

The Meaning of Maitri and of Bodhi Shrawan in Bodhi Margadarshan Maitri Dharma

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बुद्धि-श्रवणं मयि भवतु ।
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Bodhi-Heeding means to be in truth, that is, to be in the state of Guru; to realise and know the fundamentals of life, of being alive, to be omniscient and omnipresent.

गुरु मार्गदर्शन मयि भवतु ।
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The goal of this Guru Marga is to make this realm bloom in friendly, loving maitribhav, to release its countless creatures from pain and suffering by disseminating the true paths to mukti-moksha liberation ascendance forever and ever.

~ Mahasambodhi Dharmasangha

Many of us have been confused about the meaning of Maitri Dharma, linking it in our minds with previously known deities or lineages. This confusion has caused needless controversy, even conflict. In maitri dharma, there is no “lineage” where a distinct “line” is separate from all other “lines.” Such grave misunderstanding should be cleared up as soon as possible. Maitri dharma is all-encompassing and views *all* religions with respect.

The word “*maitri*” here has no nominal affiliations with physical or spiritual beings, nor with known social or religious traditions. The word maitri, meaning friendly had been chosen for its affiliations with invisible yet clearly palpable states of being that focus our human consciousness on the Earth and on the welfare of all living beings without bias regarding race, gender, social position, political persuasion or religious belief. It indicates a gentle loving kindness, with a softness that melts and merges serenely into the whole. The word *maitri* is commonly used in most Indic cultures to mean loving friendliness, compassion, oneness, inclusiveness, benevolence, awareness of and love for all living beings, without boundaries, without selfishness. The related words *maitri*, *maitra* and *mitra*, unleash the flow of friendliness, of togetherness, oneness, mutual support, symbiosis and all the feelings & sentiments that direct love and energy outward for the benefit of all, devoid of the least egotistic sentiment, without a shred of attachment, no trace of jealousy, envy, hatred, anger, rage, violence, brutality or killing. And this generally selfless, warm, serene and loving state of being is called *maitribhav*. And maitribhav is the key to this new dharma.

This friendly loving maitri dharma that Lopam has brought down for us, is the sole key to the process of Creation where in the human world, creation means sun, air, water, and earth which four elements contain, maintain and sustain all life forms active therein. The whole universe is born of dharma and sustained by the principles of dharma. Look at the incredible intricacies of Creation, of palpable, vibrant life that begets life, and in all these countless varieties of forms and qualities, from elephants and whales to fleas and mitochondria, to fireflies and coral reefs. All these fabulous creatures and the breathtaking, awesome majesty of the plant kingdom! Lopam (Guru in maitri language) has been there and knows these Sources of Life - the Paramatma Gurus with Bodhi consciousness. Their creation includes not only all the world and all animals, humans and plants in this Earth realm, but all living beings in all realms of the universe. Here in the unique realm of human beings on earth, we all receive birth into a physical form, grow, and die. We all absorb

nourishment, and we all produce our young by way of seed. But look how miraculous our differences are, with our awe-inspiring structures and our various fascinating ways of living! And yet despite all these differences, we are clearly, wonderfully, phenomenally, amazingly and inextricably One. One collective, living life entity! One living world! And dharma is the driving force, the maintaining and sustaining force, the immense light of the energetic 'qi' of this collective living entity. Being the principle of life itself, dharma is the one single set of working principles that all conscious human beings must know, revere and follow, in order to flow *with* the current of life, to be *in* the light of life. To refuse dharma is to refuse life itself — and to lose it forever.

The Dharma that Mahasambodhi Dharmasangha is teaching here, uses the word maitri in its descriptive sense of being loving, peaceful, helpful and happy. Lopam could easily have used other words to describe this source of life. It could be Love Dharma, Peace Dharma, Heart Dharma etc. etc... Our maitri dharma follows the Bodhi Path, as made clear in Lopam's own description of "*Bodhi Margadarshan Maitri Dharma*." This can be translated as meaning, "The friendly dharma born of the Bodhi Marga" where *Bodhi* means "Truth" or "Realisation of Guru nature", and is the highest level of omniscient consciousness in the heavenly spiritual realm, and where *marga* means path. Subsumed under this Bodhi Path level is the Marga GuruPath, beneath which is the GuruMarga Path that Lopam is currently teaching on earth these days.

Lopam's BodhiMarga Path has now taken visible form as universal spiritual discipline for the entire human race, — in the form of the GuruMarga Path for all peoples of all cultures and all religions. This GuruMarga Path comprises three different guru categories. They are Sanyasi GuruMarga gurus or celibate renunciators who live within the sacred precinct and focus on doing dharma for the world; Maatma GuruMarga gurus who may be householders with families, who live and work in communities helping with celebrations of rites of passage, teaching the maitri dharma and practices to one and all wishing to receive training; and the Sarva Sadharan GuruMarga gurus or secular devotees leading regular lives, who follow all maitri dharma precepts, conform to Lopam's teachings, and nurture true maitri in their daily lives till everyone radiates with maitribhav. Each and every one can be a maitri guru and is encouraged to become one, to live and to reflect the light of maitri, each taking on the responsibility of caring for and protecting the great legacy of Earth, our living habitat and the dharma, the principles of life. In this way, all three categories lead devotees to mukti-moksha and the Paramatma state, where attainment is commensurate with the degree of devotion and faithfulness each of us has made out of our life on earth.

Maitri dharma is unprecedented in recorded human history. It is here to rescue mankind from the brink of self-annihilation. At this eleventh hour, with all our natural resources threatened, our air, water and soil filled with poisons, billions of living beings having become extinct over the past two decades, our hearts hardened and shrunken like a clenched fist, our soul corrupted to the point of forgetting universal Oneness, estranged from dharma and Paramatma Gurus, deaf to the breathing of the universe - putting an abrupt and ignoble end to humans beings' long and seemingly futile evolution.

But the Guru has come and the radical shift toward the light of dharma has begun! Following the Bodhi Margadarshan Maitri Dharma in all its precepts, changing our selfish lifestyle of the brutal '*taker*' to that of the maitri friendly, kind and gentle, loving '*giver and helper*', we shall learn the new universal, benevolent maitri language of peace and, regrouping ourselves into One Family, we will let the deep reverence and heartfelt awe flow toward our divine exemplar the Maha Sambodhi Guru, known as Bodhi Shrawan Dharma Sangha, the fully realised omniscient one of truth, where Dharma Sangha signifies Lopam's existence, not as a single individual, but as embodiment of the collective Paramatma Bhagawans. Our new website now bears the unique name of *Bodhi Shrawan Dharma Sangha*, BSDS for short, signifying the unprecedented consecration closing the gap

between heaven and earth, between divinities and humans, enfolded as we now are as never before, by Paramatma Gurus who keep us strong on the shining Bodhi Path. Let us rise to Their unique but timely call to duty. Let us dedicate our life energies to the welfare of this beautiful world and all its miraculous living beings and, melting into Lopam through His trained gurus, let ourselves be now transformed into maitri beings and, with our maitrified heartsets, let us help return our battered Earth to its glorious wholeness and beyond, with the Paramatma Bhagawans' blessings filled with maitribhav, to a veritable sukhavati paradise.

<https://bsds.org/en/news/212/meaning-of-maitri-and-bodhi-shrawan>