

How did King Pasenadi lose weight?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Apr. 3rd, 2022. How are you doing? Today, I would like to share with you the Buddha's words about the reasons of King Pasenadi's obesity and how the King lost weight after listening to the Buddha. This story is taken from Dharmapadavadana sutra.

During the time the Buddha lived in Sravasti, he instructed all the living beings from heavenly beings, dragons, ghosts, gods to the King and the people of the country. The King of the country was King Pasenadi. He was arrogant, unrestrained and greedy for the pleasure of the five desires. He liked to eat delicious food. He ate more and more, and still he often felt hungry. Later, he gained too much weight and it was even hard for him to sit in the carriage. It was difficult for him to breathe just to live the daily life. Even things like laying down and getting up were not easy for him. His condition was getting worse and worse. He had seen many doctors, but no one could really help him. The King was depressed and extremely frustrated.

One day, with the last hope, he came to see the Buddha and asked for help. He couldn't pay homage to the Buddha, so he just sat aside, joined his palms, greeted the Buddha, and then asked, "World honored One, I don't know what I did wrong so that I am so fat now. I have not come here often because my body is truly uncomfortable."

The Buddha was compassionate and told the King that there are five reasons why people are prone to obesity.

1. They like to eat. They eat without stopping. They eat too much.
2. They like to sleep. They sleep too much, and they are lazy.
3. They are arrogant and like to instruct people.
4. They don't think much, and they don't like to explore the truth of the universe.
5. They are not willing to do things in person.

Then the Buddha spoke a verse to give the King some suggestions. The King felt ashamed because he had all the problems that the Buddha pointed out. So he vowed in front of the Buddha that from then on he would take care of his own life and death, cultivate a gentle attitude, treat others with kindness and control his sleep time and diet.

After the King made the vows, he went back and started to remind himself everyday to reduce the amount of food at each meal. His sleep time was shortened. He tried his best to contemplate on the Buddha's teachings to think about life and death, and at the same time, he developed a habit of exercising. He started to care about things around him and personally observed and understood everything.

This way, he lost weight day by day, and physically he became stronger day after day. When he was able to walk freely himself, he came to pay homage to the Buddha. From the distance, he got off the carriage and walked to the Buddha at a brisk pace. He thanked the Buddha for his teaching so that he could eat less, sleep less, exercise, and cultivate his mind. Also he was able to handle the state affairs himself and regained health.

The Buddha told him to sit down, and then asked him, "Why do you have to walk here when there are chariots and horses to follow?"

The king happily told the Buddha: "World honored one, previously I received your teachings, and I took them seriously and followed them. Now I have successfully lost weight and my body is light. It is all the grace of the Buddha, so I came here on foot and wanted to listen to your teachings."

The Buddha spoke to Pasenadi, "People in the world are all like this. They do not know that all phenomenas are impermanent. They only care about indulgence. They are not willing to do good deeds to accumulate blessings. At the end of a person's life, his spiritual consciousness leaves, and his physical body remains in the tomb.

The wise nurture the mind, and the fool nurture the body.

A wise person knows that this physical body is like a dream bubble. It is not eternal. It is only a short-term stay. So he spends all their energy on cultivation, hoping that his spiritual consciousness could be freed from life and death and be freed from the bondage of ignorance.

A foolish person is obsessed with self-seeing, thinking that this body is the real self, serving this stinky sack all day, creating boundless karma, and finally causing the spiritual consciousness to suffer.

If you can understand this truth, then you will practice the Buddha Dharma.

The Buddha then spoke a verse to conclude his teachings. The meaning of the verse is the following:

If a person has not heard the Buddha dharma, he will be like that big bull, with a whole body of flesh and no wisdom. The process of reincarnation is very boring, coming and going is very hard. If you are greedy for the pleasures of the five senses of the body, then there will be boundless suffering waiting for you.

A wise person has foresight and foresees these pains, so they put aside their personal views, do not serve the fake master of the flesh, and let the spiritual self be the real master. Eliminate self-consciousness, eradicate cravings and desires, then you will be able to reach non-born. When there is no born, there is no death.

After hearing this, King Pasenadi was very happy. His heart was opened. He resolved, and developed the supreme bodhicitta. Countless listeners obtained the discerning eye.

Amitabha! This is today's Dharma share. I hope you have enjoyed this teaching. Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time. Bye.