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# Global Recovery: The Buddhist Perspective

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# Buddhist Pirit Chants For Mental and Physical Well Being - A Scientific Approach

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## 1. Introduction

Recent research in medicine, in experimental psychology and what is still called parapsychology has thrown some light on the nature of mind and its position in the world. During the last forty years the conviction has steadily grown among medical men that very many causes of diseases organic as well as functional, are directly caused by mental states. The body becomes ill because the mind controlling it either secretly wants to make it ill, or else because it is in such a state of agitation that it cannot prevent the body from sickening. Whatever its physical nature, resistance to disease is unquestionably correlated with the physiological condition of the patient.

Mind not only makes sick, it also cures. An optimistic patient has more chance of getting well than a patient who is worried and unhappy. The recorded instances of faith healing includes cases in which even organic diseases were cured almost instantaneously. In this connection it is interesting to observe the prevalence, in Buddhist lands, of listening to the recital of the *dhamma* or the doctrine of the Buddha in order to avert illness or danger, to ward off the influence of malignant beings, to obtain protection and deliverance from evil, and to promote health, prosperity, welfare, and well-being. The selected discourses for recital are known as "*paritta suttas*," (discourses for protection).

"*Paritta*" in Pali, "*paritrana*" in Sanskrit and "*pirit*" (pronounced *pirith*) in Sinhala mean principally protection. *Paritta suttas* describe certain suttas or discourses delivered by the Buddha and regarded as affording protection. This protection is to be obtained by reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas*. The practice of reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas* began very early in the history of Buddhism. The word *paritta*, in this context, was used by the Buddha, for the first time, in a discourse known as *Khandha Paritta* in the *Culla Vagga* of the *Vinaya Pitaka* (vol. ii, p. 109), and also in the *Anguttara Nikaya* under the title "*Ahi (metta) Sutta*" (vol. ii, p. 82). This discourse was recommended by the Buddha as guard or

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protection for the use of the members of the Order. The Buddha in this discourse exhorts the monks to cultivate *metta* or loving-kindness towards all beings.

It is certain that paritta recital produces mental well-being in those who listen to them with intelligence, and have confidence in the truth of the Buddha's words. Such mental well being can help those who are ill to recover, and can also help not only to induce the mental attitude that brings happiness but also to overcome its opposite. From among the 24 parittas described in the Book of Protection (*Pirith Potha in Sinhala*), five parittas: 1) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Kassapa Thera Bhojjhanga), 2) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Moggallana Thera Bhojjhanga), 3) Factors of Enlightenment (Maha Cunda Thera Bhojjhanga), 4) Discourse to Girimananda Thera (Girimananda Sutta), 5) Discourse at Isigili (Isigili Sutta) by Buddha is said to be specifically discoursed to cure illnesses.

Originally, in India, those who listened to paritta sayings of the Buddha understood what was recited and the effect on them was correspondingly great. The Buddha himself had paritta recited to him, and he also requested others to recite paritta for his own disciples when they were ill.<sup>5</sup> This practice of reciting paritta is still in vogue in Buddhist lands. The habit of listening to the recital of paritta suttas among the Westerners too is growing slowly but steadily.

*Several factors is said to be combine to contribute towards the efficacy of paritta recitals.*

#### **(i). The Power of Truth**

Paritta recital is a form of saccakiriya, i.e., an asseveration of truth. Protection results by the power of such asseveration. At the end of the recital of *metta* sutta, the reciters bless the listeners with the words, *etena sacca vajjena sotti te bhavissasabbada* which means "by the power of the truth of these words may you ever live well."

#### **(ii). The Power of Virtue**

Several discourses of the Book of Protection describe the virtuous life. The starting point in Buddhism is sila (virtue). Standing on the firm ground of sila one should endeavor to achieve a collected mind. If it is true that virtue protects the virtuous, then a person who listens to the recital of paritta suttas intelligently, in a reflective mood, with complete confidence in the Buddha's words, will acquire a virtuous a state of mind as would enable him to dominate any evil influence, and will be protected from all harm.

## ii). The Power of Love

The reciters of the paritta are expected to do so with a heart of love and compassion wishing the listeners and others well and happiness and protection from all harm.

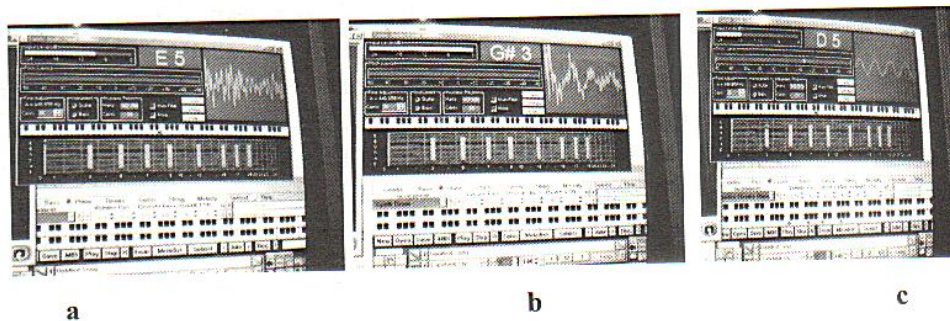
## v). The Power of Sound

It is believed that the vibratory sounds produced by the sonorous and mellifluous recital of the paritta suttas in their Pali verses are soothing to the nerves and induce peace and calm of mind; they also bring about harmony to the physical system.

This paper will now describe the results of some scientific experiments conducted in Sri Lanka by the author and a few other scientists in other countries to understand this fourth cause-the power of sound in paritta.

## 2. Scientific Aspects of Buddhist Pirith Chants

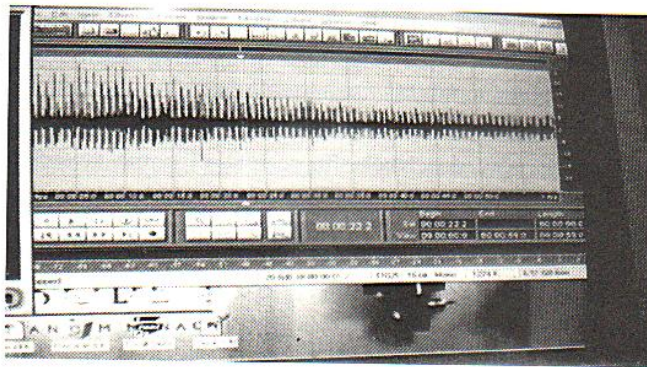
A research study conducted by Ven Madawala Upali Thero and the author in 2002 at the Kanduboda International Meditation Centre in Sri Lanka using the *Cool Edit* and *Band-in-a-Box* computer software packages and a computer connected microphone fitted to a stethoscope end revealed that Pirith sound gives only four notes contrary to the conventional music having 7 notes..



**Figure 1.** Computer analysis of music and paritta chants using the Cool Edit Program: a) wave patterns of normal classical music-*disorganised rough waveforms*, b) and c) wave patterns of paritta chants – *smooth waveforms*.

*As such, seven notes would induce raga thoughts in your mind but not so the pirith and it will calm you down. It was also found that the recitation of pirith gives best results when it is chanted at medium speed. When the recitations are done*

in a hurry or very slowly by dragging the words and sentences like a song, the computer indicated more than 4 notes producing no soothing effect. When subjects are allowed to listen to pirith chants, it was found that within 10 minutes of the commencement of the pirith their heart beat reduces and the heart pulse amplitude halved and they come to an alpha state similar to what you get under a meditative trance.



**Figure 2.** Computer sound analysis chart indicating the reduction of heart beat and pulse amplitude of a person within 10 minutes after the commencement of listening to pirit chants.

This implies that listening to pirit is good for your heart and also gets the similar benefits that one get under trance condition in meditation. Prolonged listening to a pirit chant done throughout a whole night could thus produce higher benefits similar those of meditation (benefits received at alpha level). Here we limited our research only to study the effect of sound. It was also found that live pirit chants made by priests or laymen produce better results than those of playing back the same pirit chant recorded in some form. Here the sound quality of the speakers affects very much.

### **3. Brain wave patterns during meditation and /or listening to pirit chants**

Brainwaves are the electrical wave patterns generated in every person's brain. These waves vary according to level of consciousness, subconsciousness and unconsciousness and are characterized by four distinct types of brainwaves. Each of these electrical wave patterns have distinctly different ways of perceiving, processing, learning and knowing information (Hoiberg, 1989). All of these brain waves are produced at all times. However, a predominance of a specific desimal

Brainwave state can be created at will, which allows a person to potentialize his or her capabilities towards achieving human excellence. Brainwave frequencies are described in terms of hertz (Hz), or cycles per second... the four general categories of brainwave frequencies and their main characteristics, are:

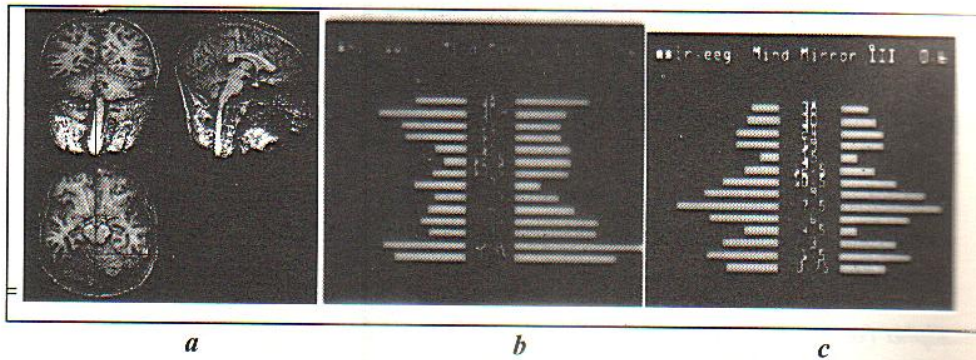
*Beta ( $\beta$ ) brainwaves: 14 -34 hertz* - beta brainwaves are characterized by logical, analytical and intellectual thinking, verbal communication and awareness of surroundings.

*Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) brainwaves : 7 -14 hertz* - they most commonly occur when we are calm and relaxed, yet mentally alert, they also present at the lower or middle level of trance in meditation. These brainwaves are also present during daydreaming (Jaggi, 1984).

*Theta ( $\theta$ ) brainwaves: 4 – 7 hertz* -characterized by being deeply relaxed and inwardly focused, they also present at the very deep level of trance in meditation.

*Delta ( $\delta$ ) brainwaves: 0.5 – 4 Hz* - being extremely relaxed, characterized by sleep.

Left part (left hemisphere) of our brain controls the right side of the body and also responsible for our logical thinking, interest in mathematics, etc. The right hemisphere of our body controls the left side of our body and is responsible for our artistic abilities, music etc. When we are fully awakened more beta waves are emitted from both the left and right parts of the brain, but there is a great disparity between the left and the right activity (see Figure 3 b). During sleep, neurons fire with more synchrony than during wakefulness. In the deepest stage of non-REM sleep, the dominant brain wave is called a delta wave. Under meditative trance or listening to sacred chants consciously, the neuron firing rates in the brain are such that both the parts are generating more alpha waves compared to the other waves and moreover both the left and the right brain hemispheric activities become well balanced (see: figure 3 c).



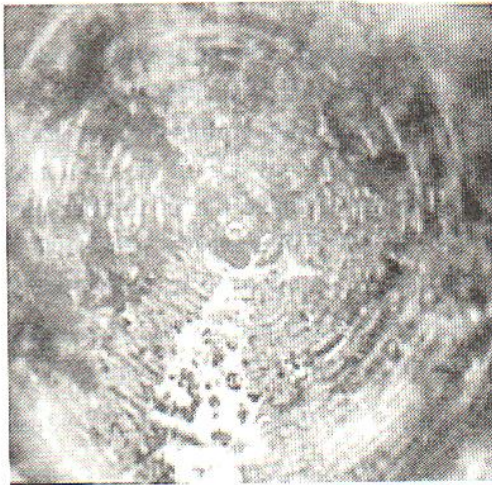
**Figure 3.** *a.* The human brain-three views, *b.* brain wave histogram for a meditator and *c.* brain wave histogram of a meditator in trance with highest activity at alpha level in 7.5 Hz (Histograms are from 0.75 Hz to 38 Hz.).

#### **4. Some benefits of pirit chants made through neuroplasticity of the brain**

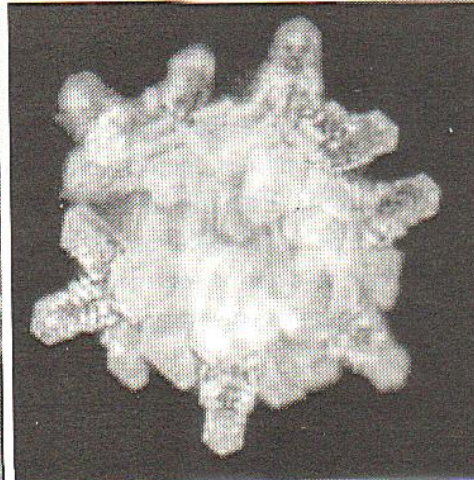
According to latest research on Neuroplasticity, one of the hottest topics in brain science, which refers to the brain's recently discovered ability to change its structure and function, alpha level under meditation or through external sound effects like FFR (frequency following response). Listening to pirit chants for periods longer than 10 minutes would bring the human brain into alpha stage - a trance level similar to what one achieved during meditation. As such, listening to Buddhist pirit chanting not only produce a calming effect on mind and increase the body's immune system, it also produces lasting changes in the brain leading to increase the IQ level, learning abilities and problem solving capabilities, sustained positive emotions, gives relief for insomnia, reshapes and expands the mind to foster happiness and cultivate compassion, thicken the brain tissues, increase attention and sensory processing and increased oxytocin peptide will increase the well-being and sense of trust in social situations (Jayaratne, 2006).

#### **5. Effect of piritta sound on water molecules in the body to cure diseases**

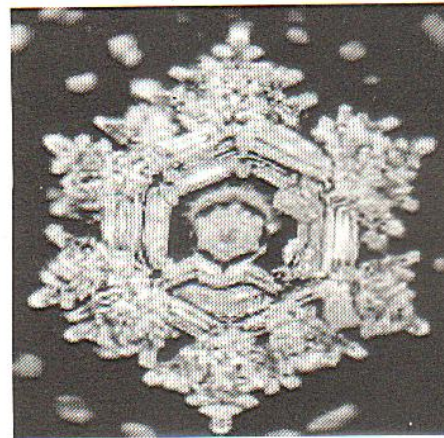
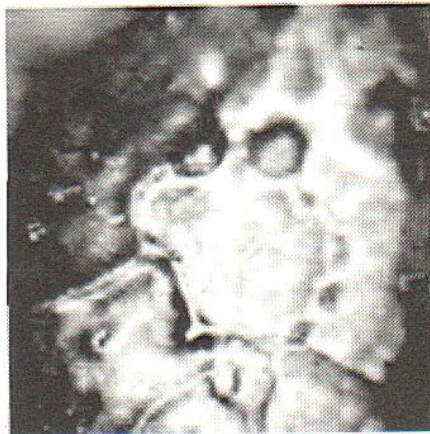
A recent Japanese study conducted by Masaru Emoto (2004) shows that water when exposed to pirit sound for several hours and then frozen produced hexagonal shape ice crystals. Since our body is consisting of about 70% of water, when listen to the pirit, many water molecules in our body become hexagonal aggregates (other wise pentagonal or some other shape). It has been found that such hexagonal water made our body and its cells healthy and disease free.



a. Heavy Metal Ice Crystal



Tibetan Sutra Ice Crystal



b. Fujiwara dam water (Japan) before chanting. Fujiwara dam water (Japan) after chanting.

**Figure 4.** Water exposed to several hours of paritta chants and freezed shows clear hexagonal shape ice crystals (a) Same water sample - heavy metal produce no clear shape, but the Tibet Buddhist Sutta, (b) Fujiwara Dam Water (Japan) – before and after chanting paritta.

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## Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective

*Chantrarat Vongareesawat<sup>1</sup>*

This is a great honor for me to present this paper at the 2010 United Nations Day of Vesak Conference and Celebrations in Bangkok, Thailand. My presentation consists of three parts: (1) Overview of Emotional Intelligence, (2) Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective, and (3) Ways to enhance Emotional Intelligence based on Theravāda Buddhism.

### Overview of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers specifically to the interplay and cooperation between intelligence and emotions. A result of interaction between intelligence and emotions forms the basis behaviors for human competence in any activity (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Obviously, the term of EI was not brought fully into mainstream psychology until the 1990s (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004).

In fact, publications dealing with social intelligence began appearing in 1920 with the work of Edward Thorndike, a professor of educational psychology (Bar-On, 2005). Thorndike's initial insight was to identify aspects of what we now call EI as dimensions of social intelligence. We must bear in mind that at that time, intelligence was thought of in very narrow terms, as Intelligence Quotient or IQ, following the lead of Alfred Binet, French psychologist and inventor of the first usable intelligence test that is a basis of today's IQ test. The EI concept, based on Thorndike's groundbreaking perspective, refers to the ability of humans to understand and act wisely in human relationships (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000). In 1983, Budnik (2003) display and summarized the work of Gardner, Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard Graduate School of Education, who introduced his now-famous model of Multiple Intelligences. The author revealed that according to Gardner's study, there are seven distinct types of intelligence. These types, as he discussed them, are referenced especially to manifest talent in children and are 1) linguistic, 2) logical-mathematical, 3) bodily-kinesthetic (processing knowledge through bodily sensations), 4) spatial capacity (thinking in images and pictures)

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5) musical ability, 6) interpersonal skill (communication), and 7) intrapersonal skills (awareness of one's own feelings and motivations and those of others).

The work and insights of Gardner were especially well presented in Budnik (2003). Subsequent to his breakthrough work in the early year 1980, Gardner revisited and extended the EI model. His findings are presented in his book namely "Frames of Mind." He did not use the term EI in reference to his model but he did address and elaborated existing concepts of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

*Interpersonal intelligence*, as we have seen and Gardner further specifies, refers to the ability of humans to understand others and to work well in co-operation by organizing groups, negotiating solutions, making personal connections, and engaging in social analysis. *Intrapersonal intelligence* refers to the ability of humans to be self-aware, to recognize one's own feelings, and to use emotions for operating successfully in social behavior (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002). Since Gardner's initial work, subsequent theorists and researchers have continued to elaborate on his model. A notable example was the work regarding two domains of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences pursued by Salovey and Mayer, Goleman, Bar-On, and others. They have transformed and renamed two types of social intelligence found in Gardner's model, recasting them in the more accessible concept of EI (Castro, 2005). Since EI has claimed as a key factor to increase the effectiveness at work, to support a potential for promotion, to encourage a personal growth, and to enhance the objectives of career development (Cherniss, Boyatzis, & Elias, 2000). Therefore, a term of EI has become increasingly prominent in recent years, starting in the early year 1990. It has been studied as the subject of much descriptive and clinical research that intends to predict, to explain, and to examine the role of EI in various domains of human competencies. Nowadays, EI has been widely recognized as a valuable concept in Western psychology.

In the Western context, not only organizations and business have become interested in encouraging and promoting EI for their employees' potential, customer satisfaction, and increasing workplace productivity (Meyer, Fletcher, & Parker, 2004), but also educators, managers, and health care professionals have become interested in the potential of EI for extending and developing personal competencies (Cadman & Brewer, 2001; Freshman & Rubino, 2002; McQueen, 2004). Currently, EI becomes increasingly popular as a measure for identifying potentially effective leaders and it may use as a tool in developing effective leadership skills (George, 2000; Jooste, 2004; Maccalupo, 2002). In response to this situation, the study of Bar-on (2005) offered three major conceptual models of EI classified by Spielberger: 1) the Salovey-Mayer model, (2) the Goleman model, and (3) the Bar-On model. All of these models are also characterized in the Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology.

In order to understand each of three EI models, the author reviewed briefly the literature in each well-known model for more understanding, as follows:

*The Salovey-Mayer Model.* In 1990, Peter Salovey, Yale psychologist, and John Mayer, a University of New Hampshire psychologist, collaborated to synthesize the concept of EI as we now know it. They carefully distinguished EI abilities from social traits or talents. In effect, they corrected Gardner's ambitious grouping. *They defined EI as human abilities such as the capacity to know one's own emotions, to manage emotions, to be self-motivating, to recognize and respond to emotions in others, and to handle interpersonal relationships.* They developed their EI model based on an understanding of cognitive intelligence that focused on specific mental aptitudes for perceiving and regulating feelings. They emphasized that EI can be learned, be developed in individuals over time, and be measured through an ability test (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2004; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). Starting in the late 1990, continuing into the present decade, Salovey and Mayer have worked to evaluate and refine EI model into four dimensions of mental processes including: (1) *perceiving or identifying emotions*, (2) *using emotions to facilitate thought*, (3) *understanding emotions*, and (4) *managing emotions* (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Quebbeman & Rozell, 2002; Vitello-Cicciu, 2003).

*The Goleman Model.* Daniel Goleman (1995), a well-known psychologist, the author of the best-seller book "Emotional Intelligence Why it can matter more than IQ", defined EI as any desirable feature of non-cognitive intelligence. He hypothesized that EI can be learned and improved with experience and age. Goleman emphasized that EI plays a critical role in life outcomes and accounts for success at home, school, and workplace. EI is a key to establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships and the capacity of individuals to be effective team members. In the workplace, EI builds the employees' technical skills and intelligence quotient for their jobs at all levels (Goleman, 1995). Goleman formulated his EI model based on the theory of performance and also drew on the concept of EI that had been elaborated by Gardner and later, Salovey and Mayer. Goleman's new model of EI consisted of five domains, specified below (Goleman, 1995): (1) *knowing one's emotions or self-awareness*, (2) *managing emotions*, (3) *recognizing emotions in others or empathy*, (4) *motivating oneself*, and (5) *handling relationships or social skills*. Then, other researcher have used these same domains and found them to be useful as a conceptual framework (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2004; Freshwater & Stickley, 2004; McQueen, 2004; Schutte et al., 2001; Vitello-Cicciu, 2003).

*The Bar-On model.* Reuven Bar-On, an Israeli psychologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, developed EI assessment as a measurement of well-being, working with this concept since the time he was a doctoral student.

Bar-On has defined EI as *an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills*. He has emphasized that *EI influences one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures contributed to emotion management* (Bar-On, 2005). Bar-On was the first to propose the term "emotional quotient" (EQ), in 1988. The terms EI and EQ are used interchangeably. He placed EI in the context of personality theory, specifically, the model of well-being. According to Bar-On's model, *EI is an integration of a number of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, skills, and facilitators that combine to form effective human behavior*. He sub-categorized EI into five major competencies and fifteen sub-component variables that can be improved through training and remedial programs (Cherniss & Goleman, 2000; Dulewicz, Higgs, & Slaski, 2003; Palmer, Manocha, Gignac, & Stough, 2003; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004). Bar-On's five EI competencies and their respective sub-components are briefly presented as follows: (1) *Intrapersonal skills* consisting of emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, and independence. (2) *Interpersonal skills* consisting of empathy, interpersonal relationship, and social responsibility. (3) *Adaptability* consisting of problem solving, reality testing, and flexibility. (4) *Stress management* consisting of stress tolerance and impulse control. (5) *General mood* consisting of happiness and optimism.<sup>6</sup>

As reviewed previously, EI concepts based on Western psychological perspective are very useful to apply and establish in many professional competencies in individuals and organizations. Although the employing EI concepts from western could increase EI competency among Thai people but scientific knowledge of EI in Western countries such as programs or EI measurements could not well-designed for assessment and enhancement EI among Thai people since there are cultural sensitivity and differences. Regarding about 92 percent of Thai people are Buddhist (Chandra-ngarm, 2003) and Buddhism has long studied on the psyche and has gained great knowledge on the nature of mind and mental development that such are closely interrelated to EI (Disayavanish, 2006; Ratanakul, 2002). Therefore, it could be advantage for Thai people to take part in increasing and applying EI based on Buddhist perspective.

### **Emotional Intelligence based on Buddhist Perspective**

Thai scholars and monks provide many Thai terms of EI based on Theravāda Buddhist concepts such as "Pre-cha-cher-g-arom", "Je-ta-ko-sol", or "Chaow-arom" (Pannitamai, 2002; Phra Dhammapitaka, 1999; Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999). Those terms are used as interchangeable terms of EI in Thailand. Currently, the EI concept is being studied and developed based on Thai "local wisdom" (*bhumi-panya*) perspective. Its definition is also related to the Buddha's Teaching: being with good thought, good action, and good speech (Chulacharitta, 2005).

The Venerable Dr. Phra Dhammapitaka or Bhikkhu Prayudh Payutto (as cited in Department of Mental Health [DMH], 2000), the first ex-chairman of the University Council of the World Buddhist University, has, in 1999, declared that the definition of EI, based on the Theravāda Buddhist perspective, is *the result of human action controlled by wisdom*. Importantly, the wise mind comes from the individuals who practice their mind, as a matter of effort, by following the “Threefold Training” or “the Noble Eightfold Path” and *performing actions with a wise mind*.

The Venerable Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, previously known as Phra Rajavaramuni (Phramaha Prayoon Mererk), the Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand, has determined and elaborated on the meaning of EI based on Buddhist principle in 1999. *EI person refers to a person who has and uses a wise mind to manage their emotions in oneself with wise decision making and good performance in thought, action, and speech with mindfulness of self and others* (Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999). He suggests the way to enhance EI that is the employment of “General mental factors” to support “Beautiful mental factors and the decrease of “Unwholesome mental factors” in individuals mind. A wise mind in individuals can be developed and practiced through the Threefold Training of the Buddha Teachings. This training is a process of mind development which consists of three trainings in higher morality (*sīla*), in mentality (*samādhi*), and in higher wisdom (*paññā*). The way to develop a higher wisdom is a practicing of insight meditation based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipatthāna*). After individuals have continuously developed their emotions and practiced mindfulness following the “Threefold Training”, the practitioners will become wise and will experience feelings, have thoughts, and manifest acts with a wise mind. This leads to a life which in every moment is characterized by happiness and harmony of life anytime and anywhere without harm to oneself or others as long as their life continues (Phra Rajavaramuni, 1999).

Disayavanish, an emeritus professor of psychiatry at Maharaj Nakorn Chiangmai Hospital, who has practiced Insight Meditation for more than 25 years, has defined EI based on Theravāda Buddhism that *EI is a process of using bare attention to the external stimuli that arise through the six sense organs, namely the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind*. The persons with EI can acknowledge their own emotions, feelings, needs, thought, and imagination of oneself and others. In addition, such persons can effectively control and manage their emotions through the development of mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*). Therefore, the development of EI in this aspect is in accordance with the practice of insight meditation (*vipassanā*) meditation based on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*satipatthāna*) (Disayavanish, 2006).

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Pannitamai (2002) revealed that EI is quite related to the Buddha Teachings. He stated that an *EI person is the one who use emotions to promote*

*intellect and to behave oneself in accordance with accepted norms.* Individuals can integrate an analytic reflection or *Yonisomanasikāra* for their correct perceptions, interpretation, and reaction to any situation with thorough, clear comprehension (*Sampajañña*). He also stated that the EI concept has a relationship with the Five Aggregates in Theravāda Buddhism as aforementioned.

Chulacharittare, a retired surgical physician who has practiced Theravāda Buddhist Meditation more than 20 years, claimed that EI based on the local wisdom perspective refers to *abilities that a person has for regulating thoughts, speech, and action in a positive way and being with a happy mind* (Chulacharitta, 2005).

Currently, a group of scholars from the Behavioral Science Research Institute, Srinakharinwirot University [SWU] in Bangkok has developed the first instrument of EI based on Theravāda Buddhist Principles for Thai university students. This tool is beneficial in measuring the level of EI competencies among Thai students in order to detect and improve their EI competencies before they graduate. The researchers determined and categorized *the three competencies of EI for Thai adolescents based on the Threefold Training*, including: (1) *Having happiness in oneself* refers to personal characteristics, including having loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, self-control, good mental health, good emotions, self-confidence, optimism, and flexibility. (2) *Involvement in good relations with others* refers to interpersonal relationships characteristics, including being sincere, generous, forgiving, unity, empathy, gratitude, and human respect. And, (3) *Having work success* refers to team work characteristics, including having honesty, vision, being punctual, work planning, perseverance, being appropriately assertive, exhibiting collaborative working behavior, job satisfaction, listening to other opinions, not being selfish, and showing inquisitive learning behavior (Intasuwan, Chuawanlee, Sucaromana, & Choochom, 2003).

Remarkably, in 2000, the Department of Mental Health [DMH], Ministry of Public Health in Thailand became interested in the EI concepts from the western psychologists. Although the DMH administrators have agreed that EI can predict the achievement in individuals and in increasing individual's motivation and professional competency as regards the existing research findings; they have more concern that Thai people should have special elements of EI competencies. They are concerned to promote people being more emotionally mature, being a good person, and living with life satisfaction and a happy mind more than using EI elements for career promotion and individuals accomplishment. Then, the team researcher of DMH conceptualized the EI concept for Thai people that such derived from mental health standpoint and Buddhist philosophy. The researchers of DMH developed "the Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening Test for the Thai population aged 12 to 60 years" in 2000. *This is a famous EI tool in Thailand which has been used for assessment the EI among various groups of Thai adulthood. The EI elements as measured in this*

screening test portrayed the desirable behaviors in *three main concepts*: virtue, competence, and happiness. Firstly, “Virtue” refers to a personal ability to have self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social responsibility. Secondly, “Competence” refers to a personal ability to know oneself and self-motivation, having decision making and problem solving, and creating interpersonal relations. Lastly, “Happiness” refers to a personal ability to living with self-esteem, life satisfaction, and happiness mind (DMH, 2000).

### **Way to enhance EI Based on Theravāda Buddhism**

Many scholars determined that EI can be developed in individuals throughout their life. It is quite clear that since people need a happier life and better success in their workplace, the experts claim that EI can make positive changes so that the various ways for EI development emerged (Smith, 2000; Texas Department of State Health Services, 2004). As has been established by the literature review, there are coincided points of EI concepts and the programs amongst the Western researchers. Firstly, they agree that self-awareness or self-understanding is a cornerstone of EI. The literature confirmed that people with EI are able to manage their own emotions and empathize with others’ feelings. Moreover, they are able to handle interpersonal relationships and direct themselves for career success. The agreeable recommendation of EI development is to improve self-awareness at the primary step for further reproduction of other EI competencies, including emotional management, empathy, social skill, and self-motivation. It could be considered that self-awareness or self-understanding powerfully impacts upon people with EI.

In other cultural frames of reference, in *Theravāda Buddhism*, self-awareness has recognized in term of having mindfulness and clear comprehension. Obviously, the Buddha provides the direct way for mental development among lay people. According to Theravāda Buddhism, lay persons who have trained mind will have mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) on their emotions first. Then, they are able to empathize with others feelings without employing unhealthy mechanisms, such as: repression or denial for self-adaptation or avoidance from negative feelings, as Sigmund Freud mentioned.

In a review of research on EI and Theravāda Buddhist perspective, Vipassanā Meditation or insight meditation is valuable in an increasing EI level (Phramaha Sawai Khaisungnoen, 2004; Meesaen, 2000, 2008; Karnpungton & Bantengsook, 2003). In developing an individual’s mind to increase EI by improving self-awareness, the directly recommended way is insight meditation practice. In the process of basic learning and developing EI by practicing insight meditation, the individuals are encouraged to follow the “Threefold Training” or “the *Paṭisambhā*”