, we talked about how the Buddha helped Cudapanthaka get enlightened, and the fifth precept was made also because of Cudapanthaka. When this story happened, Cudapanthaka was already an Arhat, a great disciple of the Buddha.

One day, Cudapanthaka entered the village of Bhadrava in ancient Indian country Chedi. When he was walking for alms, he heard that there was a vicious dragon whose name was Umbra. This dragon had bad temper and was extremely ferocious. It harmed living beings all around. Not only animals dared not to get close to the dragon, but also the birds in the sky were afraid to fly through the dragon's airspace.

After eating, Cudapanthaka walked to where the vicious dragon was dwelling. He sat down under the tree by a spring in full lotus position. When dragon smelled Cudapanthaka's smell, it became angry, so it used all kinds of magical power to deal with him. Cudapanthaka entered Samadhi right away, and fought back with supernatural power. At the end, the dragon was exhausted, and it could not move. Cudapanthaka shrank his body to very small, then he entered into the dragon from its ears, and out from its eyes; then he entered again from its nose, and out from its mouth.

Seeing this, the dragon was frightened. Its body hair if it had any all stood up. Quickly it joined palms and said to Cudapanthaka, "Master, please forgive me. I would like to take refuge in you."

Cudapanthaka said, "Don't take refuge in me. Take refuge in my teacher, Sakyamuni Buddha."

The dragon said, "From now on, I am willing to take refuge in the three jewels, and be a faithful Upasaka." After what happened, the dragon converted to become a disciple of the Buddha, and never did anything bad again. The People in that place also were able to live in peace.

This incident quickly caused sensation everywhere, and Cudapanthaka became famous because of this. Everyone wanted to give offering to him. One day, a poor woman prepared crispy chyll as offering for Cudapanthaka. When Cudapanthaka finished eating, the woman thought, "Chyll is cold. Venerable may feel cold after eating. A bowl of wine may warm him up." So she brought a bowl of wine which looked like water to Cudapanthaka. Cudapanthaka took the bowl and drank it without thinking. After drinking, he spoke Dharma to the woman, and then he was on his way back to the Vihara. Before he reached the gate of the Vihara, however, due to the alcohol he drank, he fell to the ground.

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At this time, Buddha and Venerable Ananda came back. When the Buddha saw this, even though he knew that the man who fell drunk on the ground was Cudapanthaka, he still asked Ananda, "Ananda, who is this monk?"

Ananda replied: "Buddha, he is the elder Cudapanthaka."

The Buddha then told Ananda: "Gather all the bhiksus here. I have something to say to everyone."

After the bhiksus gathered together, the Buddha ascended to the Dharma seat and said, "I heard that there was an evil dragon nearby. It was not only ferocious, but also slaying creatures everywhere. Because of Cudapanthaka, it changed to be good. and all the people, birds and beasts could live in peace. Was there such a thing?"

At this time, among the bhiksus, those who had seen what happened with their own eyes answered, "Yes, Buddha, we have witnessed this with our own eyes."

The Buddha then asked the bhiksus, "Do you think Cudapanthaka can defeat a toad now?"

The bhiksus replied, "No, Buddha."

The Buddha went on and said, "It can be seen how great a disaster drinking alcohol can cause! It not only makes people lose their prestige, but also deceives the wisdom of spiritual consciousness. Even Cudapanthak who has obtained Arhat fruit, could be held up by alcohol, let alone the ordinary people. Many sins done by the people are committed because of drinking alcohols. Therefore, from now on, all Buddhist disciples are not allowed to drink alcohols. Even if it is as small as the dew on the grass, you cannot drink it."

Amitabha! The above is how the fifth precept was made. Drug using, which is the same as, or even worse than alcohol drinking, makes people lose themselves, lose their minds, lose their wisdom, indulge themselves in illusion. How many people have lost everything because of drugs? How many people have lost all the hope because of drugs? How many people have lost all the faith because of drug? Everyone should stay away from drugs, and drugs should be kept out of reach for the people also. Do you agree? Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time. Bye!