

Dharma

"Dharma in the Buddhist scriptures has a variety of meanings, including "phenomenon", and "nature" or "characteristic".

Dharma also means 'mental contents', and is paired with citta, which means heart/mind. In major sutras (for example, the Mahasatipatthana sutra), the dharma/citta pairing is paralleled with the pairing of kaya (body) and vedana (feelings or sensations, that which arise within the body but experienced through the mind).

Dharma means the source of things and Truth.

Dharma is also used to refer to the teachings of the Buddha, not in the context of the words of one man, even an enlightened man, but as a reflection of natural law which was re-discovered by this man and shared with the world. A person who lives their life with an understanding of this natural law, is a "dhammic" person, which is often translated as "righteous".

To me dharma is a kind of natural law of things which can be expounded to others but must be found in one's own experience. It is not the teachings of any one great philosopher which must be accepted and followed blindly, but each must find the truth of it and follow the path it points to for oneself. It is also not merely to be studied intellectually, which can lead to an endless chasing after and comparison of ideas with other ideas, but a set of teachings which need to be put into practice in one's life daily.