

# Course Introduction: Buddhist Psychology for Addiction Recovery and Prevention

## (Supplementary Syllabus to standard Alcohol and Drug Recovery Courses)

This course offers a comprehensive and integrative exploration of addiction recovery and prevention through the lens of Buddhist psychology, combining classical teachings with contemporary psychological and behavioural approaches. Grounded in the understanding that addiction is not merely a biological or social problem but a conditioned mental process shaped by craving (*taṇhā*), ignorance (*avijjā*), and distorted perception, the course provides a structured pathway for transforming both behaviour and cognition.

Across **14 progressive units**, students are guided from foundational concepts to advanced applications. The early units introduce the nature of addiction, the psychological and social determinants of substance use, and key Buddhist principles such as the Four Noble Truths, dependent origination, and the threefold training (*sīla, samādhi, paññā*). Subsequent units focus on mindfulness-based interventions, emotional regulation, and behavioural change through ethical discipline (*sīla*) and habit transformation.

The course then advances into cognitive restructuring and deep psychological work, using Mindfulness practices such as *Satipaṭṭhāna*, Dhammānupassanā, and techniques derived from key discourses to challenge wrong views (*miccā diṭṭhi*), weaken craving, and dismantle maladaptive belief systems. Students learn a wide range of therapeutic methods, including thought substitution, questioning, exposure, and self-monitoring, integrated with Buddhist insight practices.

The final units emphasise applied practice and transformation, including field-based practicum experiences and the ultimate goal of recovery: the **liberation of the mind from alcohol and drugs**. By understanding the illusory nature of substance-related pleasure and cultivating wisdom (*paññā*), students are equipped to support individuals and communities in achieving sustainable recovery.

Overall, the course prepares students to function as ethical, reflective, and skilled practitioners, capable of applying Buddhist psychological principles in counselling, community work, and health promotion to address addiction in culturally relevant and transformative ways.

## Unit 1: Buddhist Perspective on Addiction and Substance Use

### Unit Description

This unit introduces students to the nature of alcohol and drug use from both a global public health perspective and a Buddhist psychological framework. It explores the historical evolution of substance use, its social and cultural roles, and its harmful

consequences on individuals, families, and communities. The unit places strong emphasis on Buddhist ethical teachings, particularly the Fifth Precept on abstaining from intoxicants, and examines how these teachings provide a foundation for understanding addiction, prevention, and recovery.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the historical and social context of alcohol and drug use
- Describe the concept of substance dependence and its impacts
- Analyse addiction using key Buddhist concepts such as *pañca sīla*, *pamāda* (heedlessness), and *appamāda* (heedfulness)
- Discuss the individual and social consequences of substance use based on Buddhist teachings on alcohol and drugs (e.g., Sigālovāda, Mangala, Parabhava, Dhammika, Uposatha, and Vera Suttas)
- Identify different categories of substance users and their characteristics
- Explain primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention approaches in addiction

### **Key Content Areas**

- History and global patterns of alcohol and drug use
- Health, social, economic, and psychological impacts of substance use
- Substance dependence: concepts and characteristics
- Buddhist ethical framework: Five Precepts and the Fifth Precept
- Analysis of Sigālovāda Sutta and other relevant discourses
- Heedlessness (*pamāda*) vs. heedfulness (*appamāda*)
- Social influences: peer pressure, cultural norms, and stigma
- Types of users: non-users, potential users, occasional users, dependent users
- Prevention approaches: primary, secondary, and tertiary

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

- Interactive lectures and discussions
- Textual analysis of Buddhist suttas
- Case studies and real-life examples
- Group discussions and reflective exercises

### **Assessment and Learning Activities**

- Short reflective writing on Buddhist perspectives of addiction
- Group presentation on social and cultural influences of substance use
- Case analysis applying prevention strategies
- Participation in class discussions

### **Recommended Readings**

- Core text: *Buddhist Perspective on Alcohol and Drug Use*
- Selected suttas: Sigālovāda Sutta, Mangala Sutta, Parābhava Sutta
- WHO and UNODC reports on substance use

## Unit 2: Understanding the Aetiology of Alcohol and Drug Use through Buddhist Psychology

### Unit Description

This unit explores the causes (aetiology) of alcohol and drug use by integrating modern psychological perspectives with Buddhist psychological analysis. It examines why individuals initiate and continue substance use, with particular emphasis on craving (*taṇhā*) and related mental processes such as attachment, desire, and conditioning. The unit highlights the role of social, cultural, and psychological influences—including availability, peer dynamics, and perceived benefits—in shaping substance use behaviour.

A key focus is placed on the concept of **alcohol and drug expectancies (patthanā/appekkhā)**, demonstrating how beliefs, attitudes, and learned expectations—not merely pharmacological effects—drive substance use. The unit further analyses cognitive distortions (*vipallāsa*) in perception, thought, and view, explaining how substances are misperceived as pleasurable, beneficial, and necessary.

Drawing on core Buddhist teachings such as the **Vipallāsa Sutta** and **Madhupiṇḍika Sutta**, the unit explains the cognitive process from contact (*phassa*) to proliferation (*papañca*), illustrating how distorted meanings and symbolic associations around substances are constructed. It also examines learning mechanisms such as classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and social learning in the development of addiction.

The unit concludes by analysing how social environments, peer influence, cultural symbols, media, and industry practices reinforce substance use, and emphasizes the importance of challenging distorted beliefs as a foundation for prevention and recovery.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the causes of alcohol and drug use using Buddhist and psychological perspectives
- Analyse craving (*taṇhā*) and related mental processes in addiction
- Evaluate the role of expectancies and cognitive distortions (*vipallāsa*)
- Describe the process of cognitive proliferation (*papañca*) in substance use
- Apply learning theories (conditioning and social learning) to addiction behaviour
- Critically examine social and cultural influences on substance use

### Key Content Areas

- Concept of aetiology: Understanding causes of alcohol and drug use

- Craving (*taṇhā*) and related constructs: *chanda*, *upādāna*, attachment and bondage
- Psychological and social determinants: availability, acceptability, peer influence, and vulnerability factors
- Alcohol and drug expectancies (*patthanā/appekkhā*) and Expectancy Theory
- Cognitive distortions (*vipallāsa*):
  - Distortions of perception (*saññā*)
  - Distortions of thought (*citta*)
  - Distortions of view (*diṭṭhi*)
- Analysis of **Vipallāsa Sutta**: misperceiving impermanent, suffering, non-self, and unattractive as the opposite
- Cognitive process in addiction: **Madhupiṇḍika Sutta** (phassa → vedanā → saññā → vitakka → papañca)
- Learning mechanisms in substance use:
  - Classical conditioning (association)
  - Operant conditioning (reinforcement)
  - Social learning (modelling, peer influence)
- Symbolic meanings of substances (e.g., pleasure, adulthood, power, rebellion)
- Role of social structures: peer groups, family norms, cultural practices
- Influence of media, alcohol/tobacco industry, and drug networks
- Formation of drug-using lifestyles and subcultures
- Challenging expectancies and distorted beliefs as a basis for prevention

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** integrating Buddhist texts and modern psychology
- **Textual analysis** of selected suttas (e.g., Vipallāsa Sutta, Madhupiṇḍika Sutta)
- **Guided discussions** on real-life examples of addiction and recovery
- **Case study analysis** (individual and community-level substance use scenarios)
- **Group work** on identifying social and psychological causes of substance use
- **Reflective learning exercises** linking personal observations with theory
- **Concept mapping** (e.g., mapping the process from craving to addiction)
- **Role-play activities** (peer influence, expectancy formation, decision-making)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Short reflection (individual):**  
Analyse how craving (*taṇhā*) and expectancies influence substance use
- **Group presentation:**  
Examine a real or hypothetical case using Buddhist psychological concepts (e.g., *vipallāsa*, *papañca*)
- **Case study assignment:**  
Apply conditioning theories and social learning to explain substance use behaviour

- **Class activity:**  
Identify and challenge common alcohol/drug expectancies in society
- **Concept diagram task:**  
Illustrate the cognitive process (phassa → papañca) in addiction
- **Participation:**  
Engagement in discussions, sutta analysis, and group exercises
- **Short quiz or written test:**  
Key concepts: craving, expectancy, vipallāsa, conditioning, and social influences

## Unit 3: Abhidhammic Analysis of Addiction and Recovery

### Unit Description

This unit provides an in-depth analysis of alcohol and drug use through the framework of **Abhidhamma**, focusing on the nature of consciousness (*citta*) and associated mental factors (*cētasikas*). Addiction is examined as a mental disorder (*cetasika roga*), arising from unwholesome consciousness rooted in greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). The unit explores the dynamic interaction between consciousness, mental factors, and behaviour, highlighting how substance use is driven by distorted cognition, craving, and ignorance.

It further analyses the classification of consciousness, the role of universal, occasional, unwholesome, and wholesome mental factors, and their contribution to addiction and recovery. The unit integrates key Buddhist doctrines such as the **Four Noble Truths**, **āśava (cankers)**, and **pañca nīvaraṇa (five hindrances)** to explain the psychological processes underlying substance dependence. Emphasis is placed on transforming unwholesome mental states into wholesome ones through mindfulness, wisdom (*paññā*), and ethical conduct, providing a foundation for sustainable recovery.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain addiction as a mental process using Abhidhamma concepts of *citta* and *cētasikas*
- Classify different types of consciousness and relate them to substance use behaviour
- Analyse unwholesome mental factors (e.g., *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha*) in addiction
- Evaluate the role of *āśava* (sensual desire, becoming, ignorance, wrong view) in sustaining addiction
- Apply the Four Noble Truths to understand addiction, its causes, and cessation
- Identify wholesome mental factors and their role in recovery and relapse prevention
- Critically examine addiction as a learned psychological habit rather than purely a chemical dependency

## Key Content Areas

- Concept of mind (*mano, citta, viññāna*) and nature of consciousness
- Abhidhamma categories: *citta, cētasika, rūpa, Nibbāna*
- Classification of consciousness: *kāmāvacara, rūpāvacara, arūpāvacara, lokuttara*
- Unwholesome consciousness (*akusala citta*):
  - Greed-rooted (*lobha mūla*)
  - Hatred-rooted (*dosa mūla*)
  - Delusion-rooted (*moha mūla*)
- Analysis of alcohol/drug use through mental factors:
  - Universal factors (*phassa, vedanā, saññā, cetanā, etc.*)
  - Occasionals (*vitakka, vicāra, viriya, pīti, chanda*)
  - Unwholesome factors (*lobha, diṭṭhi, moha, ahirika, anottappa, uddhacca, māna, etc.*)
- Addiction as mental illness (*cetasika roga*)
- Concept of *āsava*: *kāmāsava, bhavāsava, avijjāsava, diṭṭhāsava*
- Habit formation and addiction as psychological conditioning (*bhavāsava*)
- Ignorance (*avijjā*) and Five Hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*)
- Role of wrong views and expectancies in substance use
- Wholesome consciousness (*kusala citta*) and recovery process
- Beautiful mental factors (*sobhana cētasika*): mindfulness, confidence, non-greed, non-hatred, wisdom
- Development of abstinence (*virati*), compassion (*karuṇā*), and appreciative joy (*muditā*)
- Four Noble Truths analysis of addiction (*dukkha, samudaya, nirodha, magga*)
- Reflection practices on suffering, craving, and cessation

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on Abhidhamma concepts and addiction
- **Analytical breakdowns** of *citta* and *cētasika* in real-life addiction scenarios
- **Textual study** of relevant suttas (e.g., *Roga Sutta, Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*)
- **Guided meditation/reflection exercises** (mindfulness of craving and sensations)
- **Case study discussions** on addiction and recovery pathways
- **Group work** analysing mental factors in substance use behaviour
- **Concept mapping** (linking *citta–cētasika–behaviour*)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Short analytical essay:**  
Explain addiction using *lobha, dosa, moha* and associated mental factors
- **Case study analysis:**  
Apply Abhidhamma framework to a real or hypothetical substance use case
- **Group presentation:**  
Analyse *āsava* and their role in sustaining addiction

- **Reflective journal:**  
Personal or observed reflections on craving, suffering, and behavioural patterns
- **Diagram-based assignment:**  
Map the relationship between citta, cētasika, and substance use behaviour
- **Class activity:**  
Identify and transform unwholesome mental factors into wholesome ones
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: citta classification, mental factors, Four Noble Truths

## **Unit 4: Working with Communities and Initiating Action for Addiction Prevention**

### **Unit Description**

This unit focuses on community-based approaches to alcohol and drug prevention and recovery, grounded in Buddhist psychological principles. It examines how communities—including temples, religious centres, and local networks—can serve as platforms for prevention, counselling, and behavioural transformation. The unit emphasises **community empowerment**, collective responsibility, and participatory approaches to addressing substance use.

Students will explore strategies for mobilising communities, forming community action teams, and implementing sustainable prevention programmes. The unit contrasts traditional service delivery models with empowerment-based approaches and highlights the importance of changing social norms, beliefs, and symbolic meanings associated with substance use. Buddhist counselling approaches, such as *ovādapatikāra* (advice therapy) and the application of the Brahma vihara (*mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā*, *upekkhā*), are integrated as key tools for community engagement and behavioural change.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of community in addiction prevention and recovery
- Analyse community empowerment approaches versus traditional service delivery models
- Design community-based prevention strategies for alcohol and drug use
- Identify key stakeholders and resources within a community
- Apply Buddhist counselling principles (e.g., *ovādapatikāra*, Brahmavihāra) in community settings
- Evaluate strategies for changing social norms and attitudes toward substance use
- Develop indicators to monitor and assess community-level interventions

## Key Content Areas

- Concept of community: social, cultural, and geographic dimensions
- Role of temples, religious institutions, and community leaders in prevention
- Community action and collective responsibility in addressing substance use
- Community empowerment vs. service delivery model
- Formation and functioning of **Community Action Teams**
- Community mobilisation strategies and stakeholder engagement
- Addressing barriers and resistance to prevention efforts
- Traditional vs. new approaches to prevention (fear-based vs. participatory, self-realisation)
- Community assessment:
  - Mapping organisations, leaders, and systems
  - Identifying patterns of substance use and social beliefs
- Resource identification and mobilisation
- Monitoring and evaluation: indicators, impact assessment, community surveys
- Economic and social impact analysis of substance use
- Changing social norms, symbols, and cultural meanings of alcohol/drug use
- Creating enabling environments for prevention and recovery
- Buddhist counselling approaches:
  - *Ovādapatikāra* (advice therapy)
  - Behaviour and cognitive transformation
- Application of **Brahmavihāra**: *mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā*, *upekkhā* in community work
- Expected behavioural and attitudinal changes within communities

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on community mobilisation and empowerment
- **Group discussions** on local community dynamics and substance use issues
- **Case studies** of successful community-based prevention programmes
- **Field-based learning** (community observation or engagement where possible)
- **Role-play and simulation** (community meetings, counselling interactions)
- **Participatory exercises** (mapping community resources and stakeholders)
- **Reflective learning** on applying Buddhist principles in social contexts

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Community analysis assignment:**  
Map a local community, identifying risk factors, resources, and stakeholders
- **Group project:**  
Design a community-based alcohol/drug prevention programme
- **Field report (or simulated exercise):**  
Analyse community attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to substance use
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate counselling using *ovādapatikāra* and *Brahmavihāra* principles
- **Reflective journal:**  
Reflect on community engagement and personal attitudes towards prevention

- **Indicator development task:**  
Develop measurable indicators for evaluating a prevention programme
- **Presentation:**  
Propose strategies to change social norms and reduce substance use in a community

## **Unit 5: Educating the Community on Misconceptions of Alcohol and Drugs**

### **Unit Description**

This unit focuses on community education as a key strategy for alcohol and drug prevention, with particular emphasis on identifying and correcting widespread misconceptions (*miccā-ditṭhi*) about substance use. It explores how beliefs about pleasure, relaxation, confidence, and social benefits are socially constructed through conditioning, cultural practices, and distorted cognition (*vipallāsa*).

The unit provides practical guidance on initiating public discussions, facilitating community dialogue, and engaging diverse stakeholders to challenge these myths. Drawing on Buddhist psychological principles, students will learn how to deconstruct false beliefs using critical inquiry, experiential reflection, and mindful observation. The unit also highlights the role of language, symbols, rituals, and social norms in reinforcing substance use and presents strategies for transforming community perceptions and behaviours.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Identify common misconceptions about alcohol and drug use
- Analyse substance use beliefs using Buddhist concepts such as *vipallāsa* and *papañca*
- Explain how social learning and conditioning shape substance use behaviour
- Facilitate community discussions to challenge myths and promote accurate understanding
- Apply Buddhist psychological approaches to cognitive restructuring and behaviour change
- Design community education interventions targeting different population groups
- Evaluate the role of language, symbols, and cultural practices in sustaining addiction

### **Key Content Areas**

- Concept of misconceptions (*miccā-ditṭhi*) in alcohol and drug use

- Social construction of substance use beliefs (conditioning, imitation, culture)
- Cognitive distortions: *saññā-vipallāsa*, *citta-vipallāsa*, *diṭṭhi-vipallāsa*
- Expectancies and proliferation (*papañca*) in addiction
- Common myths of substance use: Forgetting problems, Easing weariness, Fun and enjoyment, Enhancing creativity, Increasing confidence and courage (“macho” image), Improving sleep, Health benefits, Chemical addiction inevitability, Pleasure in intoxication, Warmth and appetite enhancement
- Role of peer influence, media, and subculture in reinforcing myths
- Initiating public discussions and community dialogue
- Planning and conducting awareness programmes (agenda, facilitation, participation)
- Use of data (e.g., expenditure, health impacts) to stimulate awareness
- Challenging myths through critical questioning and experiential reflection
- Language, symbols, and rituals promoting alcohol and drug use
- Community-level interventions to reshape attitudes and norms
- Rights-based perspective: impact on non-users and community well-being
- Engaging different groups: youth, children, women, users
- Dealing with resistance from users and promoters
- Behavioural and attitudinal change at the community level

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on myths, cognition, and Buddhist psychological analysis
- **Facilitated group discussions** simulating community dialogue
- **Case-based learning** on real-life misconceptions and interventions
- **Role-play exercises** (public discussion, myth-challenging conversations)
- **Participatory workshops** (identifying and analysing local beliefs)
- **Critical reflection exercises** on personal and societal beliefs
- **Use of visual tools** (charts, data presentations, community mapping)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Reflective assignment:**  
Analyse a common myth about substance use using Buddhist psychology and social learning.
- **Group presentation:**  
Design and simulate a community awareness discussion session
- **Case study analysis:**  
Examine how misconceptions influence substance use behaviour
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate facilitation of a public discussion challenging myths
- **Community education plan:**  
Develop a structured awareness programme targeting specific groups
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: *vipallāsa*, *papañca*, expectancies, myths, social learning
- **Participation:**  
Engagement in discussions, exercises, and reflective activities.

## **Unit 6: Working with Youth in Addiction Prevention and Behavioural Transformation**

### **Unit Description**

This unit focuses on the critical role of youth in alcohol and drug prevention, emphasising their vulnerability to social influences as well as their potential as agents of change. It explores how prevention strategies can move beyond traditional didactic approaches toward participatory, peer-led, and transformative methods grounded in Buddhist psychology.

Drawing on key teachings such as the development of **right view (sammā-diṭṭhi)** through *parato ghoṣo* (learning from others) and *yoniso manasikāra* (wise reflection), the unit examines how youth can develop insight into the true nature of substance use. It integrates the **seven factors of enlightenment (bojjhaṅga)** and Buddhist methods of overcoming defilements (*pahāna*) as practical tools for prevention and recovery.

The unit also highlights the importance of youth-led initiatives, peer education, and community engagement, including working with children, young women, informal youth groups, and substance users. Emphasis is placed on reducing the social attractiveness of alcohol and drugs, challenging misconceptions, and fostering long-term behavioural and cognitive transformation.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of youth in primary and secondary prevention of substance use
- Analyse how social learning, peer influence, and media shape youth behaviour
- Apply Buddhist concepts such as *sammā-diṭṭhi*, *yoniso manasikāra*, and *bojjhaṅga* in prevention
- Design youth-led and peer education programmes for addiction prevention
- Critically evaluate ineffective prevention approaches (e.g., fear-based, didactic methods)
- Develop strategies to reduce the social attractiveness of alcohol and drugs among youth
- Engage different youth groups (children, young women, users) in prevention activities
- Assess behavioural and attitudinal changes among youth using appropriate indicators

### **Key Content Areas**

- Youth as a high-risk and high-potential group in prevention
- Influence of advertising, social learning, and peer pressure
- Limitations of traditional prevention approaches (didactic, fear-based)

- Buddhist framework for prevention:
  - Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*)
  - Conditions: *parato ghoso* and *yoniso manasikāra*
- Seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*):
  - Sati, dhamma-vicaya, viriya, pīti, passaddhi, samādhi, upekkhā
- Concept of craving (*taṇhā*) and attachment (*lobha*) in youth addiction
- Five methods of overcoming defilements (*pahāna*)
- Behavioural vs. cognitive transformation (*sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*)
- Peer education and role of *kalyāṇa mitta* (good friends)
- Formation and functioning of youth groups
- Youth participation in community-level prevention
- Reducing attractiveness and symbolic meanings of substance use
- Challenging myths, media messages, and social norms
- Working with different groups:
  - Children (early prevention)
  - Young women (social influence)
  - Users (harm reduction and behaviour change)
  - Informal youth groups and networks
- Prevention messages and communication strategies
- Industry tactics targeting youth
- Sustainability of youth groups and leadership development
- Monitoring and evaluation indicators for youth programmes

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** integrating Buddhist psychology and youth development
- **Group discussions** on youth culture, peer influence, and substance use
- **Role-play and simulations** (peer education, myth-challenging conversations)
- **Case studies** on youth prevention programmes
- **Participatory workshops** (designing youth-led interventions)
- **Reflective exercises** on personal beliefs and social influences
- **Field-based or community engagement activities** (youth mobilisation)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Reflective essay:**  
Analyse youth vulnerability and resilience using Buddhist psychology
- **Group project:**  
Design a youth-led alcohol and drug prevention programme
- **Peer education simulation:**  
Conduct a role-play demonstrating peer-led intervention
- **Case study analysis:**  
Evaluate the effectiveness of different youth prevention approaches
- **Community engagement assignment:**  
Develop strategies to involve youth groups in local prevention efforts
- **Indicator development task:**  
Create measurable indicators for assessing youth programme outcomes
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: *sammā-diṭṭhi*, *yoniso manasikāra*, *bojjhaṅga*, peer influence

## **Unit 7: Working with Children in Addiction Prevention**

### **Unit Description**

This unit focuses on the critical role of children in alcohol and drug prevention, recognising early childhood as a formative stage where attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours toward substance use are shaped. Drawing on Buddhist psychology and social learning theory, the unit explains how children acquire substance-related behaviours through observation, imitation, and cognitive processes.

The unit emphasises that children's minds are initially pure but become conditioned through environmental influences such as parental behaviour, media exposure, and social rituals. It explores how early perceptions of alcohol and tobacco are formed and how these can be transformed through mindful awareness, critical reflection, and community-based interventions. Practical strategies are provided for engaging children through schools, Dhamma schools, and children's clubs, focusing on behavioural and cognitive transformation, creativity, and peer influence to reduce the attractiveness of substance use.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain how children learn substance use behaviours through observation and social learning
- Analyse the role of parents, media, and environment in shaping children's attitudes toward alcohol and drugs
- Apply Buddhist psychological concepts (e.g., *vipallāsa*, *papañca*, *sati*) to early prevention
- Design child-focused prevention programmes in schools, Dhamma schools, and community settings
- Identify desired behavioural, cognitive, and environmental changes in children and institutions
- Develop creative and participatory strategies to reduce the attractiveness of substance use
- Plan and evaluate child-centred prevention activities using indicators

### **Key Content Areas**

- Children are a vulnerable and critical group in prevention
- Role of parents as first teachers (*pubbācariya*)
- Buddhist concept of the mind: purity and defilement
- Observational learning and social learning theory (modelling, imitation, reinforcement)
- Cognitive processes in learning substance use:
  - Contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*)
  - Thought (*vitakka*), proliferation (*papañca*)

- Stages of learning substance use: observation → retention → cognitive rehearsal → imitation → experimentation
- Influence of rituals, symbols, packaging, and media
- Development of positive images and myths about substances
- Early prevention strategies: correcting perceptions and unlearning conditioning
- Role of schools, Dhamma schools, and children's clubs
- Desired changes:
  - Among children (knowledge, attitudes, behaviours)
  - Among teachers and adults (role modelling, awareness)
  - In the environment (reduced promotion and visibility)
- Buddhist practices for children:
  - Five Precepts and ethical training
  - Mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*)
  - Contemplation of feelings (*vedanānupassanā*)
  - Thought transformation (*Vitakka Santana Sutta*)
- Challenging myths and symbolic meanings of alcohol and drugs
- Use of humour, ridicule, and peer influence to deglamorise substance use
- Planning prevention programmes:
  - Identifying desired changes and indicators
  - Backward planning (goal → contributing factors → actions)
- Community involvement: parents, teachers, monks, local stakeholders
- Monitoring and evaluation indicators for children's programmes

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on child development and Buddhist psychology
- **Group discussions** on observational learning and environmental influences
- **Case studies** on children's exposure to substance use
- **Participatory workshops** (designing child-friendly activities)
- **Creative activities** (storytelling, role-play, games, drawing)
- **Reflective exercises** on childhood learning and conditioning
- **Field-based or simulated activities** in schools or children's groups

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Reflective assignment:**  
Analyse how children learn substance use behaviours using social learning and Buddhist concepts
- **Programme design task:**  
Develop a child-focused prevention programme for a school or children's club
- **Group presentation:**  
Identify and propose strategies to change children's perceptions of alcohol and drugs
- **Case study analysis:**  
Examine environmental and parental influences on children's behaviour

- **Activity design:**  
Create a creative intervention (game, story, role-play) for prevention
- **Indicator development task:**  
Develop measurable indicators to assess behavioural and attitudinal changes in children
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: observational learning, *vipallāsa*, *papañca*, early prevention

## **Unit 8: Working with Women in Addiction Prevention and Recovery**

### **Unit Description**

This unit examines the vital role of women in alcohol and drug prevention and recovery within families and communities. Grounded in Buddhist teachings on equality and moral responsibility, it highlights women's roles as mothers, wives, educators, and community leaders in preventing substance use and supporting recovery.

The unit explores how women may both unintentionally reinforce and actively challenge substance use behaviours. It emphasises the importance of developing **right understanding (sammā-diṭṭhi)** among women by critically examining misconceptions, social norms, and gendered expectations related to alcohol and drug use. Practical strategies are provided for working with women's groups, mobilising community action, supporting dependent users, and creating family environments that discourage substance use and promote recovery.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of women in addiction prevention and recovery at the family and community levels
- Analyse how gender roles and social norms influence substance use
- Identify ways in which women may inadvertently promote or prevent substance use
- Apply Buddhist concepts (e.g., right view, ethical responsibility, non-permissiveness) in prevention
- Design community-based interventions through women's groups and networks
- Develop strategies for supporting recovery and preventing relapse within families
- Evaluate the impact of alcohol and drug use on women and family systems

### **Key Content Areas**

- Buddhist perspective on gender equality and spiritual capacity

- Roles of women in families:
  - As mothers (child protection and early prevention)
  - As wives (preventing and addressing spousal substance use)
- Responsibilities from Sigālovāda Sutta (family roles and duties)
- Women as victims of substance-related harm (violence, economic burden, co-dependency)
- Women as agents of prevention and change
- Identifying and working with women's groups and community organisations
- Community mobilisation through women's networks
- Awareness creation among women:
  - Questioning social norms and beliefs
  - Understanding myths and misconceptions
- How women inadvertently promote substance use:
  - Social acceptance and facilitation (e.g., serving alcohol)
  - Pardoning misbehaviour
  - Reinforcing myths (e.g., alcohol for relaxation, coping)
- Challenging misconceptions using critical inquiry and Buddhist psychology
- Women as peer educators and advocates
- Media literacy and understanding industry tactics targeting families and children
- Educating children through mothers and caregivers
- Strategies for discouraging substance use:
  - Expressing non-acceptance
  - Reducing permissiveness
  - Creating non-supportive environments for use
- Supporting recovery within families:
  - Understanding dependence (psychological vs. chemical)
  - Gradual reduction strategies
  - Emotional and practical support
- Relapse prevention and sustaining recovery
- Creating enabling environments for substance-free living
- Policy advocacy and women as pressure groups

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on gender, family, and addiction
- **Group discussions** on women's roles and lived experiences
- **Case studies** of family and community-level addiction scenarios
- **Role-play exercises** (family interactions, counselling, advocacy)
- **Participatory workshops** (designing women-led interventions)
- **Reflective exercises** on gender norms and personal beliefs
- **Community engagement activities** (mapping women's groups and networks)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Reflective essay:**  
Analyse the role of women in addiction prevention using Buddhist concepts
- **Group project:**  
Design a women-led community prevention programme

- **Case study analysis:**  
Examine family dynamics and women's roles in addiction and recovery
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate communication strategies to challenge substance use within families
- **Community mapping task:**  
Identify women's groups and propose engagement strategies
- **Intervention plan:**  
Develop a family-based recovery support plan
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: gender roles, misconceptions, recovery support, community action

## **Unit 9: Buddhist Counselling for Liberation (Vimutti) from Addiction**

### **Unit Description**

This unit focuses on the application of Buddhist counselling approaches in supporting individuals to achieve **complete freedom (vimutti)** from alcohol and drug use. It conceptualises counselling as a transformative process that goes beyond symptom reduction to address the root causes of suffering, including craving (*taṇhā*), attachment (*upādāna*), and cognitive distortions.

Drawing on early Buddhist teachings and therapeutic practices such as **ovādapatikāra (advice therapy)**, the unit explores how structured guidance, compassion, and wisdom can facilitate behavioural, emotional, and cognitive transformation. It emphasises the distinction between merely stopping substance use and attaining true liberation, highlighting the importance of gradual progress, self-effort, and the development of insight. The unit also introduces practical counselling techniques, stages of recovery, motivational strategies, and methods for understanding the client's psychopathology within a holistic Buddhist framework.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the principles and processes of Buddhist counselling in addiction recovery
- Differentiate between abstinence and complete liberation (*vimutti*) from substance use
- Apply *ovādapatikāra* and other Buddhist counselling techniques in practice
- Analyse the stages of recovery and identify appropriate interventions
- Assess client psychopathology using Buddhist psychological frameworks
- Design counselling strategies that address cognitive, behavioural, and emotional factors
- Apply motivational and relational skills grounded in compassion and wisdom
- Evaluate relapse risks and strategies for sustaining long-term recovery

## Key Content Areas

- Concept of counselling in Buddhist psychology (*ovāda*, *anusāsana*, *desanā*)
- Buddha as counsellor: compassionate and skilful means (*upāya*)
- Advice therapy (*ovādapatikāra*) and behaviour modification
- Counselling principles:
  - Exhortation, support, instruction (*ovāda*, *anuggaha*, *anusāsana*)
  - Compassion (*mahākāruṇā*) and non-judgment
- Four modes of responding to problems:
  - Categorical, analytical, counter-questioning, setting aside
- Gradual process (*anupubbikathā*) in counselling and recovery
- Stages of recovery toward liberation (from denial to full freedom)
- Difference between:
  - Stopping drug use
  - Liberation from drug use (*nirodha*)
- Causes of relapse and inability to achieve full liberation
- Psychological attachment (*upādāna*) and craving (*taṇhā*)
- Role of cognition: wrong view (*miccā-ditṭhi*), ignorance (*avijjā*)
- Psychopathology in Buddhist terms:
  - Distortions (*vipallāsa*)
  - Five hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*)
  - Latent tendencies (*anusaya*)
  - Unwholesome mental factors (*akusala cētasika*)
- Assessment of clients: personal, social, behavioural, and cognitive factors
- Therapeutic process stages: listening, analysis, reflection, understanding
- Role of the counsellor (*kalyāna mitta*): guidance, motivation, facilitation
- Motivational strategies for different stages of readiness
- Role of family, community, and environment in recovery
- Behavioural, mental, and cognitive transformation:
  - *Sīla* (conduct), *samādhi* (concentration), *paññā* (wisdom)
- Managing relapse, sustaining motivation, and ensuring continuity
- Empowering clients as co-therapists in their recovery journey

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on Buddhist counselling theory and practice
- **Textual analysis** of relevant suttas (e.g., *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, *Rahulovāda Sutta*)
- **Case study discussions** on addiction and recovery pathways
- **Role-play and simulation** (counsellor–client interactions)
- **Skills training workshops** (listening, questioning, motivational techniques)
- **Reflective exercises** on compassion, non-judgment, and self-awareness
- **Supervised practice sessions** (mock counselling scenarios)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Case study analysis:**  
Apply Buddhist counselling concepts to assess and plan intervention
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate counselling using *ovādapatikāra* and motivational strategies

- **Reflective journal:**  
Reflect on the role of compassion, wisdom, and self-effort in recovery
- **Counselling plan assignment:**  
Develop a step-by-step recovery plan based on stages of change
- **Concept mapping task:**  
Illustrate the process from craving (*taṇhā*) to liberation (*vimutti*)
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: counselling principles, psychopathology, recovery stages
- **Participation:**  
Engagement in discussions, simulations, and practical exercises

## Unit 10: Facilitating Behavioural Change through Virtue (Sīla)

### Unit Description

This unit explores the role of **virtue (sīla)** as the foundation for behavioural transformation in addiction recovery. Grounded in Buddhist psychology, it presents sīla as the first step in the gradual path toward liberation, emphasising its function in restructuring harmful behaviours and establishing a stable basis for mental development (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*).

The unit examines how addiction is sustained not only by substances but by learned behavioural patterns and lifestyles. Through the cultivation of sīla, individuals can gradually replace unwholesome behaviours with wholesome ones, weaken craving and attachment, and develop moral awareness and self-regulation. Practical strategies are provided to guide clients in modifying daily routines, reducing substance use, managing triggers, and building a disciplined and meaningful lifestyle. The unit highlights the reciprocal relationship between behaviour and mind, demonstrating how ethical conduct supports long-term recovery and prevents relapse.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of sīla in addiction recovery and behavioural transformation
- Analyse the relationship between behaviour, cognition, and mental states in addiction
- Apply the concepts of viramana (restraint) and samādāna (cultivation of positive behaviour)
- Design behaviour modification strategies using Buddhist ethical principles
- Guide clients in restructuring daily routines and lifestyles to support recovery
- Evaluate the role of moral discipline in preventing relapse
- Integrate sīla with *samādhi* and *paññā* in a holistic recovery approach

### Key Content Areas

- Concept of sīla in Buddhist psychology: foundation of liberation
- Threefold training: sīla, samādhi, paññā

- Gradual training (*anupubba sikkhā*) and behavioural change
- Virtue as:
  - Restraint (*viramana*)
  - Positive cultivation (*samādāna*)
- Behavioural patterns in addiction: lifestyle, routines, habits
- Relationship between behaviour and mind (volition – *cetanā*)
- Moral development: observation, reflection, and self-regulation
- Guarding sense faculties and managing triggers
- Behavioural interventions in addiction recovery:
  - Reducing dosage and frequency
  - Delaying and postponing use
  - Changing environments and routines
  - Avoiding high-risk situations and peer groups
- Developing healthy routines: hygiene, time management, family roles
- Replacing drug-related activities with constructive alternatives
- Role of discipline, self-control, and moral reasoning
- Lifestyle transformation and habit reconditioning
- Cognitive-behavioural link: changing perception through behaviour
- Role of equanimity (*upekkhā*) and emotional balance
- Strengthening self-efficacy and personal responsibility
- Monitoring progress and reinforcing positive change
- Long-term goal: internalisation of virtue leading to natural abstinence

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on *sīla* and behavioural psychology
- **Case studies** on lifestyle and behavioural patterns in addiction
- **Practical exercises** (daily routine planning, behaviour tracking)
- **Role-play simulations** (managing triggers and high-risk situations)
- **Group discussions** on ethical conduct and recovery
- **Reflective exercises** on personal habits and behavioural change
- **Skill-building workshops** (self-regulation, discipline, planning)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Behavioural analysis assignment:**  
Analyse a substance user's lifestyle and identify areas for change
- **Intervention plan:**  
Develop a *sīla*-based behaviour modification plan
- **Reflective journal:**  
Reflect on the role of discipline and ethical conduct in recovery
- **Case study analysis:**  
Apply *sīla* principles to address addiction-related behaviours
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate strategies for managing triggers and reducing use
- **Progress tracking task:**  
Design a monitoring tool for behavioural change
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: *sīla*, *viramana*, *samādāna*, behavioural transformation

## Unit 11: Developing Concentration (Samādhi) and Wisdom (Paññā) for Liberation

### Unit Description

This unit focuses on the development of concentration (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā) as essential components in achieving liberation from alcohol and drug dependence. It explains addiction as a conditioned mental process shaped by proliferation (*papañca*), distorted perceptions (*vipallāsa*), and wrong views. The unit presents meditation as a therapeutic process for deconditioning the mind, cultivating mindfulness, and gaining insight into the true nature of substances and their effects.

Building on prior development of virtue (*sīla*), the unit introduces practices such as mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*), overcoming mental hindrances, and four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*). Through systematic cultivation of awareness and clear comprehension, individuals learn to observe craving, challenge cognitive distortions, and develop insight into impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*). The unit emphasizes the transition from temporary behavioural control to deep cognitive transformation and sustained liberation.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of samādhi and paññā in addiction recovery
- Analyse addiction as a conditioned cognitive and perceptual process
- Apply mindfulness and meditation techniques in therapeutic contexts
- Identify and manage the five hindrances in mental cultivation
- Guide individuals in developing concentration and insight practices
- Apply the four foundations of mindfulness in addiction recovery
- Critically examine distorted perceptions and beliefs about substance use
- Design interventions that integrate meditation, insight, and behavioural change

### Key Content Areas

- Addiction as conditioned cognition: *papañca*, *vipallāsa*, and wrong view
- Threefold training: *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*
- Concept of samādhi: one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) and mental stability
- Right vs wrong concentration (*sammā samādhi* vs *miccā samādhi*)
- Foundations of concentration development:
  - Guarding sense doors (*indriya saṃvara*)
  - Mindfulness and clear comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*)
  - Contentment (*santuṭṭhi*)
- Five hindrances (*pañca nīvaraṇa*) and their management
- Development of jhāna factors: *vitakka*, *vicāra*, *pīti*, *sukha*, *ekaggatā*
- Mindfulness meditation (*ānāpānasati*) – techniques and application

- Insight meditation (vipassanā):
  - Seeing reality (*yathābhūta ñāṇadassana*)
  - Three characteristics (*anicca, dukkha, anatta*)
- Four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhānā*):
  - Kāyānupassana (body)
  - Vēdananupassana (feelings)
  - Cittānupassanā (mind)
  - Dhammānupassanā (mental phenomena)
- Cognitive transformation through reflection and inquiry
- Deconstructing myths and perceived benefits of alcohol and drugs
- Awareness of craving, attachment, and triggers
- Role of mindfulness in relapse prevention
- Gradual liberation: from restraint to insight and non-attachment

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on Buddhist meditation and psychology
- **Guided meditation sessions** (ānāpānasati and mindfulness practices)
- **Textual analysis** of key suttas (e.g., Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)
- **Experiential learning** through meditation practice
- **Group discussions** on perception, craving, and insight
- **Reflective exercises** on personal awareness and cognitive patterns
- **Case studies** on applying mindfulness in addiction recovery
- **Facilitated inquiry sessions** using structured reflective questions

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Meditation practice journal:**  
Document personal experience and insights from mindfulness practice
- **Case study analysis:**  
Apply samādhi and paññā principles to addiction scenarios
- **Reflective essay:**  
Analyse cognitive distortions and their transformation through insight
- **Practical assessment:**  
Demonstrate basic meditation guidance techniques
- **Concept mapping:**  
Illustrate the relationship between craving, perception, and suffering
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: hindrances, mindfulness, insight, three characteristics
- **Participation:**  
Engagement in meditation sessions and reflective discussions

## Unit 12: Cognitive Transformation through Contemplation of Dhammas (Dhammānupassanā)

### Unit Description

This unit focuses on achieving deep cognitive transformation in addiction recovery through the practice of Dhammānupassanā (contemplation of mental phenomena). It addresses how addiction is sustained by wrong views (*miccā diṭṭhi*), conditioned beliefs, and cognitive distortions developed through social learning and mental proliferation (*papañca*).

The unit emphasises that behavioural change alone is insufficient for lasting recovery unless accompanied by restructuring of underlying beliefs and perceptions. Through systematic reflection, questioning, and mindfulness-based analysis, individuals learn to identify craving (*kāmacchanda*), challenge false expectations, and deconstruct the perceived value and attractiveness of alcohol and drugs. The unit provides practical strategies for weakening attachment, overcoming fear, and replacing distorted cognition with right understanding (*sammā diṭṭhi*), ultimately leading to sustained liberation.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain the role of cognitive transformation in addiction recovery
- Analyse how wrong views and conditioned beliefs sustain substance use
- Apply Dhammānupassanā techniques to identify and manage craving
- Critically evaluate myths, expectations, and social influences related to drugs
- Design interventions to challenge and restructure maladaptive beliefs
- Facilitate reduction of attachment and perceived value of substances
- Address fear, dependency, and psychological conditioning in recovery
- Promote development of right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*) for long-term change

## Key Content Areas

- Cognitive basis of addiction: *miccā diṭṭhi*, *papañca*, conditioning
- Role of Dhammānupassanā in cognitive restructuring
- Analysis of craving (*kāmacchanda*):
  - Arising, persistence, cessation, and prevention
- Mental construction of drug-related beliefs and expectations
- Identification of false beliefs and learned behaviours
- Cognitive restructuring strategies:
  - Questioning method (*puccā*)
  - Challenging expectations vs. actual experiences
- Deconstructing perceived benefits of alcohol and drugs
- Changing perceptions of:
  - Pleasure and happiness
  - Normality and social acceptance
  - Power, identity, and status
  - Ritualistic and habitual use (*sīlabbataparāmāsa*)
- Fear and dependency: psychological origins and management
- Influence of social environment, peer groups, and drug culture
- Role of drug industry/racket in shaping perceptions
- Reducing the value attributed to substances
- Understanding attachment (*upādāna*) and bondage

- Breaking cognitive and emotional bonds with substances
- Building resilience against relapse and social pressure
- Developing right view (*sammā ditṭhi*) through insight

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on cognitive processes and Buddhist psychology
- **Guided analytical discussions** on beliefs and misconceptions
- **Case study analysis** of addiction-related cognitive patterns
- **Structured questioning exercises** (challenging false beliefs)
- **Group discussions and debates** on social norms and drug culture
- **Reflective exercises** on personal beliefs and attitudes
- **Role-play activities** (counselling and cognitive restructuring)
- **Problem-based learning** (designing cognitive interventions)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Case study analysis:**  
Identify and restructure maladaptive beliefs in addiction scenarios
- **Cognitive restructuring assignment:**  
Develop a step-by-step intervention to change false beliefs
- **Reflective essay:**  
Analyse personal or observed misconceptions about substance use
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate counselling using questioning and belief-challenging techniques
- **Concept mapping:**  
Illustrate the process from perception → craving → attachment → suffering
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: miccā ditṭhi, papañca, craving, cognitive transformation
- **Group presentation:**  
Analyse the role of social and cultural influences on substance use

## Unit 13: Buddhist Psychological Methods for Cognitive Transformation in Addiction Recovery

### Unit Description

This unit presents a comprehensive set of Buddhist psychological techniques for cognitive transformation in addiction recovery, drawing from key discourses such as the *Vitakkasaṅṭhāna Sutta* and *Sabbhāsava Sutta*. It emphasises that addiction is primarily sustained by unwholesome thought patterns, conditioned perceptions, and deeply rooted mental defilements (*āsavas*), which must be addressed through systematic mental training.

The unit introduces a range of therapeutic strategies—including thought substitution, cognitive restructuring, mindfulness-based inquiry, behavioural conditioning, and insight practices—to eliminate unwholesome thoughts and cultivate wholesome

mental states. It integrates classical Buddhist methods with modern psychological techniques such as exposure, self-monitoring, and cognitive restructuring. The unit also explores deeper philosophical foundations, such as impermanence (*anicca*) and non-self (*anattā*), as transformative insights that weaken attachment and support long-term recovery.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain Buddhist psychological approaches to cognitive transformation in addiction
- Apply techniques from *Vitakkasaṅḥāna Sutta* to manage unwholesome thoughts
- Analyse the role of *āsavas* (mental taints) in sustaining addiction
- Use cognitive and behavioural strategies to weaken craving and dependency
- Facilitate cognitive restructuring using questioning, re-attribution, and mindfulness
- Design interventions using exposure, stimulus control, and response prevention
- Apply insight into impermanence (*anicca*) and non-self (*anattā*) in recovery
- Identify and address self-defeating beliefs and irrational cognitions

## Key Content Areas

### 1. Thought Transformation Techniques (*Vitakkasaṅḥāna Sutta*)

- Thought substitution (wholesome vs unwholesome thoughts)
- Image substitution and mental re-scripting
- Distraction techniques and behavioural engagement
- Reflecting on the dangers of unwholesome thoughts
- Ignoring and withdrawing attention
- Investigating the origin of thoughts
- Forceful control and self-regulation

### 2. Cognitive Restructuring Methods

- Identifying irrational beliefs and expectations
- Questioning method (*puccā*)
- Examining evidence mindfully
- Re-attribution with clear comprehension (*sampajañña*)
- Semantic analysis and redefining concepts
- Being specific in analysing experiences

### 3. Behavioural and Experiential Techniques

- Self-monitoring (tracking thoughts and behaviour)
- Behavioural targets and habit restructuring
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Distraction and alternative activities

- Response prevention and habit interruption
- Stimulus control (internal and external triggers)
- Systematic desensitization and exposure (in-vivo exposure)
- Cognitive flooding and feared fantasy techniques

#### 4. Emotional and Cognitive Interventions

- Shame-attacking exercises
- Paradoxical magnification
- Acceptance paradox
- Externalisation of thoughts (dialogue method)
- Double standard technique
- “Shades of grey” thinking and equanimity (*upekkhā*)

#### 5. Deep Cognitive and Insight-Based Approaches

- Understanding *āsavas* (*kāmāsava*, *bhavāsava*, *diṭṭhāsava*, *avijjāsava*)
- Seven methods of removing taints (*Sabbhāsava Sutta*):
  - Seeing (*dassana*)
  - Restraint (*samvara*)
  - Wise use (*paṭisevana*)
  - Endurance (*adhivāsana*)
  - Avoidance (*parivajjana*)
  - Removal (*vinodana*)
  - Development (*bhāvanā*)

#### 6. Addressing Self-Defeating Beliefs

- Types of self-defeating beliefs (fear, perfectionism, rejection, etc.)
- Vertical descent technique
- Cognitive-emotional analysis
- Gradual restructuring of identity and self-concept

#### 7. Insight-Based Transformation

- Impermanence (*anicca*) and changeability of addiction
- Non-self (*anattā*) and emptiness (*suññatā*)
- Dependent origination and conditioning
- Detachment and liberation from craving

#### Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on Buddhist psychology and therapeutic models
- **Demonstrations and guided practice** of cognitive techniques
- **Case study discussions** on addiction and cognitive patterns
- **Role-play sessions** (counselling, thought-challenging, exposure scenarios)
- **Group exercises** (belief identification, cognitive restructuring)
- **Reflective practices** (mindfulness, insight contemplation)
- **Skills training workshops** (self-monitoring, intervention design)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Case formulation assignment:**  
Analyse cognitive and behavioural patterns of a client
- **Intervention design project:**  
Develop a Buddhist psychology-based treatment plan
- **Reflective journal:**  
Apply techniques such as thought substitution and mindfulness
- **Role-play assessment:**  
Demonstrate counselling techniques (questioning, exposure, re-attribution)
- **Behavioural monitoring task:**  
Design and use a self-monitoring tool (charts/diaries)
- **Group presentation:**  
Present a selected technique (e.g., stimulus control, acceptance paradox)
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Concepts: Vitakkasaṅṭhāna, āsavas, anicca, anattā, cognitive restructuring

## Unit 14: Liberation of the Mind from Alcohol and Drugs

### Unit Description

This final unit synthesizes the entire course by focusing on the ultimate goal of addiction recovery, liberation of the mind (ceto vimutti) from alcohol and drugs. It explains how substance use is sustained not by the inherent properties of drugs but by ignorance (avijjā), craving (taṇhā), attachment, and distorted perceptions.

The unit critically examines how alcohol and drugs become falsely perceived as pleasurable and beneficial through social conditioning, expectations, symbolic meanings, and cultural constructs such as masculinity and power. It highlights the psychological nature of dependence, especially the role of conditioned discomfort and perceived relief.

Drawing on Buddhist psychology and Abhidhamma, the unit presents liberation as a process of removing ignorance and craving through wisdom (paññā). It introduces the three doors to emancipation (vimokkha mukha), emptiness (*suññatā*), signlessness (*animitta*), and desirelessness (*appanīhita*), as pathways for freeing the mind from addiction. The unit emphasises that recovery is not merely behavioural change but a profound transformation in perception, understanding, and consciousness.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Explain addiction as a product of ignorance, craving, and conditioned perception

- Analyse how social, cultural, and psychological factors construct the attractiveness of substances
- Critically evaluate myths related to pleasure, power, and normality of substance use
- Apply Buddhist concepts of liberation (*ceto vimutti*) to addiction recovery
- Explain the role of *avijjā*, *taṇhā*, and *upādāna* in sustaining addiction
- Describe the three doors to emancipation and their relevance to recovery
- Facilitate insight-based interventions to reduce craving and attachment
- Integrate wisdom-based approaches into long-term relapse prevention

## Key Content Areas

### 1. Nature of Addiction in Buddhist Psychology

- Addiction as a product of *akusala citta* and mental defilements
- Role of craving (*kāmacchanda*, *taṇhā*) and attachment
- Misperception of drugs as pleasurable and beneficial

### 2. Construction of Drug Attractiveness

- Social permissiveness and pardoning behaviour
- Symbolic meanings (*saññā*) through conditioning
- Expectations (*appekkhā*) and wrong views (*miccā diṭṭhi*)
- Cultural constructs (masculinity, power, identity)
- Psychological interpretation of withdrawal discomfort

### 3. Cognitive and Social Illusions

- Alcohol/drug as a symbol of pleasure, freedom, and power
- Role of conditioning (classical, operant, social learning)
- Misattribution of pleasure to substances

### 4. Psychological Nature of Dependency

- Habit formation and conditioned discomfort
- Psychological vs. physiological dependence
- Role of belief systems in sustaining addiction

### 5. Liberation of Mind (Ceto Vimukti)

- Liberation as removal of craving and ignorance
- Parallel between Nibbāna and recovery from addiction
- Types of individuals in recovery (faith-based vs. wisdom-based paths)

### 6. Three Doors to Emancipation (Vimokkha Mukha)

- **Suññatā (Emptiness):** understanding substances as empty of value
- **Animitta (Signless):** seeing through false perceptions and illusions
- **Appaṇihita (Desireless):** realizing the suffering and unpleasantness

## 7. Insight-Based Recovery

- Role of wisdom (*paññā*) in transformation
- Deconstruction of perceived pleasure
- Development of detachment and renunciation

## 8. Individual Differences in Recovery

- Wisdom-based vs. effort-based recovery pathways
- Role of faith (*saddhā*), concentration (*samādhi*), and effort
- Gradual vs. rapid transformation

## Teaching and Learning Methods

- **Interactive lectures** on liberation and Buddhist philosophy
- **Analytical discussions** on social and cognitive construction of addiction
- **Case study analysis** (belief systems and recovery pathways)
- **Guided contemplation exercises** (*anicca*, *dukkha*, *anattā*)
- **Group discussions** on cultural influences (e.g., masculinity and substance use)
- **Reflective practices** (insight meditation and self-inquiry)
- **Concept mapping** (from ignorance → craving → attachment → suffering → liberation)

## Assessment and Learning Activities

- **Analytical essay:**  
Examine how addiction is constructed through social and cognitive processes
- **Case study analysis:**  
Apply the three doors of emancipation to a recovery scenario
- **Reflective journal:**  
Personal reflections on craving, attachment, and perception
- **Conceptual diagram:**  
Illustrate the process of addiction and liberation using Buddhist principles
- **Group presentation:**  
Analyse cultural myths (e.g., masculinity, power, pleasure) in substance use
- **Short test/quiz:**  
Key concepts: *avijjā*, *taṇhā*, *suññatā*, *animitta*, *appaṇihita*, *ceto vimutti*
- **Final integrative assignment:**  
Develop a comprehensive recovery model integrating all course units

Prepared by Shakya Nanayakkara, based on **Mind Liberated from Alcohol and Drugs, Buddhist Psychology Manual of Prevention and Treatment**. Anyone interested in joining the course, contact [shakya@healthylanka.lk](mailto:shakya@healthylanka.lk)

