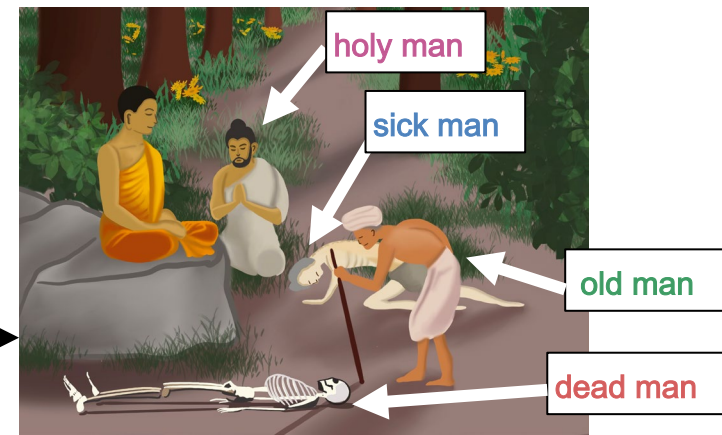


# How do Buddhists explain suffering in the world?

## Becoming the Buddha

- About 2500 years ago in Nepal and India, privileged **Siddhartha Gautama** saw suffering for the first time.
- Siddhartha left his home to become a monk to try to understand why there was suffering in the world. He began the spiritual journey of an **ascetic**.
- Siddhartha meditated beneath the Bodhi Tree and reached enlightenment. He became the **Buddha**, which means **enlightened** one.
- The Buddha developed a philosophy for life that many Buddhists use today in their own search for understanding.



## Key vocabulary

- **ascetic:** a person who chooses severe self-discipline and hardship
- **(a) Buddha:** an enlightened one
- **The Buddha:** title given to Siddhartha Gautama, the originator of Buddhism, when he reached enlightenment
- **Buddhism:** philosophical worldview held by followers of the teachings of the Buddha ( **Buddhists** )
- **Dharma:** (in Buddhism) 'laws of life'
- **enlightenment:** wisdom to overcome suffering and reach happiness
- **meditation:** training the mind to focus clearly
- **Nirvana:** 'blowing out', a state beyond suffering, desire or sense of self
- **reality:** the state of things as they exist rather than as an idea
- **spiritual** : relating to the human spirit or soul rather than the physical world
- **suffering** : the experience of something bad
- **wisdom:** the ability to apply knowledge and experience

## Four Noble Truths

The Buddha taught this about existence and freedom from suffering:

1. Suffering exists in life because life isn't perfect.
2. Suffering is caused by our desire for things to be as we want them.
3. Suffering can be ended if people stop wanting things.
4. Ending suffering can be achieved by following the Eightfold Path.

## The Eightfold Path (the middle way)



Wheel of Dharma

The **Eightfold Path** (the **middle way** ) is a philosophical approach to life with eight guiding principles with the aim of ending suffering and reaching enlightenment.