



## JAYAMAṄGALA GĀTHĀ AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COPING IN APPLIED BUDDHISM

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### Abstract

**Background and Objectives:** Contemporary life is characterized by rapid social change, economic uncertainty, and persistent psychological stress, making coping an essential life skill for sustaining psychological well-being. Modern psychological research emphasizes emotion regulation, resilience, cognitive appraisal, and meaning making as key mechanisms for managing adversity. Religious and cultural traditions also provide moral and contemplative resources that cultivate inner stability and ethical clarity. Within the Theravāda Buddhist tradition, the Jayamaṅgala Gāthā, commonly known in Thai as the Phahung Chant, is widely recited as a sacred chant recounting the Buddha's victories over various adversaries. The term Jayamaṅgala Gāthā means "Verses of Auspicious Victory." Although often interpreted as a ritual text for blessings and protection, its narrative structure presents a sequence of encounters in which challenges are resolved through virtues such as wisdom, patience, loving-kindness, and moral clarity. This documentary research aimed to analyze the narrative structure of the Jayamaṅgala Gāthā in terms of life challenges and their modes of resolution grounded in Buddhadhamma, and to construct a Buddhist coping framework for developing life coping skills in relation to contemporary psychological well-being.

**Methodology:** The study employed documentary research with qualitative thematic content analysis. The primary data consisted of the canonical text of Jayamaṅgala Gāthā preserved in Theravāda chanting traditions and supported by relevant academic literature. Each narrative episode within the chant served as the unit of analysis. The analytical process involved close textual reading, coding of symbolic life challenges and corresponding modes of resolution, and iterative grouping of codes into broader coping themes. Thematic synthesis was used to interpret how Buddhist virtues embedded in the narrative episodes function as coping processes. Analytical transparency was maintained through explicit connections between textual evidence, coding categories, and thematic interpretation.

**Main Results:** The findings indicate that the chant functions as a structured set of coping exemplars rather than merely a ritual recitation. Across the narrative episodes, diverse forms of adversity were identified, including fear, aggression, anger, rigid beliefs, false accusation, attachment to power, and distorted understanding. These adversities are consistently resolved through inner cultivation. Five integrative coping processes emerged: Emotional regulation, patience and endurance,



compassion-based conflict de-escalation, wisdom-based clarification, and context-sensitive skillful means. These processes reflect core Buddhadhamma principles such as *paññā*, *mettā*, *khanti*, and *samādhī*, demonstrating their roles as moral-psychological mechanisms that support both wisdom development and ethical cultivation.

**Involvement to Buddhadhamma:** From the perspective of Applied Buddhism, the chant can be interpreted as a culturally embedded narrative model that illustrates how Buddhist ethical principles guide responses to adversity. The narrative episodes portray "Victory" as internal transformation through wisdom, compassion, patience, and ethical discipline. This interpretation highlights the role of Buddhism in the development of wisdom and morality through narrative-based learning processes.

**Conclusions:** The *Jayamaṅgala Gāthā* can be understood as a narrative-based coping framework rooted in Buddhadhamma. Conceptually, the study demonstrates how Buddhist ethical principles can be translated into a structured coping model relevant to contemporary psychological contexts. Practically, the findings suggest that the chant may function as a reflective resource for developing coping skills in educational, contemplative, and well-being settings. The study contributes to Applied Buddhism by presenting a model that integrates wisdom development and moral cultivation within a contemporary well-being framework.

**Keywords:** Narrative Coping, Buddhadhamma Application, *Jayamaṅgala Gāthā*, Thematic Analysis, Psychological Coping

## Introduction

In contemporary societies, rapid social change, economic uncertainty, technological disruption, and rising psychological stress have intensified demands on individuals' capacity to manage adversity and sustain well-being. Coping has therefore become a central construct in mental health discourse, closely linked to resilience, emotional regulation, and meaning making. Contemporary psychological frameworks conceptualize coping as a dynamic process involving cognitive appraisal, emotional regulation, behavioral response, and perceived self-efficacy in dealing with stressors. Effective coping promotes psychological stability and quality of life, whereas maladaptive coping contributes to emotional dysregulation and stress escalation (Silvers, 2022). Mental well-being is increasingly understood as multidimensional and shaped by psychological and sociocultural factors, with coping functioning as a key protective mechanism (Gautam et al., 2024). This perspective highlights the importance of examining culturally embedded coping resources within specific social and religious contexts (Wortmann & Park, 2009). Religious and cultural traditions have long provided frameworks for interpreting suffering, cultivating inner strength, and transforming adversity into meaningful experience. In Buddhist traditions, practices of mental cultivation, ethical reflection, and contemplative discipline support psychological balance and moral clarity. Chanting and recitation of canonical texts play an important role in this process. Beyond ritual performance, Buddhist chants function as pedagogical and contemplative practices through which practitioners internalize ethical values, regulate emotions, and sustain mental stability. Empirical studies in Thai Buddhist contexts have shown that chanting contributes to stress



reduction, emotional balance, and perceived quality of life (Kladsumnaing & Rattanangam, 2023); (Phrakru Paladsuwattanapanditkul, 2024), while international research has linked chanting with enhanced emotional regulation and well-being (Perry et al., 2022). Together, these findings suggest that Buddhist chanting operates not only as a ritual practice but also as a culturally embedded coping resource supporting psychological well-being.

Within this broader context, Buddhist coping has emerged as an interdisciplinary field linking Buddhist studies, psychology, and well-being research. It refers to the use of Buddhist teachings and practices such as mindfulness, wisdom, compassion, and ethical conduct as resources for interpreting and managing life difficulties. Studies suggest that Buddhist-oriented coping can function as a cognitive and interpretive framework through which individuals understand adversity and regulate emotional responses (Xu, 2021). While meditation and mindfulness have been widely examined, relatively little attention has been given to canonical chanting as a structured coping framework. Existing research on Buddhist chanting has largely focused on cultural significance, ritual function, and moral or identity formation (Makrudin, 2023); (Malisorn et al., 2023), with some work highlighting symbolic and narrative transmission of Buddhist teachings (Lumpakorn & Pengkaesorn, 2024). However, systematic analysis of how canonical chants convey coping processes aligned with contemporary psychological perspectives remains limited. Among canonical Buddhist chants, *Jayamaṅgala Gāthā* (Verses of Auspicious Victory) occupies a prominent place in Theravāda Buddhism, particularly within Thai society. The chant narrates episodes depicting the Buddha's victories over adversaries that symbolize psychological and moral challenges such as fear, anger, delusion, attachment, arrogance, and wrong views. Each episode portrays the Buddha overcoming these challenges through virtues such as wisdom (*Paññā*), loving-kindness (*Mettā*), compassion (*Karuṇā*), patience (*Khanti*), and moral integrity. From a narrative perspective, the chant presents a structured sequence of confrontation and resolution grounded in Buddhadhamma and may therefore be interpreted as a narrative-based coping framework. This structure reflects processes emphasized in contemporary coping theory, including cognitive reappraisal, emotional regulation, and meaning making in the face of adversity (Folkman & Lazarus, 2013). Recent scholarship has begun to examine the chant as a resource for overcoming obstacles in Buddhist educational contexts (Yusoontorn, 2025), yet systematic episode-level analysis of its coping structure remains limited.

Despite growing scholarly interest in Buddhist coping and chanting practices, a significant research gap remains. Most studies examine chanting primarily as ritual performance, cultural heritage, or contemplative activity rather than as a process-oriented model of coping. In particular, limited attention has been given to analyzing *Jayamaṅgala Gāthā* (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as a structured coping framework aligned with contemporary psychological models of adaptation and well-being. Modern coping theories emphasize mechanisms such as cognitive appraisal, perceived self-efficacy, emotional regulation, and adaptive meaning making as central components of effective coping (Poluektova et al., 2023); (Lewis Hall & Hill, 2019). However, the ways in which these mechanisms are embedded within canonical Buddhist chants remain underexplored in interdisciplinary scholarship. Although religious and spiritual coping has been widely examined in



relation to meaning reconstruction and adjustment to adversity (Wortmann & Park, 2009), systematic text-based analyses of canonical chanting as structured coping models remain scarce. Addressing this gap is especially relevant from the perspective of Applied Buddhism, which emphasizes the practical application of Buddhist teachings to contemporary life challenges and well-being promotion. Emerging research suggests that chanting and Buddhist-oriented practices may support emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, and psychological resilience (Perry et al., 2022). Nevertheless, few studies analyze the internal narrative logic of specific canonical texts. Interpreting Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as a coping framework, therefore, contributes to interdisciplinary dialogue between Buddhist studies, coping research, and contemporary well-being scholarship.

Conceptually, this study lies at the intersection of coping theory, Applied Buddhism, and contemporary well-being psychology. Coping theory explains how individuals regulate emotion, interpret adversity, and sustain adaptive functioning under stress, while Applied Buddhism contributes ethical and contemplative principles such as wisdom (Paññā), loving-kindness (Mettā), compassion (Karuṇā), and patience (Khanti) as moral-psychological resources. Integrating these perspectives, the study proposes that canonical chanting narratives function as culturally embedded coping scripts that translate Buddhist virtues into psychologically actionable strategies. Accordingly, this study adopts a documentary research approach using content analysis to examine Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as a narrative-based Buddhist coping framework grounded in Buddhadhamma. The study analyzes each episode of the chant to identify the life challenges represented and the corresponding modes of resolution conveyed through Buddhist virtues and practices. By situating canonical narrative within established coping and meaning-making frameworks (Lewis Hall & Hill, 2019), the study advances a culturally grounded yet theoretically integrated model of coping. Jayamañgala Gāthā was selected because of its widespread recitation in Thai Buddhist practice and its coherent narrative structure portraying diverse forms of adversity and resolution. Although the analysis focuses on this specific chant, the identified coping patterns may offer conceptual transferability to other Buddhist narrative texts and contemplative practices.

### Objectives

This documentary research aimed to analyze Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) in terms of life challenges and modes of resolution as presented through its narrative structure grounded in Buddhadhamma, and to interpret the chant as a Buddhist coping framework for the development of life coping skills in relation to contemporary psychological well-being.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed documentary research with qualitative thematic content analysis to interpret Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as a Buddhist-based coping framework. The design was appropriate because the study aimed to examine meanings, narrative structure,



and recurring conceptual patterns embedded in a canonical chant, rather than to test causal relationships or measure variables. The approach aligned with Applied Buddhism, which interprets classical texts in relation to contemporary psychological and well-being frameworks. Data analysis was conducted in December 2025 using the chant text, scholarly commentaries, and peer-reviewed literature on chanting, Applied Buddhism, and coping theory.

### **Research Materials and Data Sources**

The primary data consisted of the canonical text of Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as preserved in Theravāda chanting traditions and supported by academic interpretations. The chant was treated as a complete textual unit and analyzed episode by episode. Secondary sources included academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to Buddhist chanting, Buddhist psychology, Applied Buddhism, and coping theory. Only publications with clear authorship and academic credibility were included. Web-based sources were excluded to comply with journal requirements.

### **Units of Analysis**

The unit of analysis was each narrative episode depicting the Buddha's confrontation with a specific obstacle or adversary. Each episode was treated as an independent analytical unit representing: 1) A symbolic life challenge (e.g., Fear, Anger, Delusion, Attachment, Wrong View) and 2) A corresponding mode of resolution grounded in Buddhadhamma (e.g., Wisdom, Loving-kindness, Patience, Ethical Conduct). This episode-level unitization enabled systematic comparison across episodes and supported conceptual mapping to contemporary coping constructs.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

The data analysis procedure was substantially revised to provide clearer analytical transparency and to demonstrate a structured qualitative process. The analysis followed a four-stage thematic content analysis process:

**1. Text Selection and Familiarization:** Close and repeated readings of Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) were conducted to identify narrative episodes, symbolic language, and doctrinal context. Each verse and episode were examined in relation to its narrative meaning within the broader structure of the chant.

**2. Initial Coding:** Each episode was coded according to two core analytical dimensions: 1) The life challenge represented, and 2) The mode of resolution demonstrated through Buddhist virtues and practices. Codes were derived inductively from the text and informed by established concepts in Buddhist ethics and contemporary coping theory.

**3. Thematic Grouping:** Related codes were consolidated into broader coping themes (e.g., Emotion Regulation, Cognitive Reappraisal, Compassion-based Responding, Patience Under Adversity, Meaning-oriented Coping), reducing descriptive codes into analytically coherent categories.

**4. Interpretation and Conceptual Mapping:** Themes were interpreted in relation to applied psychological constructs (e.g., Problem-focused Coping, Emotion Regulation, Perceived Self-Efficacy, Meaning Making), Enabling Integration Between Buddhadhamma principles and contemporary well-being psychology.

This structured sequence (Text Familiarization → Coding → Thematic Grouping → Conceptual Mapping) was used to enhance analytic transparency and methodological replicability.

### Example of Coding Process

To increase analytical transparency, a sample coding table derived from actual verses of Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) was provided below. As shown in Table 1, the table illustrates how textual excerpts were interpreted, coded, and grouped into coping themes.

**Table 1** Example of Coding Process Derived from Jayamaṅgala Gāthā

| Verse / Episode<br>(Pāli Excerpt)                                 | Meaning                                                                                                          | Code labels                           | Coping Theme                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Bāhum<br>sahassamabhinimmita-<br>sāyudham taṃ... Māraṃ<br>vijetvā | The Buddha confronts Māra, representing fear and inner disturbance, and overcomes through mindfulness and wisdom | Fear, temptation, wisdom, mindfulness | Cognitive reappraisal; Inner mastery    |
| Nālāgiriṃ gajavaram atimatta-<br>bhūtaṃ... mettābalena            | A violent elephant symbolizes uncontrolled aggression resolved through loving-kindness                           | Anger, violence, mettā, compassion    | Compassion-based coping                 |
| Saccaṇca dhammaṇca...<br>diṭṭhi-vipallāsa                         | Wrong view and delusion are transformed through truth and right understanding                                    | Delusion, wrong view, insight         | Cognitive restructuring; Meaning making |

This coding structure demonstrated the progression from textual verse → interpretive meaning → code labels → coping themes, thereby enhancing analytical clarity and replicability.

### Trustworthiness of the Analysis

To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, several qualitative validation strategies were applied:

- Theoretical triangulation through interpretation using both Buddhist doctrinal frameworks and contemporary coping theory
- An audit trail documenting coding, theme development, and interpretation
- The use of established academic sources to support interpretative claims and reduce subjective bias

These procedures were clarified and streamlined to present the study as a systematic qualitative analysis rather than a purely interpretive essay.

### Ethical Considerations

The ethics statement was consolidated and integrated at the end of the methodology to improve structural coherence. This study involved documentary analysis of publicly available canonical texts and academic literature and did not involve human participants; Therefore, formal ethical approval was not required. Nevertheless, the study adhered to academic ethical standards by ensuring accurate citation, faithful representation of canonical texts, and responsible scholarly interpretation.



## Results and Discussion

This documentary research analyzed Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) using qualitative thematic content analysis. To address the study objectives, the results were organized sequentially: The first objective presented an episode-level mapping of adversities and modes of resolution grounded in Buddhadhamma, while the second objective synthesized these codes into transferable coping-skill themes with applied psychological meaning.

To reduce redundancy and improve clarity, the results were presented through two tables corresponding to the study objectives. Table 2 presents the episode-level analytical mapping of adversities and coping strategies, while Table 3 presents the thematic synthesis of coping skills derived from the analysis. A complete set of verse-based evidence was retained within the tables to avoid repeating identical categories in the main text.

### 1. Episode-Level Analytical Mapping

The chant was systematically organized into nine narrative episodes. Across these episodes, the analysis identified both intrapersonal challenges, such as fear, anger, delusion, and attachment to views, and interpersonal or social challenges, including intimidation, violence, defamation, and ideological confrontation. The coping strategies consistently emphasized inner cultivation rather than external force.

As shown in Table 2, each episode represented a specific form of adversity and a corresponding coping response grounded in Buddhadhamma. The analytical structure followed the format "Episode - Adversity - Coping Strategy - Psychological Meaning." Redundant descriptive columns from earlier versions were removed to improve clarity and analytical focus.

**Table 2** Episode-Level Analytical Mapping of Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory)

| Episode        | Adversity                                      | Coping Strategy                  | Psychological Meaning                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Māra           | Fear, inner temptation, psychological pressure | Wisdom and mental steadiness     | Cognitive reappraisal; Inner mastery    |
| Ālavaka        | Aggression and intimidation                    | Patience and restraint (Khanti)  | Emotional regulation under pressure     |
| Nāḷāgiri       | Uncontrolled anger and violence                | Loving-kindness (Mettā)          | Compassion-based de-escalation          |
| Aṅgulimāla     | Delusion-driven violence                       | Compassion and moral guidance    | Behavioral transformation               |
| Ciñcā Māṇavikā | False accusation and defamation                | Calmness and truthfulness        | Psychological composure under injustice |
| Saccaka        | Rigid attachment to views                      | Wisdom through reasoned dialogue | Cognitive clarification                 |
| Nandopananda   | Pride and attachment to power                  | Skillful means (Upāya)           | Context-sensitive coping                |
| Baka Brahmā    | Wrong view and distorted understanding         | Right knowledge and insight      | Cognitive restructuring                 |

**Table 2** Episode-Level Analytical Mapping of Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) (Continued)

| Episode             | Adversity                        | Coping Strategy         | Psychological Meaning       |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Concluding blessing | General insecurity and adversity | Living guided by Dhamma | Meaning-oriented resilience |

All Pāli names and episode labels were standardized to ensure spelling consistency across the tables.

### 2. Thematic Synthesis: Core Coping Themes

After grouping the episode-level codes, five core coping themes emerged from the thematic analysis. These themes appeared across multiple episodes and formed an integrated coping structure within the chant.

Table 3 presents the thematic synthesis of coping skills derived from the episode-level analysis. The table was reformatted to align with the concise analytical structure used in Table 2. Thematic descriptions were shortened to avoid redundancy with the earlier explanations.

**Table 3** Thematic Coping Structure Derived from Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory)

| Coping Theme               | Core Function                                                         | Episodes                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Emotion Regulation         | Maintaining composure under psychological pressure                    | Māra, Āḷavaka             |
| Compassion-Based Response  | De-escalating conflict through mettā and compassion                   | Nāḷāgiri, Aṅgulimāla      |
| Patience and Steadiness    | Sustaining endurance in adversity                                     | Āḷavaka, Ciṅcā Māṇavikā   |
| Wisdom and Clarification   | Resolving conflict through reasoned discernment                       | Saccaka, Baka Brahmā      |
| Skillful Means and Insight | Applying context-sensitive strategies grounded in right understanding | Nandopananda, Baka Brahmā |

The table format was standardized using three columns with concise headings and consistent terminology to ensure uniform presentation throughout the manuscript.

### Summary of the results

In summary, the findings showed that Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) was structured as a sequence of narrative episodes that could be coded and synthesized into identifiable coping-skill themes. The episode-level analysis presented diverse life challenges and corresponding modes of resolution grounded in Buddhadhamma, as illustrated in Table 2. The thematic synthesis identified five recurring coping themes operating across the narrative episodes, as summarized in Table 3. The alignment between the analytical findings and the textual structure of the chant was supported by the verse-based evidence summarized in the tables.



## Discussion

This documentary research provides an interpretive account of how Jayamañgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) can be understood not only as a ritual chant for auspiciousness but also as a text-based framework for developing life coping skills. In line with the objectives, the discussion first interprets the episode-level mapping of adversities and modes of resolution (As Shown in Table 2) and then explains how these findings were synthesized into five coping-skill themes with applied psychological meaning (As Summarized in Table 3). Rather than emphasizing external dominance, the chant consistently frames victory as the transformation of mental processes through wisdom, patience, loving-kindness, compassion, calmness, truthfulness, right knowledge, and skillful means. The discussion, therefore, moves from textual evidence to theoretical implications. It begins with the core interpretive claim that "Victory" functions as a patterned coping process, then elaborates each coping-skill theme with reference to episode evidence, and finally positions the findings in relation to prior chanting scholarship and psychological coping research.

### **Interpreting the core finding: "Victory" as a patterned process of coping**

A key interpretive insight from this study is that the chant's "Victories" can be read as a patterned process of coping rather than isolated miracle narratives. Across the nine episodes, adversity is portrayed in forms that map onto everyday psychological and social challenges: Intimidation, aggression, uncontrolled anger, violence rooted in delusion, defamation and social judgment, ideological rigidity, attachment to power and self-importance, and wrong views that distort reality. The chant's internal logic suggests that such problems are not resolved by escalation, retaliation, or coercion, but by cultivating capacities that restore clarity and stability. This orientation resonates with contemporary psychological perspectives that place emphasis on adaptive regulation of emotion, appraisal, and meaning, especially under conditions of stress and uncertainty (Sillers, 2022); (Paley & Hajal, 2022); (Stolz & Herzig, 2024). From a broader mental-health perspective, coping processes are increasingly understood as central mechanisms supporting psychological well-being and adaptive functioning in rapidly changing social contexts (Gautam et al., 2024).

The episode-level analysis showed that coping in the chant was repeatedly represented as a movement from reactivity to steadiness and from conflict to non-escalation (As Shown in Table 2). The thematic synthesis further revealed that this movement was enabled by a constellation of coping skills rather than a single technique (As Summarized in Table 3). In practical terms, the chant implicitly teaches a repertoire: 1) Regulating emotion under pressure, 2) Responding with loving-kindness and compassion to reduce escalation, 3) Sustaining patience and psychological steadiness under intimidation or injustice, 4) Clarifying problems through wisdom and reasoned discourse, and 5) Employing skillful means supported by right knowledge. In the language of applied psychology, the chant demonstrates a shift from impulsive coping to reflective coping and from emotion-driven reaction to value-guided response, a distinction consistent with meaning-oriented and cognitively mediated coping processes described in religion and coping research (Szabó & Baji, 2025). Importantly, these skills appear as embodied exemplars in narrative form, which may make them more accessible than abstract doctrinal statements for many



practitioners in everyday contexts, a pattern that parallels qualitative findings on chanting and contemplative practices as experiential mechanisms for emotional integration and well-being (Lee, 2021); (Perry et al., 2022). This narrative transmission of moral-psychological exemplars also reflects the continuing role of Buddhist storytelling in shaping ethical understanding and social learning within Thai cultural contexts (Makrudin, 2023); (Phengprapha & Khunarak, 2021).

#### **Emotion regulation under pressure: Coping begins with stability rather than escalation**

The first coping theme, emotion regulation under pressure, is most salient in the *Māra* and *Āḷavaka* episodes. The chant's imagery of pressure, threat, and provocation can be read as an archetype of modern life stress, where individuals experience intense internal disturbance and external demands simultaneously. The episode-level analysis showed that these episodes illustrate situations of psychological pressure and confrontation (As Shown in Table 2). The results further indicated that the chant's approach began with stabilizing the mind before acting, which aligns with contemporary models emphasizing that emotion regulation is central to adaptive functioning across developmental stages (Silvers, 2022). This interpretation is also consistent with guidance psychology perspectives suggesting that prayer may carry psychological value by supporting emotion regulation, particularly when practiced repeatedly as a coping routine (Mekkhachorn, 2024), and with empirical findings that repetitive contemplative practices such as chanting may enhance emotional balance and stress regulation among practitioners (Lee, 2021). Such stabilizing practices also reflect broader perspectives that coping skills are enacted within everyday living conditions and lifeworld contexts rather than only as internal psychological processes (Stolz & Herzig, 2024). Within Thai Buddhist contexts, chanting continues to function as a structured and ongoing contemplative practice that supports emotional composure and moral awareness in everyday life (Phrakru Opasdhammapitak, 2016). In practical coping contexts, this stability can be interpreted as the ability to remain composed enough to perceive the situation accurately and avoid impulsive escalation.

This point becomes clearer when linked to the conceptualization of emotion regulation and coregulation as processes shaped by relational contexts (Paley & Hajal, 2022). Although the chant depicts the Buddha as an ultimate exemplar, the underlying mechanism is transferable: Emotional steadiness changes the interactional field. When a person responds with restraint rather than reactively matching aggression, the conflict dynamic often loses momentum. Such a shift from reactive to reflective coping parallels meaning-oriented and cognitively mediated coping processes described in religion and coping research, in which individuals reinterpret adversity and respond in ways aligned with guiding values (Xu, 2021). The findings of this study suggested that the chant implicitly models a foundational coping principle: Stability is not passivity; It is the condition for skillful action (As Summarized in Table 3). The emphasis on patience and restraint in the *Āḷavaka* episode illustrates a form of coping that does not deny the presence of threat but refuses to amplify it through reactive emotion.



### **Loving-kindness and compassion as a non-escalation strategy**

The second theme, compassionate and non-escalating response, is central to the *Nāḷāgiri* and *Aṅgulimāla* episodes. The verse-based evidence presented in Table 3 highlights loving-kindness and compassion as primary mechanisms of resolution. The episode-level analysis showed that these episodes illustrate situations in which aggression and violence are transformed through compassion-based responses (As Shown in Table 2). Interpreted psychologically, this theme suggests a shift from adversarial coping to relationship-transforming coping. The chant depicts the transformation of a dangerous situation not through dominance but through moral-psychological power that changes the trajectory of aggression.

This reading is supported indirectly by applied research demonstrating that Buddhist-inspired programs integrating contemplative practices can enhance cognitive flexibility and emotion regulation (Nilsson et al., 2025). Related applied Buddhist research further indicates that structured contemplative and ethical practices may support well-being and adaptive functioning when implemented within community and educational contexts (Phramaha Somchai Khantisarano et al., 2025). Studies examining ethical teachings embedded in Buddhist chants further suggest that such narratives reinforce value-based conduct and contribute to quality-of-life development among practitioners (Phrakru Kositwattananukul et al., 2025). While the present study did not evaluate an intervention, it showed that the chant itself contains a narrative template consistent with these mechanisms: Loving-kindness reduces threat perception and interrupts cycles of aggression, while compassion reframes the "Enemy" as a being influenced by delusion and suffering, making corrective guidance possible. Such reinterpretation of adversaries aligns with coping research emphasizing cognitive reappraisal and compassionate reorientation as mechanisms that transform emotional response and support adaptive functioning under stress (Folkman & Lazarus, 2013).

In applied settings, this has practical relevance. Many life problems are interpersonal, and coping often fails because the person tries to solve the problem while remaining emotionally fused with hostility. The chant's template implies that compassion is not merely an ethical ideal but a coping strategy that reduces escalation and preserves psychological resources. Within contemporary coping and meaning-making frameworks, compassion-oriented responses are associated with reduced rumination, increased perspective taking, and more constructive engagement with interpersonal difficulty (Wortmann & Park, 2009); (Sun et al., 2022). In contemporary terms, compassion can facilitate reappraisal, reduce rumination, and support constructive problem engagement.

### **Patience and steadiness when facing injustice and social judgment**

A third theme, patience and psychological steadiness, is particularly vivid in episodes involving intimidation and defamation, especially the *Ciñcā Māṇavikā* episode. The episode-level analysis showed that this episode represents a situation in which an individual is exposed to public accusation and reputational threat (As Shown in Table 2), which resembles a major modern stressor amplified by social media and social surveillance. The chant portrays a response grounded in calmness and truthfulness, suggesting that coping is sustained not by immediate vindication but by inner steadiness and ethical alignment.



This interpretive point aligns with research in Thai Buddhist contexts showing that chanting and related practices can contribute to quality of life and psychological relief among practitioners (Kladsumnaing & Rattanangam, 2023); (Phrakru Paladsuwattanapanditkul, 2024). The present study extended the literature by proposing that the quality-of-life effects may be partly mediated by the chant's implicit coping instruction (As Summarized in Table 3). By repeatedly rehearsing narratives of composed response under injustice, practitioners may internalize a stance of endurance and reduce emotion-driven retaliation. This also complements evidence that regular spiritual practice in daily life can be associated with stress reduction (Jiraphattrakul, 2023). Evidence from Buddhist-inspired well-being programs further suggests that contemplative training contributes to emotional regulation and adaptive functioning across diverse populations (Nilsson et al., 2025).

From a well-being psychology perspective, the *Ciñcā Māṇavikā* episode can be read as a model of coping with uncontrollable external evaluation. It suggests that when the external situation cannot be immediately changed, the individual's primary coping task becomes maintaining integrity and emotional balance, which can prevent secondary harm such as chronic anger, shame, or rumination. Such endurance-oriented coping aligns with contemporary meaning-centered approaches emphasizing the role of purpose and existential framing in sustaining psychological stability under distress (Sun et al., 2022); (Szabó & Baji, 2025). In applied terms, the chant provides a narrative rehearsal for "Holding Steady" when the social environment becomes unstable.

#### **Wisdom, reasoned discourse, and the correction of cognitive distortion**

The fourth theme, wisdom, and reasoned problem clarification, emerges strongly in episodes involving ideological confrontation and wrong view, notably the *Saccaka* and *Baka Brahmā* episodes. The episode-level analysis showed that these episodes involve situations in which conflict arises from rigid beliefs or distorted understanding (As Shown in Table 2). These episodes are especially significant for linking *Buddhadhamma* to modern coping theory because they highlight cognitive processes that resemble appraisal and reappraisal. The chant depicts a wrong view as a "Snake" that grips the mind, suggesting that distorted understanding is not a minor issue but a dangerous force that can drive harmful action and suffering.

This can be linked conceptually to contemporary psychological work on how individuals appraise coping potential and how self-efficacy relates to problem-focused coping (Poluektova et al., 2023). In the chant's logic, wisdom functions as the capacity to see clearly, and right knowledge functions as the corrective force that frees the mind from distortion. If appraisal is distorted, coping strategies are likely to be maladaptive; If appraisal is clarified, coping becomes more effective. Thus, the chant can be read as teaching that accurate understanding is itself a form of coping because it determines how the person selects strategies, interprets threats, and evaluates outcomes.

The findings of this study suggested that wisdom-based clarification functions as an important coping mechanism within the chant's narrative structure (As Summarized in Table 3). The emphasis on reasoned discourse is also significant. It suggests that coping involves not only emotional regulation but also cognitive and ethical clarification. In modern contexts where misinformation and polarization are common, this aspect of the chant provides a culturally grounded frame for what may be described



as "Epistemic Coping": Responding to confusion and wrong view through careful discernment rather than reactive argumentation. This epistemic dimension of coping resonates with broader perspectives that situate coping within lived social realities and interpretive lifeworld contexts (Stolz & Herzig, 2024).

### **Deepening the analysis of "Skillful Means" (Upāya): Coping as contextual intelligence**

The theme of skillful means and right knowledge offers the most distinctive link between canonical narrative and applied well-being psychology. The episode-level analysis showed that episodes such as the Nandopananda episode illustrate context-appropriate action rather than fixed rules (As Shown in Table 2). In Buddhist terms, upāya refers to methods suited to specific conditions and capacities. Psychologically, it resembles contextual coping intelligence, the ability to select strategies that fit situational demands, personal resources, and relational dynamics. This perspective reframes coping as the skillful deployment of virtues rather than their mere possession. Patience, compassion, and wisdom are applied differently across contexts, while upāya functions as the integrative principle coordinating these responses.

In applied terms, upāya can be conceptualized as a three-layer coping process:

1) Assessment and fitting, recognizing dominant dynamics such as fear, aggression, or wrong view; 2) Selection of method, choosing appropriate responses such as calmness, dialogue, or compassion, and 3) Ethical anchoring, ensuring responses reduce harm and enhance clarity rather than serve ego or retaliation.

The findings of this study suggested that this structure represents ethically guided adaptability (As Summarized in Table 3), consistent with Applied Buddhism's emphasis on practical methods for living (Phramaha Somchai Khantisarano et al., 2025). It addresses a common coping gap: Individuals may know what is good yet struggle to enact it under pressure. By emphasizing timing, method, and context, the chant implicitly trains flexible coping across varied adversities.

The theme also reflects Thai cultural continuity in chanting practices. Studies highlight chanting's enduring social and ritual role (Phrakru Opasdhammapitak, 2016) and evolving belief-behavior patterns (Malisorn et al., 2023). Repeated chanting may therefore cultivate upāya as a "Living Intelligence" that preserves core values while enabling context-sensitive application. Semiotic perspectives further suggest that chant narratives encode moral-psychological meanings through symbolic imagery such as the "Snake" of wrong view or the "Raging Elephant" of force, which guide practitioners in recognizing challenges and selecting appropriate responses (Lumpakorn & Pengkaesorn, 2024).

### **Positioning the findings in relation to prior chanting scholarship**

Most prior research on Thai Buddhist chanting has focused on cultural significance, ethical values, and general well-being outcomes. Studies have examined the social influence of Buddha-Jaya-Mangala Gatha (Makrudin, 2023), the ethical values in Puttacchayamongkolkatha for quality-of-life development (Phrakru Kositwattananukul et al., 2025), and the relationship between chanting and quality of life in specific Thai provinces (Kladsumnaing & Rattanangam, 2023); (Phrakru Paladsuwattanapanditkul, 2024). Such studies provide important evidence that chanting is meaningful and beneficial for many practitioners. They also reflect the continuing



role of chanting as a structured contemplative and ethical practice within contemporary Thai Buddhist society (Phrakru Opasdharmapitak, 2016); (Mekkhachorn, 2024). However, they often treat chanting as a holistic practice without systematically unpacking how the chant's internal structure may teach coping processes.

The present study contributed by offering a structured interpretive model in which the chant's narrative episodes were coded as distinct coping scenarios and were synthesized into transferable coping skills (As Shown in Table 2 and Summarized in Table 3). Rather than replacing prior perspectives, this approach complements them. It suggests that the cultural and well-being effects found in earlier studies may be supported by a text-based mechanism: Repeated engagement with narratives of skillful coping may reinforce psychological scripts that guide behavior under stress. Such mechanisms are consistent with broader psychological frameworks emphasizing coping, appraisal, and mental well-being as interconnected processes shaping adaptive functioning in everyday life (Gautam et al., 2024); (Poluektova et al., 2023). The result is a stronger explanatory account of chanting's applied value.

The findings also align with scholarship that emphasizes the endurance and transformation of Buddha confrontation narratives in contemporary media, highlighting their didactic role in transmitting moral instruction (Phengprapha & Khunarak, 2021). If such narratives remain compelling because they teach through story, the chant can be interpreted as a concentrated form of this educational function: It compresses multiple coping exemplars into a single ritual sequence. This interpretation is further supported by applied Buddhist research indicating that contemplative and narrative-based practices can enhance emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, and adaptive functioning in diverse populations (Nilsson et al., 2025); (Phramaha Somchai Khantisarano et al., 2025).

## Originality and Body of Knowledge

The originality of this documentary study lies in its interpretation of the *Jayamaṅgala Gāthā* (Verses of Auspicious Victory) as a narrative-based coping framework grounded in Buddhadhamma, derived directly from episode-level analysis. Across nine narrative episodes, a consistent structure emerges in which adversity is resolved through inner cultivation rather than external force. Five recurring coping processes were identified: Emotional stabilization, compassion-based de-escalation, patience and endurance, wisdom-based clarification, and context-sensitive skillful means. Together, these processes form a patterned adversity -response-transformation sequence, supporting the interpretation of the chant as a structured coping model.

The body of knowledge generated from this study is a synthesized model constructed directly from textual analysis. Each narrative episode consists of three interconnected elements: A life challenge, a virtue-based response, and transformation through ethical insight. These elements form a coherent narrative-to-coping pathway that systematically links canonical storytelling with identifiable coping processes, as illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) -Based Life Coping Skills Model

The proposed model outlines a three-stage sequence: Recognition of adversity, activation of ethically grounded coping responses, and transformation through insight-led action and skillful means. Within this framework, "Victory" is understood as an internal transformation grounded in wisdom, compassion, patience, and right understanding. The consistency of the adversity -response- transformation pattern across all episodes indicates that the chant can function as a structured narrative scaffold for reflective coping development in educational, community, and contemplative contexts. Overall, the study presents a textually grounded and culturally embedded coping model that contributes to the advancement of applied knowledge at the intersection of Buddhist studies and well-being.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This documentary study concludes that Jayamaṅgala Gāthā (Verses of Auspicious Victory) functions as a narrative-based coping framework grounded in Buddhadhamma. Across nine episodes, adversity is recognized, stabilized through inner discipline, and transformed through ethically guided wisdom rather than domination. Five interrelated coping processes emerge: Emotional stabilization, compassion-based de-escalation through mettā (Loving-kindness), patience under adversity through khanti (Endurance), wisdom-based clarification through paññā (Wisdom), and context-sensitive skillful means through upāya (Skillful Means). Together, these processes



form a repeatable coping sequence linking problem recognition, moral-affective regulation, and insight-led action, positioning "Victory" as inner transformation rather than external conquest. Episode-based analysis shows that distinct adversities evoke differentiated responses, revealing a coherent coping repertoire embedded within the chant's narrative structure. While the study relies on textual analysis and conceptual interpretation within a single chant, the findings suggest that the chant provides a culturally grounded model of reflective coping. Future research may empirically test this model through chanting-reflection programs and examine outcomes such as emotion regulation, coping self-efficacy, and psychological resilience in educational, community, and contemplative contexts.

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