



FOREST DESANĀS

Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno

FOREST DESANĀS

FOREST DESANĀS

Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno

Translated by:

Ajaan Suchart Abhijāto

A Forest Dhamma Publication



FOREST DESANĀS

A Forest Dhamma Publication

“The Gift of Dhamma Excels All
Other Gifts”
—*The Lord Buddha*

FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION

All commercial rights reserved.

© 2012 Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno

Dhamma should not be sold like goods in the market place. Permission to reproduce this publication in any way for free distribution, as a gift of Dhamma, is hereby granted and no further permission need be obtained. Reproduction in any way for commercial gain is strictly prohibited.

Author: Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno

Translator: Ajaan Suchart Abhijāto

Design by: Mae Chee Melita Halim.

Contents

Contents	v
About the Author	7
Early years	7
Venerable Ajaan Mun	8
Seclusion and Establishing a Monastery	9
Wat Pa Baan Taad	10
Rise to Fame	10
Some Basic Teachings on the 'Citta'	11
Kammaṭṭhāna	15
The Dhamma Weapon	17
The Guiding Principle	27
Cause for Schism	46
The Dhamma Water	67

Calming the Citta with Paññā	87
The Four Satipaṭṭhānas	98
The Ovādapāṭimokkha	110
Investigation Methods	123
Looking Always at the Heart	138
Dukkha	164
Two Kinds of Knowledge	181
A Lifetime Endeavour	199
Genuine Progress	212
Mental Development	221
The Dhamma Teaching	231
Watching Your Thoughts	247
The Four Requisites	259
Exposition on the Buddha	271
The Four Noble Truths	280
The Importance of Correct Behavior	288
Investigating Avijjā	298
Glossary	315

About the Author

Venerable Ajaan Mahā Boowa (born August 12, 1913 and commonly known in Thai as Luangta Maha Boowa) is the common name for Phra Dharma Visuthimongkol, a revered Thai Buddhist monk. “Ajaan” (or “Acharn”), meaning “teacher,” is the common title for Thai monks, similar to “*Bhikkhu*” or “*Rishi*” in other Buddhist traditions. Ajaan Mahā Boowa is one of the best known Thai Buddhist monks of the late Twentieth and early Twenty-first centuries. He is widely regarded as an *Arahant*—a living Buddhist saint. He was a disciple of the esteemed forest master Ajaan Mun Bhūridatta, and is now himself considered a master in the Thai Forest Tradition.

Early years

Venerable Ajaan Mahā Boowa Ñāṇasampanno was born in Baan Taad village which is located in the northeastern province of Udon Thani. He was one of 17 children of a family of rice farmers.

At age 21, his parents asked him to enter the monkhood for a time, as is a Thai tradition to show gratitude towards one's parents. He chose to enter Yothanimit monastery and was ordained on May 12, 1934 with Venerable Chao Khun Dhammachedi as his preceptor who gave him the Pāli name Ñāṇasampanno, which means "one endowed with wisdom." He had no intention of remaining a monk for the rest of his life.

After entering the monkhood, he studied the lives of the Buddha and his *Arahant* Disciples, and became so impressed that the feelings of faith arose in him, and he decided to seek the same attainments as had the original Enlightened Disciples of the Buddha. He sought to understand the ways of practicing the Dhamma (Dharma) which would lead to *Nibbāna* (*Nirvāṇa*).

He sometimes passed and sometimes failed in his Pāli studies. He also studied the *Vinaya*, the monastic rules of correct conduct. After seven years, he succeeded in passing the third level of Pāli studies, and achieved the highest level in Dhamma and *Vinaya* studies. He then aimed solely at the practice of Dhamma in hopes of studying directly with Venerable Ajaan Mun, one of the most renowned meditation masters of that time.

Venerable Ajaan Mun

He then went in search of Venerable Ajaan Mun, and when he met him he was pleased with his efforts, since it seemed as if Venerable Ajaan Mun already knew of his desires, intentions, and doubts. All of the questions in his mind were clarified by Ajaan Mun, who showed him that the Paths leading to *Nibbāna* still exist. He said to himself: 'Now, I have come to the real thing. He has made everything clear and I no longer have doubts. It is now up to me to be true or otherwise. I'm determined to be true!'

He learned the methods, including meditation, followed by Ajaan Mun based on the principles of Buddhism and the code of Buddhist discipline. He has continued to follow these methods in his own teaching and training of monks and novices. Due to the deep respect and admiration he retains for Venerable Ajaan Mun—whom he has likened to a father and mother to his students, he was inspired to write a biography of Venerable Ajaan Mun aimed at disseminating his methods of practice as well as documenting his exemplary character for the sake of coming generations.

Furthermore, he has written many books on the practice of Buddhist meditation, as well as many recorded teachings on Dhamma so that Buddhists would have a guide in the practice of meditation.

Seclusion and Establishing a Monastery

In 1950, after the death of Venerable Ajaan Mun, Ajaan Mahā Boowa looked for a secluded place, settling in Huey Sai village in Mukdahan province. He was very strict and serious in teaching the monks and novices, both in the austere *dhutanga* practices and in meditation. He continued his teaching until these same principles became established amongst his followers.

Learning that his mother was ill, he returned home to look after her. Villagers and relatives requested that he settle permanently in the forest south of the village and no longer wander in the manner of a forest monk. As his mother was very old and it was appropriate for him to look after her, he accepted the offer. With a donation of 64 acres of land, he began to build his monastery, Wat Pa Baan Taad, in November 1955.

Wat Pa Baan Taad

Ajaan Mahā Boowa said:

“This monastery has always been a place for meditation. Since the beginning it has been a place solely for developing the mind. I haven’t let any other work disturb the place. If there are things which must be done, I’ve made it a rule that they take up no more time than is absolutely necessary. The reason for this is that, in the eyes of the world and the Dhamma, this is a meditation temple. We’re meditation monks. The work of the meditation monk was handed over to him on the day of his ordination by his Preceptor—in all its completeness. This is his real work, and it was taught in a form suitable for the small amount of time available during the ordination ceremony—five meditation objects to be memorized in forward and reverse order—and after that it’s up to each individual to expand on them and develop them to whatever degree of breadth or subtlety he is able to. In the beginning the work of a monk is given simply as: *Kesā*—hair of the head, *Lomā*—hair of the body, *Nakhā*—nails, *Dantā*—teeth, *Taco*—the skin which enwraps the body. This is the true work for those monks who practice according to the principles of Dhamma as were taught by the Lord Buddha.”

The wilderness surrounding the monastery has vanished, as it has now been cleared for cultivation. The forest inside of the monastery is all that remains. Wat Pa Baan Taad preserves this remnant in its original condition, so that monks, novices, and lay people can use its tranquility for the practice of the Dhamma as taught by the Lord Buddha.

Rise to Fame

Ajaan Mahā Boowa has travelled to London to give lectures. He also founded the Help Thai Nation Project, a charitable effort dedi-

cated to the helping the Thai economy. He has been visited and supported by the King and Queen of Thailand.

Ajaan Mahā Boowa's biographer says: "Ven. Ajaan Mahā Boowa is well known for the fluency and skill of his Dhamma talks, and their direct and dynamic approach. They obviously reflect his own attitude and the way he personally practiced Dhamma. This is best exemplified in the Dhamma talks he gives to those who go to meditate at Wat Pa Baan Taad. Such talks usually take place in the cool of the evening, with lamps lit and the only sound being the insects and cicadas in the surrounding jungle. He often begins the Dhamma talk with a few moments of stillness—this is the most preparation he needs—and then quietly begins the Dhamma exposition. As the theme naturally develops, the pace quickens and those listening increasingly feel its strength and depth."

Some Basic Teachings on the 'Citta'

Ajaan Mahā Boowa sees the essential enduring truth of the sentient being as constituted of the indestructible reality of the *citta* (heart/mind), which is characterized by the attribute of Awareness or Knowingness. This *citta*, which is intrinsically bright, clear and aware, gets superficially tangled up in *samsāra* but ultimately cannot be destroyed by any *samsāric* phenomenon. Although Ajaan Mahā Boowa is often at pains to emphasize the need for meditation upon the not-self (*anattā*), he also points out that the *citta*, while getting caught up in the vortex of conditioned phenomena, is not subject to destruction as are those things which are impermanent, suffering and not-self (*anicca, dukkha, anattā*). The *citta* is ultimately not beholden to these laws of conditioned existence. The *citta* is bright, radiant and deathless, and is its own independent reality.

Being intrinsically bright and clear, the *citta* is always ready to make contact with everything of every nature. Although all condi-

tioned phenomena without exception are governed by the three universal laws of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, the *citta*'s true nature is not subject to these laws. The *citta* is conditioned by *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* only because things that are subject to these laws come spinning in to become involved with the *citta* and so cause it to spin along with them. However, though it spins in unison with conditioned phenomena, the *citta* never disintegrates or falls apart. It spins following the influence of those forces which have the power to make it spin, but the true power of the *citta*'s own nature is that it knows and does not die. This deathlessness is a quality that lies beyond disintegration. Being beyond disintegration, it also lies beyond the range of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā* and the universal laws of nature.

The fundamental problem that besets human beings, according to Ajaan Mahā Boowa, is that they have taken fake and false things as their true self and lack the necessary power to be their 'own true self'; they allow the wiles and deceits of the mental defilements to generate fear and anxiety in their minds. Fear and anxiety are not inherent within the *citta*; in fact, the *citta* is ultimately beyond all such things and indeed is beyond time and space. But it needs to be cleansed of its inner defilements (the *kilesas*) before that truth can be realized. Ajaan Mahā Boowa states:

Our real problem, our one fundamental problem—which is also the *citta*'s fundamental problem—is that we lack the power needed to be our own true self. Instead, we have always taken counterfeit things to be the essence of who we really are, so that the *citta*'s behavior is never in harmony with its true nature. Rather, it expresses itself through the *kilesas*' cunning deceits, which cause it to feel anxious and frightened of virtually everything. As a result, the *citta* is forever full of worries and fears. And although fear and worry are not intrinsic to the *citta*, they still manage to produce apprehension there. When the *citta* has been cleansed so that it is absolutely pure and free of all involvement, only then will we see a *citta* devoid of all fear. Then, neither fear nor courage appear, only the *citta*'s true nature,

existing naturally alone on its own, forever independent of time and space. Only that appears—nothing else. This is the genuine *citta*.

Ajaan Mahā Boowa goes on to attempt to describe the inner stages and experience of the cleansed *citta*. When its purgation of defilements is complete, it itself does not disappear—only the impermanent, suffering, and the non-self disappear. The *citta* remains, experientially abiding in its own firm foundation, yet ultimately indescribable:

Once the *citta* has become so well-cleansed that it is always bright and clear, then even though the *citta* has not ‘converged’ in *samādhi*, the focal point of its awareness is so exceedingly delicate and refined as to be indescribable. This subtle awareness manifests as a radiance that extends forth in all directions around us. We are unconscious of sights, sounds, odors, tastes, and tactile sensations, despite the fact that the *citta* has not entered *samādhi*. Instead, it is actually experiencing its own firm foundation, the very basis of the *citta* that has been well-cleansed to the point where a mesmerizing, majestic quality of knowing is its most prominent feature.

Seeming to exist independent of the physical body, this kind of extremely refined awareness stands out exclusively within the *citta*. Due to the subtle and pronounced nature of the *citta* at this stage, its knowing nature completely predominates. No images or visions appear there at all. It is an awareness that stands out exclusively on its own. This is one aspect of the *citta*.

Another aspect is seen when this well-cleansed *citta* enters meditative calm, not thinking or imagining anything. Ceasing all activity, all movement, it simply rests for awhile. All thought and imagination within the *citta* come to a complete halt. This is called “the *citta* entering a state of total calm.” Then, the *citta*’s essential knowing nature is all that remains. Except for this very refined awareness—an awareness that seems to blanket the entire cosmos—absolutely nothing else appears. Distance is not a factor. To be precise, the *citta* is beyond the conditions of time and space, which allows it to blanket everything. Far is like near, for concepts of space do not apply. All that appears is

a very refined awareness suffusing everything throughout the entire universe. The whole world seems to be filled by this subtle quality of knowing, as though nothing else exists, though things still exist in the world as they always have. The all-encompassing flow of the *citta* that has been cleansed of the things that cloud and obscure it, this is the *citta's* true power.

The *citta* that is absolutely pure is even more difficult to describe. Since it is something that defies definition, I don't know how I could characterize it. It cannot be expressed in the same way that conventional things in general can be, simply because it is not a conventional phenomenon. It is the sole province of those who have transcended all aspects of conventional reality, and thus realize within themselves that non-conventional nature. For this reason, words cannot describe it.

Why do we speak of a conventional *citta* and an absolutely pure *citta*? Are they actually two different *cittas*? Not at all. It remains the same *citta*. When it is controlled by conventional realities, such as *kilesas* and *āsava*, that is one condition of the *citta*. But when the faculty of wisdom has scrubbed it clean until this condition has totally disintegrated, the true *citta*, the true Dhamma, the one that can stand the test, will not disintegrate and disappear along with it. Only the conditions of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, which infiltrate the *citta*, actually disappear.

No matter how subtle the *kilesas* may be, they are still conditioned by *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*, and therefore, must be conventional phenomena. Once these things have completely disintegrated, the true *citta*, the one that has transcended conventional reality, becomes fully apparent. This is called the *citta's* Absolute Freedom, or the *citta's* Absolute Purity. All connections continuing from the *citta's* previous condition have been severed forever. Now utterly pure, the *citta's* essential knowing nature remains alone on its own.

Since this refined awareness does not have a point or a center, it is impossible to specifically locate its position. There is only that es-

sential knowing, with absolutely nothing infiltrating it. Although it still exists amid the same *khandhas* with which it used to intermix, it no longer shares any common characteristics with them. It is a world apart. Only then do we know clearly that the body, the *khandhas*, and the *citta* are all distinct and separate realities.

Kammaṭṭhāna

Kammaṭṭhāna literally means “basis of work” or “place of work.” It describes the contemplation of certain meditation themes used by a meditating monk so the forces of defilement (*kilesa*), craving (*taṇhā*) and ignorance (*avijjā*) may be uprooted from the mind. Although *kammaṭṭhāna* can be found in many meditation-related subjects, the term is most often used to identify the Forest Tradition (the *Kammaṭṭhāna* tradition) lineage founded by Ajaan Sao Kantasilo and his student Ajaan Mun Bhūridatta.



The Dhamma Weapon

— June 1st, 1979

The term '*Majjhimā*', or suitability, refers to the application of the Dhamma weapon to encounter and overwhelm any kind of *kilesa* that might appear. When the strength of this Dhamma weapon matches the strength of the *kilesas*, then we can withstand them. But there is still the possibility of the *kilesas* overwhelming and defeating us. But if we are tough and a lot more forceful than the *kilesas*, then they will steadily diminish. We will come to see the result which will testify to the efficacy of our exertion at this stage, using this particular kind of *Majjhimā* as the means of countering the *kilesas*. We will then use this particular method of practice in the future.

One must steadily and constantly do the work of suppressing and eradicating the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* steadily weaken, the application of the *Majjhimā-dhamma* will be automatically adjusted to the intensity of the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* are violent and vehement, then the *Majjhimā-dhamma* must be equally forceful and vigorous. One must really stand on one's ground and fight to the death. One must not retreat one step or back down. One must not abandon or let go of one's *sati* and *paññā*, which is the foremost and the principal weapon,

such as during the time when *dukkha-vedanā* or pain appears within the body due to sitting for a long time. There will be a lot of pain in the various parts of the body, which becomes more intense and severe. It will yield no result or benefit if we merely endure this pain. We must use our endurance and persevere in our struggle using *sati* and *paññā*. *Paññā* will have to dig and search, probe and analyze, for the truth of the *dukkha-vedanā* or pain which is appearing at that time, by constantly having *sati* controlling and directing the work of *paññā*. Both of these factors must be relentlessly performing their work.

One has to investigate to see where this pain arises. It will be unavoidable that there will be the presumption and assumption that pain arises from any one particular part of the body. For instance, at the knee or round the waist, or at the bottom, or at the thighs around the pelvis, or at any other particular part. Whichever part seems to be most profoundly affected by this pain is where one has to focus one's *sati* and *paññā*. One has to examine and find out what is the cause of this pain. What is it that is being afflicted? Is it the flesh, or is it the skin? Or the sinews or the bones? One has to examine the flesh, and then compare it with the pain to find out if they are one and the same thing. Are they similar to one another? The flesh has a physical appearance and characteristic, but the pain doesn't. It simply manifests itself. This is the way of differentiating them so that one can see them clearly as they are. This work of differentiating must rely on *sati* to direct and focus *paññā* to probe and examine the nature of pain and the nature of the flesh.

Then one's understanding, perception, and insight of this truth will be consistent and continuous. One must not relent in the application of one's *sati* and *paññā*, as they must always go together in a pair as they investigate all of the *sabhāva-dhammas* or phenomena like the pain and the flesh. If we want to isolate a bone for investigation, because there are aches and pains in the bone and we have the understanding that this bone is being afflicted by pain, we must then concentrate our attention in looking at this pain until we can see it

very clearly. Then we have to look at the bone itself to see what kind of characteristics it has, for the bones have their distinct characteristics, features, and colors. But this pain has no such feature. It is simply pain, similar to the pain that we have alleged to be arising from the flesh. It is just our presumption to think that the flesh is being afflicted with pain. Whether it is the pain of the skin, the flesh, or the bones, it always has the same characteristic. But the skin, flesh, and bones, all have different characteristics. How can they be pain? Let's consider when a person is dead. The bones, the flesh, the sinews and the skin still remain. But there is no pain. If they are one and the same thing, why is there no pain in a dead person, in spite of the fact that the skin, the flesh, the sinews, and the bones are still there? If this is the case, how can we consider them to be one and the same thing? This is one aspect of investigation.

The second aspect deals with the *citta*, which is terribly important. We must now isolate the *citta* and look into it. Is the *citta* afflicted with pain? If it is not any single part of the body that is being afflicted with pain, then is it the *citta* that is being so afflicted? We have to look at the *citta* and at the pain, and also at the body to see how they are different from one another. All the *citta* has is just knowingness. Whether pain arises, remains or disappears, this knowingness is still there. Even before this pain arose, this knowingness was still there. If the pain is the *citta* and the *citta* is the pain, then when the pain disappears the *citta* must also disappear. The *citta*, knowingness, should not remain. If they are one and the same thing, then it would have to be like this.

But what happened here was that when the pain vanished, this knowingness still remained, and before this pain arose, the *citta* also knew. How can they be considered one and the same thing? We have to identify the *saññā* that alleges this thing or that thing is painful, the flesh is painful, the sinews are painful, the bones are painful, the heart is painful. In short, we are painful! When it gets to the point where 'We are painful!', then it can be excruciating. We have to differentiate and analyze so that we can see it clearly as it is. This is

one type of *Majjhimā* to be used in combating the pain that becomes extremely intense after we have sat for a long time, or when we are afflicted with illness.

This is especially so during the last moments when we are about to pass away. Then the pain will launch its full onslaught. It will attack us with maximum force, to the extent where we may not be able to withstand it, but perish right there and then. Between this pain that is so severe that we are unable to withstand it and will have to pass away, and the pain that arises from practice—of these two types of pain—which is more severe? If we are not capable of realizing the true nature of pain, by doing the investigation at this time, how then can we gain insight into the true nature of pain that arises at the time when we are about to pass away, when the pain is at its maximum intensity?

If our work of investigation is in vain at this time, then when we die we will also die in vain. We will never be able to come up with any truth to hold on to as our support. We have to investigate until we gain true realization and insight into the nature of pain, of the body and all its parts, like the skin, the flesh, the bones, and the sinews. We must investigate with *paññā* until we see that the *citta* is the *citta*, that each separate phenomenon is a separate truth, that pain is just pain, then it is possible for us to separate ourselves from them. Even if the pain doesn't disappear, it will not be able to disturb, agitate, confuse and trouble the heart. We will remain at ease, comfortable, bold and courageous. We will have a shield protecting our heart. Each of these phenomena is real. They do not affect one another. The body is merely the body, the pain is merely the pain, and the *citta* is merely the *citta*. They each are real. This is how I myself was able to perceive them with *sati* and *paññā*. This is another aspect of the *Majjhimā* that we will have to apply in our practice.

When *rāga-taṇhā* or lust becomes very intense, we will have to apply the means that is equally forceful and strong. We have to counter it with its opposites. We have to bring in the *nimitta* of *asubha* or the

contemplation of loathsomeness. We have to visualize a body that is very sexy and beautiful in our mind, and then break it down, decompose it, until it becomes bloated, rotten, being devoured by vultures, crows, and dogs. How then can there be any lust or infatuation? This is the way of the *Majjhimā*—this is how we will have to apply it. We have to come up with the tool that is suitable for the different kinds of *kilesas* that exhibit themselves. No matter how forceful and violent, or how subtle they might be, we have to come up with the appropriate tools that will neutralize them. Or else we will never achieve our goal. It is the same way with *asubha*. We have to do it in a way that will catch up with the *kilesas* and see them clearly within our hearts.

We have to counter and overwhelm each different kind of *kilesa* with the appropriate kind of *Majjhimā*. Then we will live in peace and happiness. The Dhamma teaching of the Lord Buddha which we call the *Majjhimā* is of many different levels or categories. When we have established bases within ourselves, then the *Majjhimā* that we have utilized will now have to vary to suit the various kinds of *kilesas* that still exist and which are far more subtle, until this *Majjhimā* flows continually, day and night, due to our relentless investigation. When the *kilesas* become more subtle, then *paññā* will also become correspondingly more subtle. The things that are capable of catching up with the *kilesas* are *sati* and *paññā*. No matter how the *kilesas* may manifest themselves; *sati* and *paññā* will always catch up with them, and outwit them.

You have to apply this *sati* and *paññā*, and really investigate, doing it thoroughly. Don't remain idle, doing nothing. Don't be weak or discouraged. Don't project difficulties into the future. Don't think that in the future it will be very hard to do the practice. If we want to think, then we should think that the *kilesas* will always be menacing and trampling over our heart in every form of existence that we will take up. This will go on ceaselessly if we cannot find a way of eliminating them. They will be the ruler of the heart, and subject it to take up birth in the various forms of existence following the *kamma* that we

have accumulated in the past. We will be totally useless if we allow the *kilesas* to menace and damage ourselves. If we are going to think about the future, this is how we should think. It is only the present that is of any importance. We have to pick ourselves up, stand our ground, set up our resolve, and not back down.

The Lord Buddha had vouched for the efficacy and the result of all the Dhamma that he laid down for us. He was the first one to cultivate this Dhamma, and was able to attain the fruits, rising up steadily from the mundane state of existence to the state of illumination, to the state of *Buddho* or the state of purity, by the power of this Dhamma. The Lord Buddha had tested this Dhamma before expounding it to us, so how can this Dhamma go off the mark? The *kilesas* can never surpass this Dhamma. Every kind of Dhamma surpasses and outsmarts every kind of *kilesa*. If we apply the Dhamma that is suitable to each different type of *kilesa*, then it is certain that we will overcome and vanquish every kind of *kilesas*. This is the fundamental principle that we have to consider and apply in our practice.

We have to exert ourselves to the utmost and be very diligent and enterprising. We should not see anything to be more valuable than Dhamma to the extent where we become obsessed and engrossed in it; or see anything to be more valuable than the state of deliverance from the *kilesas* and *āsava*, which oppress the heart. This is a crucial point. We should aspire for the happiness that arises from being totally free of all kinds of *kilesas*, as this is the everlasting happiness that is totally independent of time, the happiness that lasts forever. You have to set up your determination to concentrate in your investigation. I teach you, my fellows in the Dhamma, wholeheartedly and with pure intention. I have not kept any secret from you. I teach and bring to light the various means and methods in coping, conquering, and overcoming those influences that are harmful and antagonistic to the heart, from my personal and practical experience. I illustrate and point out all the facts and know-how of practice.

You must strive relentlessly in your exertion and set your heart into the practice. *Sati* or mindfulness is terribly important. You must always maintain your *sati*. Don't be careless or unmindful. But when we come together the tendency is for us to be absentminded and to lose our guard, like the time when we come to have our hot drinks, or while we are walking along the path together, or when we have to work together. We tend to be unmindful, to the extent where we become carried away and become somewhat wild and reckless. Don't let this happen within the circle of the practitioner who sees the danger of the *vaṭṭa-samsāra*, the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, and the menace of the *kilesas*. While we are walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, while we are eating or drinking, we must always be seeing the harm of the *kilesas*. Don't be immersed in the pleasure of eating. While standing, walking, sitting, or lying down, don't be immersed in reverie and fantasy, nor be heedless or negligent, for this is not the way of the Lord Buddha.

This is not the way for one who is going to be free from *dukkha*. Remember this very well. Wherever you are, be possessed with *sati*. Don't be negligent or heedless. Be possessed with *sati* always. You must really and firmly establish your *sati*. Don't waste your time thinking of or concocting the things that you have done countless times before. All there is in this *vaṭṭa-samsāra* and this entire world is just our thinking and concoction that agitates and troubles our hearts. Haven't we seen their menace already? Why do we have to cherish them and be immersed in thinking about them? We should learn our lesson well from those things which have been harmful to us. We should avoid and stop that kind of thinking, and try to suppress and eradicate all those things that are harmful to us, namely our thinking and concocting.

Let us think in the way of the Dhamma, so that the Dhamma can appear. Then all the thinking that goes in the way of *samudaya* will gradually fade away. Then this other thinking can spring forth be-

coming truth and Dhamma that is capable of overcoming the *kilesas* and *āsava*.

The *citta* that steadily attains calm is the result of our practice. Let us not put the blame on our *vasanā* or endowments or gifts. The *kilesas* pay no attention to the *vasanā* of anyone. Regardless of the numbers of the *kilesas*, they all are always harmful to us. We have to look at the *kilesas* as the curse and as the devil. We must not think about those *vasanās* that can help us eradicate the *kilesas*, apart from thinking about our diligent effort and strenuous exertion, having *sati* and *paññā* as our weapon. This is the crucial criterion for the eradication and suppression of the *kilesas*. Don't be concerned with the *vasanās*, for this can only cause us to become weak and discouraged. Then we will not succeed. We have to be tough and strong, we who are the practitioners.

When I heard Tan Ajaan Mun relate the way that he had exerted himself, I was moved with sympathy and compassion for him, for he was really earnest and serious, putting his whole life into it. He really sought for the truth and Dhamma, without anyone to teach and guide him. He kept on struggling and plowing through doggedly by himself with only the aid of the scriptures that were presented in general terms, and was eventually able to succeed and become our wonderful teacher of this era. Before he could become famous and an honor to Buddhism, and be respected and venerated both by those who had gone forth and by the laity, he had to really struggle. He was really earnest and serious, really putting up his life in exchange for what he was looking for. It was this that enabled him to become wonderful and noble, and to be free from all forms of *dukkha*. No form of *samudaya* or conventional reality could delude him any longer, from that very moment on to the end of time.

This is what is meant by '*Nibbāna* is permanent'. The *kilesas* are impermanent, for they are *samudaya*, which have *sukha* and *dukkha*, gain and loss. They make people happy and sad, and will always do so. When we have eliminated all of them, then it is no longer an

issue to say whether the *citta* is permanent or not, or whether *Nibbāna* is permanent or not. It is only the *kilesas* that infiltrate the *citta* that make it have its ups and downs, highs and lows, constantly changing and not remaining the same. It keeps changing from *sukha* to *dukkha*, from being luminous to being dull, from being confused and agitated to being calm. These are all the influences of the *kilesas*. But when the *kilesas* calm down due to our exertion, then the heart also attains calm. If our exertion becomes more intense, then our mind will get calmer. When we can overcome any particular kind of *kilesa*, then that *kilesa* will disappear forever. We will keep on overcoming and getting rid of every kind of *kilesa*, until there isn't a single one left within the heart.

We will then not have to go look for any happiness anywhere else. We can see very clearly that the reason that we cannot find any happiness is because of the *kilesas* which obstruct and oppress us with *dukkha*. We have to shoulder the burden of this *dukkha* constantly—all of the time, in all the various forms of existence right on up to the present one. But when we are totally free from this oppression of the *kilesas* and they have been totally vanquished from the heart, then it is not necessary to ask about the *akālika citta*, the timeless *citta* or the *akālika* Dhamma, the timeless Dhamma, or the *Dhammopadipo*, the radiance of Dhamma which is constant and unchanging. We don't have to ask about these things, for they will be found within our mind.

You must really strive in achieving this, for it is the most valuable treasure—much more precious than all the other possessions of the world that are highly cherished and valued, with tremendous greed for them, and boundless desire to acquire them. Although one might already have lots of them, one still wants more of them. This is the way of *lobha* or greed. The ambition for power and influence is also the work of the *kilesas*. Greed, or *lobha*, is the work of the *kilesas*. Hatred is the work of the *kilesas*. Delusion is the work of the *kilesas*, as well as the confusion and trouble of both the body and the heart. They are all the work of the *kilesas*. They are not the work of Dhamma. Although it

might have to go through *dukkha*, the work of Dhamma is the work for happiness. This *dukkha* is the investment capital; the *sukha* is the profit that arises therefrom. This is not the *dukkha* that is damaging and menacing without there being any reward, like the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas* to destroy people. This *dukkha* is different.

When we strive in our exertion, if there is *dukkha* then let us face it, so long as the results are steadily forthcoming and the heart becomes more blissful and joyful until we arrive at the state of perfection when all of our burdens will be discarded. The battle that has been raging intensely against the *kilesas* like a *Dhamma-cakka* turning around relentlessly and ceaselessly both day and night, while walking, standing, sitting, and lying down, with the exception of the time when we go to sleep will cease immediately when all of our enemies have been totally vanquished. Then the weapon that countered the *kilesas*, or the mode of our practice that has been turning around like a revolving wheel, will also cease immediately. This is because all of the opposition and all of the enemies that we have been contending with, have all totally disappeared. The battle between the *kilesas* and the *citta* has now come to a decisive conclusion. We have won. The conquering of oneself, which is the conquering of the *kilesas* within one's heart, is far more supreme than conquering other people or winning battles a hundred thousand times. We have to accomplish this task.

The Guiding Principle

— June 5th, 1979

No race of people living on this earth, without any exception, lives in isolation. People of every country live in groups, forming societies, forming circles of families and friends. It would be correct to say that people are cowardly, and it would not be wrong to say that people have to socialise and to be involved with one another. We, *bhikkhus* who are fearless and resolute should live alone in seclusion. But fundamentally we still have to live in groups and in company. We still have to have contact with our peers, though we spend most of the time wandering around and living in seclusion and solitude. But from time to time, there will be the occasion and necessity to come into contact with our peers and our teacher, to ask some of the questions that we might have arising from our practice, and to listen to further instruction about the truth and Dhamma. So in the end, we are also classified as social animals, with the exception that our way is different from that of the other people.

The traditions, customs, rules, and disciplines of the *bhikkhus* and the laity are different from one another. The traditions and the discipline of the *bhikkhus* follow the rules of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, and,

therefore, in all our conduct and behavior we must conform to the principles of the *Dhamma-vinaya*. We also have to be mindful of our thoughts, and of which way they are going. We have to be concerned with the morals of it, and whether this thinking is going in the right or the wrong way, for it is still possible that even if we are not going against the *Vinaya*, we could be going against the Dhamma. To break the *Vinaya* is a grosser offence, whilst breaking the Dhamma is a more subtle violation.

They are all the work of the *kilesas*, and that is why we have to be careful; for we are here for the purpose of overcoming and correcting the *kilesas*. We must not take these thoughts lightly. Our actions of body and speech that we exhibit when we communicate with our peers must be watched and observed. Whether we are living in seclusion or in the company of our fellow *bhikkhus*, we have to be mindful of our conduct and behavior. We have to be observant of the rules and the discipline which is the *Dhamma-vinaya*. This is our way of life, and we must not abandon it. When we live with others, we have to follow the traditions, the rules, and the disciplines, of the society that we are living in, and this is the society of the *bhikkhu*. The laity have their own laws and customs to govern themselves. They have their own ways and customs which are of a coarser nature, as they are not very strict with their behavior and conduct. It is not like the way of the *bhikkhu*. Speaking from the principle of the one who has gone forth, the *bhikkhu* must be careful at all times, and be mindful and observant of all of his behavior and conduct—every action of body, speech, and heart, and in all postures. We are now living together in a social group made up of varying temperaments and personalities. We bring with us our own old ways and habits. The core of our personality and character is uniquely our own. We have to realize that these are each individual's personal traits and have to be very careful when we exhibit them.

The conduct and behavior that go contrary to the principles of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, which affect and disturb our fellow *bhikkhus*,

are not considered as traits or personality. Every one of us here must therefore be very careful, cautious and vigilant, for this is the way of maintaining peace and harmony amongst ourselves. This is the way of preventing any trouble from arising. It is as if we are all the same organ. Our practice of the chaste and holy life will flow smoothly and with ease, for there will be no mental hindrances or any problem arising from this way of living together. There will be nothing to menace and trouble the heart, nothing to confuse, agitate, or prevent it from becoming calm as one tries to develop *samādhi*. For this reason, we have to be very careful and vigilant. All of us have to bear this well in mind—that we are now a *bhikkhu*. We must maintain our status of the *bhikkhu*, both in our hearts and in our behavior and conduct, of speech and bodily action. We have to make sure that they don't affect and disturb other people. As far as conceit and snobbery are concerned, this is directly the work of the *kilesas*. We have to consider them as harmful to ourselves and our colleagues. We must avoid mindlessly exhibiting and hurting everyone around us, as this is just the way of spreading filth and destroying happiness. This is especially so in the circle of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, a very refined class of people. Our behavior and conduct must be virtuous and conforms with the principle of the *Dhamma-vinaya*. This moral excellence does not come from any unestablished principle.

We must strictly adhere to the *Dhamma-vinaya* as our guiding principle because it is the most sublime. We will see this clearly when we develop our heart. The more refined the heart becomes, the more will we be impressed with the subtlety of Dhamma. But at the same time the *kilesas* will also become correspondingly more subtle, so we must not be complacent and take them lightly. We always have to be vigilant. The happiness that arises from living together is the consequence of each one of us being careful and cautious, mindful of our *kilesas*, and preventing them from exhibiting themselves. It is the nature of the *kilesas* to always agitate us and make us sad and gloomy. At the same time they also affect and disturb others, by creating emotional strain in those people such that they cannot live in peace, for

they always have enmity and aversion within themselves. This will significantly damage the work of mental development. Even when there are no tensions, it is already very hard to practice meditation. This is because in the mind there is a natural process that constantly pushes the mind into thinking and concocting about this and that, causing it to become restless and agitated, to the extent where it is impossible to enter into calm, in spite of the application of maximum effort. This is how the mind normally is. And when there are issues and problems to deal with, then it is like adding fire to it, that will only afflict it with more discomfort and stress, then spill over to the other members of the community, thus preventing them from living in peace and happiness.

In this way, we just build up a lot of bad *kamma* for ourselves and others. This is not what a practitioner who strives for the eradication of all forms of immorality, should be doing whilst endeavouring to live together in peace and harmony. We have to oversee ourselves, and have self-control and discipline. Our behavior and conduct must not go in the way of the *kilesas*. This is the principle of living together. When there are no clashes or friction, and when we all follow the principle of rationality, truth, and Dhamma, then there will be no room for the ego. We will only uphold what is right based on the principle of Dhamma as the determining factor. Even though the mind might not attain calm, at least there will be no *dukkha*, as the *dukkha* will not be able to arise when we have left no room for it to come out. This is one form of peace and happiness: living together harmoniously among friends and among good people. We should not look at each other with enmity, but we should look at each other in the light of reason. If there is the necessity and due reason for us to become involved and enter into contact with one another, we should allow ample room for *mettā* or goodwill, and make allowances for other people's mistakes. Let bygones be bygones. This is the way of the practitioner. We should not look at others in the light of animosity and enmity. When we see anyone breaking the rules of the *Dhamma-vinaya*, then we must warn

and admonish him. We must gladly take and listen to any warnings and admonishments from our fellow *bhikkhus*.

The one who listens does so in the light of Dhamma, for the purpose of correcting the wrong that he has committed, so that he can conform to the right way that has been pointed out by his peers. This is the proper way for both parties, both the one who gives the admonishment and the one who takes the warning. The one who admonishes does so in the light of Dhamma. He does not do it out of displeasure or dislike, or for the sake of finding fault with another, or to humiliate and embarrass the other person. The one who takes the admonishment also does so in the light of Dhamma. He respectfully takes the criticism as if he is being shown a store of great treasures. This is right and proper for both sides. Living together in harmony is important. If one of the members of the community behaves badly, then it will have an adverse effect on every other member of the community. For this reason, living together means that each one has to be careful and cautious. There should always be forgiveness for one another, befitting our status as the practitioners of Dhamma who are filled with Dhamma within our hearts, and being principally endowed with *mettā* and *karunā*, love and compassion. For this is the basic constituent of the mind of the practitioner. A practitioner must always cultivate *mettā* towards all living beings: ‘*Sabbe sattā averā hontu*’, and so forth. Furthermore, one also cultivates the *Karaniya Mettā Sutta*, and the other *suttas* dealing with the *brahma-vihāras*, the four sublime abodes. A *bhikkhu* must always cultivate these thoughts. What I have shown here is only an example. It is for you to take it up and develop it in your practice. The cultivation of *mettā* is for happiness and coolness.

Furthermore, you have to cultivate yourselves in the practice of mental development. Don’t engross yourselves in the thoughts of animosity and distaste for anyone. You have to consider that we are living together following the way of Dhamma. Always be forgiving and magnanimous. A *bhikkhu* is one who can sacrifice everything. A

bhikkhu is always forgiving. If a *bhikkhu* cannot forgive, then nobody else can. This is the crucial principle that the *bhikkhu* should follow. Then when we live together, we will live in peace and harmony, in happiness and coolness. This is the governing principle of a community.

It is for this reason that it is not possible for me to accept too many *bhikkhus*. I have thoroughly thought about this. I am not concerned that there might not be enough of the living requisites to go around, for I am looking from the standpoint of supervision. When I have to oversee a lot of people, I will not be able to give adequate attention to everyone. There is also a greater possibility for one of us to cause damage and disturbance to the rest of us. There will then be chaos and trouble for the whole community. This is not good or desirable. But when I can maintain the numbers of you here at the optimum level, then my instructions to you can be to the fullest benefit, and I can give you all the necessary attention. Excess breeds mediocrity. When there are too many of us, then whatever we do will take longer.

For instance, the time that we spend eating will be much longer instead of shorter. We have to spend more time getting things done. By the time we finish our chores, it can be quite late in the day. There will be a lot more work to do just to take care all of us. The more people we have, the more work we have to do. Then there will be less time left for practice, and less benefit. For this reason, I only accept just enough, because this is just about the right number. If I take any more it will be excessive. Things can go badly if there are too many. The possibility of people making a mess of things is far greater, and there will just be more clumsiness and incompetence. And it will just be a nuisance for me.

I have a lot of *mettā* and compassion for my Dhamma colleagues. How can I not have any compassion for those who are seeking for Dhamma? I also used to be a junior *bhikkhu* who was searching for a teacher. I had to go through many teachers before I finally ran into Tan Ajaan Mun. I sympathise and understand your feelings and your predicament, for I have put myself in your place. Otherwise, I would

not be able to know how to deal with you. This is because both of our predicaments are of the same nature, for we are in the same boat.

The way things are now, some of you might think that this temple is very strict and very resolute, and very rigorous and scrupulous. This is because you haven't seen how I practiced in the past. The laypersons applaud this monastery as being unsurpassed by any other monastery, concerning our strict observance of the rules and the discipline, of orderliness and cleanliness, and of the *bhikkhus* who are obedient, and well-behaved, not showing any signs of transgression and mischief. This is how they sing our praises. But we should not indulge in this sort of compliment, for I have really been very lax with all of you. And what is the reason for this slackness? It is simply because there are just a lot of you now, and this laxness is the natural consequence of it. When there are more of you, then this laxness increases, and the amount of the gifts and the living requisites also increases correspondingly, as you all can see. But our practice and exertion does not become more rigorous and intensive.

There are also a lot more people that come into contact and involvement with the monastery. So the more people there are, the more work there is. But there isn't much that we can do about it, as this is their faith and conviction. They come voluntarily, and nobody can prevent them from doing this. The amount of food that we are getting nowadays is grossly in abundance. This excess of the living requisites, and of the gifts and offerings, can weigh down on the practice of mind development. If one is not careful, one will steadily degenerate, without any doubt. For this reason, the practitioner must always see the harm of these things, and must not become too involved. If he does, he will be buried by them and his Dhamma virtue destroyed. He will never progress. We must, therefore, be vigilant.

Meditation practice is extremely vital for mental development. We must be courageous, firm, conscientious, and resolute, not weak or discouraged. Otherwise, we will fail and not achieve any beneficial results. We have to always remind ourselves that every type of *kilesa*

is extremely tenacious. They are far more clever and cunning than we are. If we act foolishly and practice heedlessly and senselessly, then we will never be able to subdue or eliminate any of the *kilesas*, because they will always be more powerful, shrewd and crafty than we are, and that is why they are our master. We might think that we are the masters, but truly, we are not. We are just the *kilesas*' servants without knowing it. All of our thoughts are initiated by the *kilesas*. They direct us to think in a way that will generate a lot of agitation and confusion, brew up hatred and aversion. Love and anger are the *kilesas*' creations. Can we not see that they are perilous and harmful? How can we consider ourselves more clever than them, and capable of outwitting them? We are always following their lead every time that we think. We never realize that hatred is just the work of the *kilesas*. We never realize that anger is also the work of the *kilesas*. The same with love and aversion. We are not aware that they are the strategy of the *kilesas* that push and propel these things into being. But if we know this at every moment, then the *kilesas* can definitely be subdued. This is a very crucial point for the practitioner. We must constantly keep this well in mind.

We have to realize that there is a very great difference in skill and aptitude between ourselves and the *kilesas*. With what can the *kilesas* be conquered? It is nothing else but our *saddhā*, conviction, *sati*, mindfulness, *paññā*, discernment and *virīya*, our diligent effort, acting as the support. *Sati* is terribly important. *Paññā* is the tool that does the work of analysis and examination, countering and contending with the *kilesas*. *Sati* is the overseer, making sure that we do not lose our guard. And when we have been relentlessly developing and exerting ourselves, then *sati* will become highly developed. It will then become *sampajañña*, constant awareness. This is the outgrowth of mindfulness. After *sampajañña*, it will become *mahāsati*.

The same applies to *paññā*, which starts with difficulty in the beginning. Please don't have the understanding that *paññā* will arise by itself. We have to devise various ways of thinking, contempla-

tion and analysis that are versatile and mansided. In whatever way we can subdue and calm the *kilesas* and eliminate them, that way is Dhamma. This is the *paññā-dhamma*. We must not rely entirely on the scriptures, otherwise we will turn into worms eating up the paper. All the Dhamma that the Lord Buddha taught came out of his heart. The Dhamma is found within the heart.

Sati-paññā is also found within the heart. We have to bring them out. We have to produce them. Then we will be able to see into the principle of cause and effect, and use it to contend with the *kilesas* that are extremely cunning and clever. They are always the master in every instant of our thinking and concocting, and during every moment of contact through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body, which all converge and become the *dhammārammaṇa*, mental objects right within the heart. These are all the works of the *kilesas*. The reason why we still cannot see the danger of the *kilesas* is because we are still a lot more foolish than they are. If we are a lot wiser, then when they begin to concoct, we will be aware of them. As soon as they concoct, we will know. We have to strive in this way, and then the result will be as I have just said, without any doubt.

We have to be constantly developing and training our mind. The practice of fasting is a very good way of reducing restlessness and agitation. It is one means of supporting our exertion. The fasting practitioner must be careful every time he fasts. It happened to me before, and I am giving you some precautions. In the beginning stages of fasting, the mind will become consistently cool and calm; the mind is fully possessed with mindfulness and one is hardly ever off-guard. But when one takes some food, then one become unmindful and inattentive, which is something quite normal. When we fast again the result might not be like before. Instead of becoming cool and calm, we become disappointed and saddened. The mind now yearns for the past result and neglects the work at hand, which is the establishing of mindfulness. Thinking of the past has now replaced it, and therefore, the results are not forthcoming. We have to cut off this yearning and

concentrate on developing mindfulness. Whatever has happened in the past, however firm and stable the mind was before, it has already happened. They were the results gained from our exertion, the same kind of exertion that we are now putting forth, which is the establishing of mindfulness. These results cannot come forth by any other means.

We must stay in the present. Don't rake up the past by hankering for the past results. However lofty they might have been, we must now forget them. Don't think of them, for they will just agitate and disturb the heart. We will then not be able to attain calm. Then there will just be regret and frustration, and grumbling and complaining that this is not like before. This is one form of hindrance. For this reason, I am exhorting you not to become involved with thinking about what happened in the past. We must remain in the present and ask ourselves: 'How am I doing? Why is the mind not calm?' We must focus our attention here.

If we cannot take hold of the knowing, then we must not abandon our mantra or *parikamma* object. Wherever we go, we have to stay close to the mind. Keep the mind constantly concentrating on the mantra, using it as the meditation subject. Whatever it may be, be it '*Buddho*' or '*aṭṭhi*' or '*kesā*', '*lomā*', '*nakhā*', '*dantā*', or '*taco*', keep the mind concentrating and holding on to it. Don't let the mind think about other things. If we are not mindful, the *kilesas* will then direct it to think about other things. When we are mindful of the mantra, the mind will then become calm. This is the key to a successful practice. In the beginning stages, when we try to establish calm, it is quite difficult. But no matter how hard it is, we must not let it bother us. We must consider our exertion to be free from *dukkha* extremely vital for us and we have to continually exert ourselves.

We have to develop mindfulness until it becomes stable, continuous and persistent. When the time is appropriate for *paññā* to do the work of investigation and analysis, we must then do it using both the internal and the external as the objects of investigation and compari-

son. *Magga* can be found in both the internal and the external. *Paññā* can be found both internally and externally, if one just develops it so that it actually becomes *paññā*, which is also called the *magga*. And what aspect are we going to investigate in the light of *aniccam* or impermanence, for instance? We can take the external as the objects of investigation, and then compare it with the internal. This can be done. Or we can compare the internal with the external, for in fact they are one and the same thing. There is no difference between them concerning *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*, or *asubha*, loathsomeness, or *paṭikkūla*, filth and impurity. They can be found, both internally and externally, in all men and women, people and animals.

We can investigate and analyze in any way that we devise, at any appropriate time. But when we develop calm, we must solely concentrate on calming the mind, using a mantra or *ānāpānasati*, mindfulness of breathing as our meditation subject, that suits our temperament and character. The work must be flowing continuously, having *sati* constantly supervising. Then our knowing will continuously flow with the work. Once the knowing is in perpetual contact with the meditation subject, and the mind doesn't have any chance to wander here and there, the mental stream will then steadily converge into the centre of calm. It now becomes the unique and distinctive feature of the mind. When this feature becomes more apparent, the mind will become calmer. All the thinking and concocting will gradually diminish. The recollection of the mantra will also decrease. What takes its place now is this very distinctive knowing. Whether we recollect the mantra or not, this knowing will still remain. This is what is meant by the mind converging into itself and 'becoming itself'. This is the calming of the mind.

You have to really and earnestly concentrate in doing this work. Dhamma is the most supreme and wonderful thing, unsurpassed by any other thing. The *kilesas* are ignoble, despicable, filthy and corrupt. When we haven't yet seen and experienced this marvellous Dhamma, we have nothing to compare the *kilesas* with. So we always follow the

kilesas, always believe them, and let them rock us to sleep. But when we have something to compare it with, then we can see that the *kilesas* are fake. Dhamma will then become real, and become the truth. It will then compete with the *kilesas*. We will then gradually let go of the *kilesas*, and see the harm of every kind of *kilesa* at every moment. This is because we now have the Dhamma as a comparison and as a competitor. Whether it is the calm or the discerning ability of the heart, whatever level of calm it is and however brilliant and subtle *paññā* may be, all of them are Dhamma. These *dhammas* are the competitors of the *kilesas*. We will get to know immediately the difference between the Dhamma and the *kilesas*, concerning the benefits, ease, comforts, and happiness that they can provide. This is how it will be for all practitioners who do not relent in their exertion, and who strive in ridding all the *kilesas* from their heart. They achieve this by the power of the Dhamma. The taste of Dhamma excels all other tastes. All other tastes are nothing but the taste of the *kilesas*. What else can they be? Whatever flavor it may be, it is usually the flavor of the *kilesas*.

The Dhamma always outstrips the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* always surrender to the Dhamma. They are not afraid of anything else but the Dhamma. They capitulate to the Dhamma. So how do we make the *kilesas* surrender and be fearful of the Dhamma? We must develop and train ourselves with the Dhamma. We must not relent or back down. We will then experience calm and insight right within the heart. We will also discover the means and techniques used in subduing the *kilesas* right within the heart. Once we have cleared the way of hindrances, then the Dhamma will have the opportunity to grow steadily, not dependent on time or place or postures. When the opportunity is there, the Dhamma will steadily appear, just like when the *kilesas* emerge. When the conditions are right for them to appear, then they will appear. The more the *kilesas* appear, then the more the *dukkha*. The more the Dhamma emerges, then the more the happiness. This is the basis of comparison and competition between the Dhamma and the *kilesas* that can be seen clearly within our hearts. The *kilesas* have ruled over our hearts for a long time. Aren't we ever

going to learn our lesson about their menace? It is about time that we did so now, as there is now the Dhamma that will serve as the competitor to them, and the object of comparison and contrast.

We will then begin to exert in our practice, and keep on driving inwards. At least we should try to make our heart calm, so that we can have peace and happiness. For one who has gone forth, especially if he is a practitioner, if he doesn't have any calm within his heart, he will never have any happiness. Living amongst his peers, he will see that everything around him is antagonistic to him. Though he might not exhibit this externally, it will be building up within his heart. He will not be able to see how wonderful and noble all of his teachers are because his mind is burning with fire. All of his thoughts are fiery. When the mind doesn't have anything unusual or marvellous within itself, but is fully possessed with the *kilesas*. Then, when he thinks about his peers, his fellows in Dhamma, and his teachers, it will all go in the way of the *kilesas*. He will not be able to see their marvel and wonder. He will become dull, weak, discouraged, always retreating, letting the *kilesas* trample upon him, totally tearing him into pieces.

Does this befit us who are the practitioners, the followers of the *Tathāgata*, who take up the foremost and most supreme Dhamma of the Lord Buddha? We are making ourselves vulnerable to the *kilesas*, and letting them trample all over us from the tops of our heads down to the soles of our feet, for countless lives. And we still have not learned our lesson yet! When are we ever going to come up with any wisdom? How can we ever believe in the Lord Buddha? It is more correct to say that we take up '*Rāga-taṅhā saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', lust as our refuge. There is just empty wind when we utter '*Buddhaṃ, Dhammaṃ, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', for truly it is all the time '*Rāga, dosa, moha saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*', as we are much closer to them than to the Dhamma. We only think about the Dhamma occasionally. But the *kilesas* are ever-present, deeply buried and completely merged with the heart itself. There is no way that the Dhamma can infiltrate the heart to make it marvellous and wonderful.

But when the mind has attained calm, we will then see our worth and assets, and see the merit and virtue of the heart, of our colleagues, and of our teacher. The more subtle and lofty the mind becomes, the more we will come to see the marvel and greatness of our teacher. And why is this so? Previously, when our teacher taught us the Dhamma instructions in their depth, profundity and subtlety, we could only listen. It never got to our hearts. But when we have experienced the Dhamma like the state of calm, we can see clearly that it is exactly as our teacher had explained. It is now a living reality within our hearts. All the various levels of *sati* and *paññā* instructed by our teacher have now also appeared within our hearts. We will see clearly within the heart the results that arise from the investigation of *paññā* that overcomes, uproots, and eliminates the *kilesas*, until the heart becomes purified. The intensity of our conviction, belief, and admiration for our colleagues and our teacher, will become heightened as the mind remains with the way of Dhamma.

I try my best to provide all of you with favorable times and opportunities to practice, but you have to put in the effort yourselves. I try to keep all the extra-curricular activities to the minimum, so that you can really strive in your practice. If you find walking meditation is good for you, then you should keep on walking. If you are not doing any other kind of work, then you should do a lot of walking meditation. The body can be adversely affected if it is not given the proper work-out and exercise. You should, therefore, do a lot of walking meditation, as a way of working-out.

Sitting for a long time or sitting a lot depends on your ability. This is not something that can be forced upon you. It depends on your own disposition, and what is suitable for you. As far as I myself was concerned, in the beginning stages of practice I found it quite painful after sitting for about 30 minutes. But then I was able to extend it to an hour, an hour and a half, two hours, and three hours and four hours, sitting each time. During each session of sitting, I usually sat for about three or four hours. But when the time came for putting

in an all-out effort, then it just happened by itself. There is a time when you come to a critical situation, with which you will have to contend until you come up with the results and come to true realization and insight. This is when you go into the ring and put your whole life at stake, like sitting all night. I had never anticipated doing this before. But as I began to sit, then the *kilesas* would begin to gather up their forces and really strike at and swoop down on me. I began to wonder what was going on. It seemed like I was being obstinate and unyielding, though it was going in the way of Dhamma. I said ‘What is happening?’ This is the way of the *magga*, contending with my own *kilesas*. I’m not picking a fight with anyone. If I’m fighting with other people, then this is the work of the *kilesas*. But if I’m doing it for the purpose of conquering myself, then this must be the *magga*, the weapon to fight the *kilesas* with. My mind now begins to turn around incessantly, but when it stops, I then say ‘Alright, it’s either I realize the truth or death!’

I immediately set up a resolve: “Today I have to get to see the truth that is manifesting itself right at this time. What is it like? If I don’t die, then I have to remain sitting until morning before I will get up from this seat. From this moment until dawn, I will not let anything come to sidetrack me from this work.”

The mind then began to turn around investigating incessantly. That is how it was when I sat meditating all night long. When you have established a firm foundation from this way of practice, then this becomes a very good way to proceed. You will have no qualms, nor have any fear of the pain that you have investigated before, now that you know how to totally separate the pain from the heart. It can no longer enter the heart and affect it in any way. You have clearly realized the truth of the body. Every part of the body is one form of truth, it is as it is. The pain that appears doesn’t know that it is painful. It is one form of process or condition, one form of truth. It exists as it is. It is the mind that alleges that I am painful, that I am experiencing the pain, rounding it all into this ‘I’. When the body, the pain, and ‘I’ are

mixed together, the mind then ends up burning itself, because *paññā* cannot catch up with this delusion.

But when *paññā* has analyzed and differentiated every part of the body and the nature of pain, and seen them according to the truth, then every part of the body is just the body, the pain is just the pain. They are all just as they are, and as they have been since ancient times. Pain is a condition that arises, remains, and disappears, as it is natural for it to do so. It is the mind that supposes, assumes and presumes. *Saññā* is really the chief culprit here. When you understand this, then the mind will steadily draw inwards. Actually it is *saññā* that is steadily drawing inwards. You will then get to see the truth within your heart. The heart then becomes real, the body is real, and so is the pain. They each are real. Although the pain did not disappear, it will not affect the heart. The heart will remain calm and at ease.

This is an extremely crucial technique, for you have now established a base. You are now bold and courageous, and the mind becomes sublime, elegant, brilliant and luminous. You can now see the indescribable marvel within your heart that you have never experienced before. With this much success, you are quite proud of yourself. You can now fearlessly face up to the pain, as well as coming face to face with death. You will just say, "Where will this death come from? What form of pain can deceive me? At the time of death, what kind of pain can appear if not this same kind of pain that is appearing at this time?"

But I have already understood the truth of the pain that is appearing at this time. For me, death really has no meaning or significance at all. All that is necessary is to get to know the truth. The four elements of earth, water, air, and fire, will just dissolve from this body. They just return to their original state. And how can the mind die? Whilst I think that it passes away, it instead becomes more distinct and remains knowing. So what really dies? Do the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire, ever really die? Have they ever been destroyed? Of course not! It never happened! And how can the mind die, when

I can see it becoming more distinct and obvious? Is this the one that is going to die? How can it die? I cannot find the cause of it'. It just manifests itself more distinctly and obviously. I become very brave and courageous. This is speaking about the time when it is suitable to put in an all-out effort into the practice. This will come by itself.

May all of you put in your effort and strive in your practice. Don't relent or retreat, and be always and constantly endeavouring and striving. You have to take hold of this supreme treasure, and make it your own possession right within your heart. As far as the *kilesas* which are ruling over your hearts are concerned, they have been here for aeons, their origin untraceable. This is due to your delusion that makes you fall completely under the control of the *kilesas*, allowing them to trample on and damage your heart, pushing you to take birth in the various forms of existence.

Whatever form of birth you take up, it is all due to the influence of the *kilesas*. It is the *kilesas* that lead you to born and die, to suffer pain, trouble and hardship. If you cannot see the harm of the *kilesas*, then what can you see the harm of? There is nothing else that is harmful to you. The external conditions such as the climate, the hot and the cold weather, are all something quite ordinary. They are not as dangerous as the *kilesas* which hurt and oppress you. This is how you have to see the danger of the *kilesas*. Then it will be possible for the heart to live in peace and tranquillity. In practice, there are two essential keys to success. The first one is when you come to the true conviction in the principle of Dhamma, when you have established a firm foundation for the heart, and are completely certain that the mind will no longer deteriorate. It can be achieved by sitting all night. This accomplishment will be clearly perceived. You now know definitely that the mind will now not deteriorate. You then move on to eliminate *rāga* or lust by incessantly contemplating on the loathsome nature of the body, which is a bit tricky but you will eventually achieve it. You then move on to the last stage of your practice, to the pinnacle of the heart, to the pinnacle of knowledge, and to the pinnacle of your prac-

tice, where you will find that this is also a bit tricky to achieve. If you have not ‘cracked’ this secret yet, you will not be able to explain it to the other practitioner. You can only learn it from practical experience.

This is similar to what the scriptures say: That an ordinary person who has not yet realized any of the four stages of enlightenment is not capable of solving the problems of a *sotāpanna*. A *sotāpanna* is not capable of solving the problems of a *sakadāgāmī*. A *sakadāgāmī* is not capable of solving the problems of an *anāgāmī*. An *anāgāmī* is not capable of solving the problems of an *arahant*. An *arahant* is not capable of solving the problems of the Lord Buddha. Also, no other *arahant* is capable of solving the problems of the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mogallāna, problems that are not about the elimination of the *kilesas*, but are beyond the ability of the other *arahants*. But when I spoke about the tricks needed to solve the problems of the *sotāpanna*, the *sakadāgāmī*, the *anāgāmī*, and the *arahant*, I meant the tricks used in the elimination of the *kilesas*. When you ask someone who has not learned these tricks that you have learned and seen not from written scriptures, but clearly from your practical experience, be it at any level, he will not be able to answer you. Even if he is a very learned scholar of the *Tipiṭaka* or Buddhist Canon, he will be stuck. Therefore, speaking from the practical experience point of view, how can anyone be contemptuous of the *kammaṭṭhāna* practitioner who can ask you questions that you cannot answer?

Consider, for example, at the time of the Lord Buddha. There was a well-learned scholar who had accomplished his study of the *tipiṭaka*. He was scornful of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhus* and treated them with contempt and derision. All of these *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhus* were *arahants*. So when the Lord Buddha heard of him and came upon the scene, he asked them some questions. He first asked the scholar, whose name was Poṭhila, but he was not able to give an answer. He then asked a *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, who happened to be an *arahant*. He was able to give an answer immediately. The Lord then asked another question on another level of Dhamma. He asked Poṭhila the scholar.

Again he was not able to answer. When he asked the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, he answered immediately again. When the Lord Buddha asked the scholar some more questions, he was not able to answer any of the questions. When he asked the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu*, he was always able to answer right away. The Lord Buddha then said to the scholar, 'You should not be contemptuous of the *kammaṭṭhāna wvabhikkhu*, because you are similar to a cowherd, a hired hand. You only get paid a salary to make a living from. But the *arahants*, who are the sons of the *Tathāgata* are similar to the owners of the cattle. They can do anything with the cattle at any time they please, for they are the owners. They are not the hired hands. They are the bosses'. That was how the Lord Buddha expounded this discourse, as it was recorded in the scriptures.

There are a few tricks in the practice. When those who have already experienced them talk about them, they will all understand. They know what wrong view is. When you have the wrong view, although you may think it is the right view, and tell it to someone who has already attained, he will know. For instance, you may think that you have got rid of *rāga* or lust. When you tell it to someone who has already eliminated lust, he will know if you have really got rid of it or not. The important thing is that you should keep on practising and progressing until you yourself experience these sublime results which cannot be kept hidden from you.

Cause for Schism

June 10th, 1979 —

All the Buddhas attain their enlightenment through the realization of the Dhamma that is inherent in this world. All of them attained the same knowledge and insight, and their teaching was all the same and conforms to the highest ethical and moral principles. They did not teach the Dhamma in an aberrant or corrupt manner like the Buddhist followers of today who are indecorous and ostentatious, trying to outdo the Lord Buddha. There are many of them, despite the fact that the ideal way of teaching is still extant. But they just don't want to follow it, because they simply want to be famous and distinguished.

If one follows the principles of the Dhamma teaching, then one will be free of errors, flawless and impeccable. Whether one is a *bhikkhu* or a layperson, one will be possessed with *sīla* or morality and Dhamma. If one just practices following the principles of the Dhamma teaching that one has faith in, then how can one ever get into trouble? The cause for schism in various sects is the conduct that goes against the *Dhamma-vinaya*, crushing and trampling on the *Dhamma-vinaya*, which are the truth; thus replacing the Dhamma teaching of the Lord

Buddha with the *kilesas* by thinking that this is the proper and correct way of doing things. If they are in accord with one's preferences and obsessions, then they must be right. These ways then keep on growing. These are the grosser kind of *kilesas*.

Concerning the more subtle ones that are found within the heart of everyone, including those of us practitioners who have been constantly fooled by their tricks, what are they? They are hatred, anger, and the obsessions with our feelings and emotions that are created by our thinking and concocting, which are influenced by the *kilesas*, with ourselves being totally unaware of them and are totally engrossed and immersed in them. They are all found within the heart of everyone. The Lord Buddha expounded that all of them are harmful and dangerous. Love, hatred, anger, animosity, and our obsession for the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and emotions are all harmful. They are influenced and created by the *kilesas* that give rise to delusion and infatuation. The Dhamma has already pointed this out, but we are always enticed and hypnotised by them. If we do not fall for them or be captivated by them, how can the heart not find any calm? We have to be vigilant, take care of our thinking and concocting, and curb the confusion and chaos of the heart that the *kilesas* create by manipulating *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* to afflict our hearts with trouble and hardship. This is something that we haven't yet seen the harm of. When the mind has not attained calm, then it is already obvious that it is being afflicted with harm. This damage is the state of confusion and restlessness which prevents the mind from coming to calm.

The reason why the mind cannot be calm is because of the agitating and disturbing influences that reside inside the mind. If the practitioner doesn't reflect on their harm, then he will not be able to find anything worthwhile. The wonderful quality of the mind, which is the state of calm, will not appear. We have to constantly see them as harmful and be very careful and vigilant. If we are not, how can we expect to come across the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*? If they constantly obstruct the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*, how can we ever real-

ize them when every time we think, our thoughts always go in the way of the *kilesas*? Whatever we concoct or turn our mind to various thoughts, it is never about the Dhamma, but always about the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava*. How then can we ever come across the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*? We as practitioners must think like this. The *kilesas* are always influencing *saṅkhāra* and *saññā*. As far as the sight and sound and the other sense objects are concerned, the *kilesas* only influence them when they come into contact with the sense organs. This happens from time to time. It is the feelings and emotions which arise from sensual contacts that disturb and agitate us that we ceaselessly think about and concoct. Whatever we concoct, it is always the work of the *kilesas*, not the work of Dhamma, not the work of *sati* and *paññā*.

If *paññā* investigates and contemplates, then it is the work of Dhamma. When *saṅkhāra* thinks with Dhamma, analysing and differentiating the element aggregates, reflecting and contemplating with discernment; then it will go in the way of Dhamma. Our perception or *saññā* must follow the investigation, like following a painted line. This is what *saññā* has to do. Then it will be in accordance with the Dhamma. But as it is, 95% of the time it is the work of the *kilesas*. Even the remaining 5% hardly ever goes in the way of the Dhamma. Thus, in the practice of Dhamma, we hardly ever come across and clearly perceive the Dhamma within our heart, the state of calm that is not really that far away from us at all. As soon as we curb and restrain our emotions with *sati*, the state of calm will appear. If we cannot calm our hearts and free them from these disturbing and agitating influences, how then are we going to come up with the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*? I have explained this to you countless times—more frequently than the *kilesas* have swarmed over your heart. By now you should be able to bear it in mind and take it up for contemplation and investigation.

The work of overcoming and uprooting the *kilesas* is a herculean task. There is nothing more tenacious than the *kilesas*, and I myself have already experienced this. I really had to put all of my life into

it. Looking back at the way I practiced, I cannot help but be in awe of the way I struggled, for now I would not be able to put forth that kind of effort. That is how intense it was. My physical condition is no longer favorable for this kind of exertion, and neither do I have the determination. These days, I am just passing my days doing nothing, living an ambitionless existence. There is no ambition, even for the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*, and this is not being contemptuous of them. I am speaking about my state of mind, as there is now a great contrast to before. All I had then was the intent and steadfast determination for the Dhamma and for the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*, the state of freedom. When one's aspirations are at this extreme, then everything is geared towards and concentrated on one's goal which acts like a magnet that attracts every facet of one's exertion, endurance, and perseverance. One's diligent effort, endurance, perseverance, and one's tenacity and aggressiveness will all come by themselves. This is because one's heart is full to the brim with one's determination and aspiration for the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. Nothing can easily undermine this resolve. One can readily shake the *kilesas* loose, even though one hasn't yet developed one's *sati* and *paññā* to a very high level. One's determination is very strong and powerful.

Regardless of how toilsome and arduous one's exertion is, one just keeps on persevering, and keeps on fighting and struggling with these extremely tenacious *kilesas*. One cannot do it lightly, taking it easy and letting the heart drift aimlessly. One must be firmly grounded with truth and rationality. Having an unshakable conviction for the Dhamma is a crucial basis for the heart. Once one has a firm belief in the Dhamma, then one has to follow the instruction of the Dhamma. When the Dhamma says that we have to resist, we must resist. For instance, when we want to see something, we have to resist this urge. And when we want to listen to the things that go in the wrong way, and which promote the growth of the *kilesas* and are harmful for us, then we must not listen.

Whatever we crave, we have to resist that craving, and this is not only about hearing and seeing. If there is any desire that goes in the way of the *kilesas*, we must resist it. There is pain in resisting the *kilesas*, but let us face this pain. This pain is for the overcoming and eliminating the *kilesas* that have been afflicting us and are embedded within the heart for a very long time. We are fighters, we must resist. If we are going to uproot the perils and poisons within the heart, we must act like a fighter—tough and hardy, enduring and persevering. Once we have established this crucial understanding, then everything will be manageable.

We will not be concerned with the four living requisites which are food, shelter, clothing, and medicines; for our interest now is all focused on the Dhamma, and ultimately on the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*, the state of deliverance. This intense interest is so forceful that it blocks all the other things from distracting the heart. We exist solely for the practice that will lead us to freedom. When we eat, we only eat so that we can nurture our freedom, and when we go to sleep, it is only for the purpose of resting and re-strengthening the body so that we can exert for the freedom inside our hearts. Everything that we do is solely for this purpose. When our determination is this intense, then we will naturally become very tough and strong. Have the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna* really faded away? Where are they now? They are found right within the heart. They are being concealed by the *kilesas*, making the heart worthless, lacking in moral excellence. This is because the *kilesas* have wiped them all out. Can't we yet see the harm of the *kilesas*? They have wiped out all the goodness and all the admirable and marvelous qualities of our hearts. The attributes that are appearing now are all created by the *kilesas*. We are merely substituting the genuine for the fake qualities. Aren't we ever disgusted with them?

We have to look up to those teachers who are renowned and are revered by many *bhikkhus*, *sāmaṇeras*, and the laity. We have to look at the way they have practiced. I have already talked to Tan Ajaan Khao,

who was terribly intense and resolute in his exertion. He told me that through one's exertion, one can get carried away with oneself without being aware of it, becoming fanatical. One can discipline oneself to the extent where it becomes damaging to oneself. This is due to one's aggressiveness and tenacity. In the application of one's exertion, one must therefore be flexible, enterprising and versatile. This is what he related to me. He was really rigorous and resolute. He also talked about the time that he was staying with his teacher in Chiang Mai, and also in the various places that he put forth his exertion. It was an uphill struggle for him. His striving was rendered difficult due to his age. When he was ordained as a *bhikkhu*, he was already quite old and already had a family. His teacher also tried very hard—being aloof, delighting in solitude and seclusion. He just wouldn't allow anybody to come close to him. He was Tan Ajaan Mun.

When Tan Ajaan Mun went to live in Chiang Mai, Tan Ajaan Khao tried to follow him, and eventually caught up with him and sought permission to stay with him, and listen to his Dhamma teaching. With his strenuous exertion, he put his whole life into it. I have also talked with Tan Ajaan Brom, and it was very satisfying. He had already transcended and achieved the ultimate goal when he was living in Chiang Mai. All of these teachers were really resolute and determined.

The chance of coming across the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna* is very slim if one just lives casually. Tan Ajaan Kum Dee was also very resolute and strong-willed, but his personality has now completely turned around. He said that before, he was very stubborn and unyielding, but that was due to the intensity of his resolve. He has now changed. That was what he said. One who is going to combat and conquer the *kilesas* must always be strong and forceful, and always opposing and resisting. One must not see anything better than the Dhamma appearing in the mind. Then the mind will be sublime, due to the Dhamma that one has cultivated. The mind becomes awful, terrible and totally worthless when it comes under the influence of the *kilesas*. There are many of these *kilesas* that obscure and prevent

one from seeing the truth. The *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *rāga*, are like fires that constantly consume the heart. It is hot when one is standing, sitting or lying down. In all postures one is always afflicted with this heat. One is totally overwhelmed with this annoyance, and one looks at everything in the wrong light. This is because the heart is in the wrong—it is being poisoned and is injurious to itself. One cannot remain calm and cool when one sees one's colleagues. One is vexed and edgy, finding faults with others as a means of venting the *kilesas* that are consuming one's mind. This can actually happen. No matter how transcendent one's teacher might be, one cannot perceive it because the *kilesas* which have completely enveloped the mind are not marvelous. How then can the mind see those wonderful and supreme qualities? It can only see whatever the *kilesas* direct it to see.

We must, therefore, discipline and train ourselves. We really must achieve this. At least we should attain calm, so that we can clearly see the result from our sitting in meditation. This will at least bring forth *samādhi*, concentration of the heart that is not beyond the training and disciplining of our hearts. We have been neglecting the mind for too long. In looking for benefit for ourselves, we have to make an assessment of the value of the stream of thoughts that has been constantly flowing for such a long time. What have we come up with from this thinking? We have been constantly following it and have been captivated by it. The more we oblige these thoughts, the more fuel we put on the fire that produces our trouble and hardship. Are we still going to persist in cooperating with these thoughts, to become enchanted and mesmerized by them, while we are wide awake? We have to ponder this. This is called Dhamma, the means of coping with the *kilesas*. If we don't develop *sati* and *paññā*, then we will never overcome the *kilesas*. We will only be groping and doing guesswork. When we sit meditating, we only sit as a mere token. And when we experience minor pain and difficulties while the mind hasn't yet attained calm, we will simply give up and go to sleep, which is merely a way of nurturing the *kilesas*. The more strength we gain from this sleeping, then the more the *kilesas* and *rāga-taṇhā* will be enhanced.

We have to make comparisons and make assessments so that we can see things clearly. Then it will be possible for us to struggle with them. Why can't we dig and search and come up with the Dhamma, so that we can use it to compete and wrestle with the *kilesas*? When we are inclined to apply reason and Dhamma to liberate us from *dukkha*, we will surely achieve this one day. It will happen inevitably to one who likes to contemplate and reason things out for the purpose of liberating himself by using whatever logical arguments that he can come up with. People do not become brilliant from the first day of their birth. We all carry ignorance with us, as we are all born in the midst of the *kilesas* that cause all living beings to be ignorant of the Dhamma.

To become wise, we have to depend on Dhamma, our teacher, and the work of disciplining and training ourselves. Our behavior and bearing will steadily rise above average as the heart becomes steadily developed due to our exertion. For this reason, the work of development, learning, and hearing, are extremely crucial. We can be really captivated and enchanted by listening to the Dhamma of a teacher whose practices and attainments are indisputable. For one who has truly become enlightened, he will not speak with uncertainty and vagueness that will cause doubts to arise in the listener. Whatever he says is always true and valid because he has already truly experienced them, both the ways of practice that he has cultivated and the corresponding results. So when he talks about them, like the Lord Buddha when he expounded and proclaimed the Dhamma to the world, how can he be wrong?

The Dhamma discourses that can be accounted for number only 84,000, which as I see it is very small indeed. I really agree with what Tan Ajaan Mun said about this matter. He said that the Dhamma found within the scriptures is comparable to the water filling a jar. The 84,000 Dhamma discourses are comparable to the water inside a jar. It is hardly a great number. But the Dhamma not found in the texts is similar to the water in the ocean. How wide and how deep is this?

And how great is the difference between them? He knows about this because he practiced every day of his life and was experiencing and perceiving the Dhamma every day. The mind was really impressed with these *dhammas* and was able to understand their various aspects. The depths and profundity of his Dhamma is immeasurable, for his mind was no longer involved or entangled with anything. It was the mind of one who had already attained freedom. He said that it was a great pleasure and very gratifying to experience these *dhammas*. The mind is like a large fish in the ocean that has plenty of room to move around as the ocean is very large and extensive and the fish is enormous. For the heart that has attained ultimate purity, how can its Dhamma experience be limited to a certain level of profundity and subtlety? There is no bound and limit for this heart. It can freely and easily go anywhere, for there are no longer *kilesas* to entangle and shackle it.

When it is tied up with and constantly surrounded by the *kilesas*, then it is not possible for it to roam about freely. It is totally restrained and prevented by the *kilesas* from going anywhere. The *kilesas* are all over it. One lives and thinks with the *kilesas*. One's thoughts all go in the way of the *kilesas*. Everything is influenced by the *kilesas*, making it impossible for the Dhamma to appear. But when the *kilesas* have been totally vanquished and one attains freedom, then it will be just like what Tan Ajaan Mun had described. Wherever he sat, the Dhamma experience arose continuously. He was convinced that the knowledge and insight that the Lord Buddha and the noble disciples who had attained freedom must have been immeasurably extensive and enormous. Their Dhamma experiences are like the sky and the oceans that have no bounds or limits. He said this based on his own personal experience. He had complete faith in the enlightenment and wisdom of the Lord Buddha and the noble disciples. He said that he had no doubt at all. What I wrote in his biography was just a brief sketch of the essence of what he said. When I listened to his Dhamma talks, I was so captivated. It was very impressive and pleasant to listen to, for it was the '*one who knows*' who spoke. This is what Dhamma is like.

When the mind cowers, it really cowers, and when it is gloomy, it is really gloomy. When it is overpowered by the *kilesas*, it can become really gloomy. But as soon as one has eliminated the *kilesas*, the elegance and serenity of the mind will then appear. These qualities will be realized inside the mind. When the *kilesas* steadily diminish, then these mental qualities will steadily appear, because they are an integral part of the mind. The reason why they are not apparent is due to the filth that envelope them. The mind then becomes filthy, corrupted, worthless and undesirable. Is *dukkha* desirable? How then does it manage to overwhelm our hearts? Nobody wants *dukkha*. But we cannot avoid experiencing this *dukkha*, as it is inside our mind, and we are not yet capable of eliminating it with our *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya*. We, therefore, have to endure it.

In any case, we are fighters and must not retreat. We have to be firm and strong, as this is very crucial for us. We have to train ourselves to be earnest. Don't be frivolous and vacillating, like a post that is stuck in a pile of buffalo dung that keeps falling down. Don't toy with your practice, for then you will never be able to come up with any result. Whatever you do, you have to be serious, really commit yourselves, for you are the practitioners. If you are serious and earnest in what you do, then you will become powerful. When it is time for you to exert yourselves in the work of overcoming and eliminating the *kilesas*, you must be serious and earnest. When you are serious and earnest with your other tasks, it is not only fruitful for them, but it will also be fruitful for the mind and fruitful for the work of eliminating the *kilesas*, because it will also make the mind serious and earnest. This is vital.

I have to talk to you about this out of my concern for you although it is inconvenient for me. I put in my effort to teach you because I have already seen the harm of the *kilesas* and have seen how they trample and damage the heart. Sometimes they trampled all over me right in front of my eyes, as I didn't have the strength to resist them. But when I was able to muster up enough energy, I then attacked them at full

force. I was seething with rage and vengeance, but as I was not able to fight them, I was forced to endure them. But I was really enraged and boiling inside. However, when I had accumulated enough *sati* and *paññā*, I then went on the offensive.

When I had established enough *sati*, I was able to make the mind attained calm and free it from the confusion and madness inside. I then felt relaxed and at ease. This is *samādhi*, or the state of calm. Once the mind has attained calm, then it will become restful, comfortable, satiated and not craving for anything. After it withdraws from the state of calm, if you tell it to investigate and contemplate with *paññā*, it will do so. It is unlike the time when the mind is hankering and craving for things. The mind will not investigate with *paññā* and come up with anything worthwhile. It just keeps beating around the bush and turning the investigation into speculation. Whatever it investigates it will turn into speculation. That is why the Lord Buddha said that *paññā* that is being supported by *samādhi* is of great result and benefit. *Samādhi* acts as the sustenance for *paññā*. Once the mind has attained calm and investigates with *paññā*, it will be *paññā*. The level of *paññā* will correspond to the level of *samādhi*. This will keep steadily progressing until *paññā* becomes incisive and brilliant.

The more one comes across one's results of practice, then the more one will become motivated. When one becomes wise and discerning, then nothing can slip through one's investigation. This is when one's mental strength has matured to the ultimate level. There will be no retreat. In the beginning stages, one is submissive and is trampled on by the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* keep on crushing one's head. Regardless of how infuriated and enraged one might be, one has to endure it because one doesn't have any strength, *sati*, and *paññā*, to counter them. So during such time one has to give in to them. This was when my mind hadn't yet established any foundation. The *kilesas* then kept on trampling on and crushing me in all postures, standing, walking, sitting, and lying down. I could not find any peace and happiness. I went through enough of these experiences myself so I am telling you

straightforwardly. It happened to me. Even while I was doing nothing, the pressure inside was so intense. I was burning hot within, like a fire burning rice-husks, burning and smoldering deeply within. I wonder how it managed to get to be like this. I kept on observing it, but it remained like that as I didn't have any *sati* and *paññā* to unravel the *kilesas*. I just had to endure. However severe this blaze and *dukkha* was, I had to endure it. No matter how offended I was, I had to put up with it. It was useless for me to become enraged, but I did not relent in striving until I came across the state of calm.

Once I had attained calm, I then went on the offensive. To enter into *samādhi* would be very easy for me. I did not have to go through the usual routine. I could enter into *samādhi* right away. This is the time when I became very adept with *samādhi*. The mind is now always ready to enter into *samādhi*. The *samādhi* that arises from sitting practice and is totally devoid of any thought is one type of *samādhi*. Another type called *samādhi bhāvanā* is the *samādhi* in which the mind remains calm but still thinks with the mind firm and stable as a rock. That was how firm my *samādhi* has become. By entering into the state of calm frequently, I was able to make my *samādhi* solid and firm. This is the way of nurturing *samādhi*. After withdrawing from *samādhi*, which I use as a way of resting the *khandhas*, I can see very clearly that my *samādhi* is very firm and solid. I'm now ready to go on the offensive drive. If I intensify my effort in the development of *paññā*, it will not take long. But instead, I become attached to *samādhi*. I'm now so skilful I can enter *samādhi* any time that I want to. It takes less than a minute to do it. As soon as I prompt it, the mind will go right into *samādhi* because I have already securely established *samādhi*. So it is very easy and quick to stop all mental activities and enter into *samādhi* right away.

If I developed *paññā*, I would advance very quickly. But I instead became attached to *samādhi*, by mistaking this *samādhi* as *Nibbāna*. I therefore paid no attention to the development of *paññā*. It took Tan Ajaan Mun to shake me out of this delusion. When my mind was free

from this delusion, it then became very energetic, ready and well-qualified. With that kind of *samādhi*, how can it not be ready? The *samādhi* of that level is very suitable for the development of *paññā*. Once the mind begins to develop *paññā*, it will do it relentlessly. It will realize the truth that will enable it to destroy all of the *kilesas*. I now become awe-stricken with the power of *paññā*, for I can now see it clearly in my mind, which further enhances my efforts. All the laziness has totally disappeared.

Please understand that on the level of *samādhi* one can become lazy, because one does not want to investigate. One just wants to rest in the state of calm and comfort. This is the lazy kind of *samādhi*. But after Tan Ajaan Mun goaded me to investigate, and I have learned how to investigate, then the diligent effort just came naturally. But for me, the mind tended to go to the extreme. Once it had begun to develop *paññā*, it was not able to go back into *samādhi* because it was no longer interested in *samādhi*. The mind just kept turning around incessantly investigating and struggling with the *kilesas*. Sometimes this went on throughout the night and I didn't get any sleep, and in the daytime I couldn't sleep either.

When I did the walking practice, I was not able to walk straight, for I kept crashing to the ground. This was due to the lack of sleep, because the mind kept on investigating and fighting with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava*. As far as surrendering myself to the *kilesas* was concerned, it is out of the question. I would rather die. The only way that I can be defeated is when I die. Giving in by retreating simply cannot happen. It is not possible. It can only happen if my head is cut off. Defeat can only occur if I lose my life. To give up by retreating is just not possible. Once you have attained this level, this will happen. I am just telling you the truth. I am not boasting. I am speaking the truth of my practice, how I developed, how I exerted myself, how I had to wage an uphill struggle and how lazy I was. I was carrying the burden of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava*, and enduring the fire inside my

heart, both day and night, standing, sitting, walking, and lying down. This fire had never been separated from my heart.

Once I had trained, disciplined, and developed my heart by earnestly exerting myself, enduring and persevering, my heart was then able to attain a state of calm and became strengthened. I was then able to drive harder. I could now intensify my effort in my practice of mental development. The calm would gradually increase and become more and more profound until I thought that it was *Nibbāna*. I became smug. Once the *knowing* becomes densely concentrated, then there is no thinking. It is as if the world does not exist. What remains is just this sublime and profound *knowing*. I therefore speculated that this is what *Nibbāna* would be like. Fortunately, I did not claim it to be *Nibbāna*. I just speculated that this would be *Nibbāna*. It was only after I had investigated with *paññā* that I was able to discern what this state was. How could it be *Nibbāna*? When *paññā* had been thoroughly investigated, I could then see the *kilesas* that were still hidden in the mind. They had merely been resting, merely been temporarily subdued by the power of *samādhi*. But as soon as they emerged, they would be immediately eliminated by *paññā*. *Paññā* doesn't promote the growth of the *kilesas*. It only destroys them. *Paññā* will keep on advancing. This is the way it is with the mind of this level.

When you are dejected, you can be really demoralized. Living with your colleagues you keep blaming yourself for lagging behind in your practice, by thinking that all of your colleagues have totally eliminated the *kilesas*, leaving yourself behind to be consumed by the fire of the *kilesas*. This was the way I felt when I first went to stay with Tan Ajaan Mun. When I looked at all the other *bhikkhus*, they appeared to be serene and peaceful, though their exertion didn't seem to be that intense. But I, for my part, after finishing the morning meal, would go into the forest and practice until it was time to sweep in the afternoon. But I didn't achieve anything. That was because at that time my mind had deteriorated and I was intensifying my effort to bring the mind back to its former higher level. My striving was very strenuous and

intense. After having some conversation with my colleagues, I got to know them better. And when I had established some *samādhi*, I also got to know more about myself. I could see this clearly, so could my colleagues. How could they not know? Because this was a path that I had never walked before, when I talked to my teacher I had to tell him the truth so that he could correct me when I was wrong.

Once I had gained the strength of *samādhi* and been goaded by Tan Ajaan Mun to develop *paññā*, I then really exerted myself. Now the *kilesas* could not remain at rest. I would drag them by the neck and chopped off their heads. I would grab their arms, their legs, and chop them off. Once you get to the level of *paññā*, the mind will investigate continuously. It will start with the investigation of the body, to see it to be loathsome or *asubha*. This *paññā* that investigates the body is very aggressive and forceful. Once the delusion of the body is shattered, and you have fully understood every aspect of the body, the mind will then become satiated. It will then stop investigating the body. Once you are full, what is the use of taking more food? Or doing the investigation anymore?

What, then, does it become attracted to? Now it will mostly become attracted to *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*, with *saññā* the most important target, for it is very insidious. *Saṅkhāra* will just flare on and off, but with *saññā*, it will quietly permeate out to form a mental picture. It can subtly fantasize. You can't help but being amazed by its subtlety. You then keep track of it, and then it cannot surpass the ability of *paññā*.

Once *sati* and *paññā* become automatic, or become *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*, then what can slip away from it? Once *sati* and *paññā* investigate incessantly and naturally all the time, except when being forced to stop, then this is called automatic *sati* and *paññā*. Even when you are eating, this *sati* and *paññā* doesn't eat with you. It just keeps on investigating. This is how automatic the investigation has become. At this stage, all the laziness disappears. Sometimes you have to restrain it, or else you can die from exhaustion. You have to hold it back.

Sometimes you overexert yourself until you are ready to drop dead. The entire body becomes dead tired. You cannot even walk another step, because during the night time you didn't have any sleep, and during the day time you just cannot go to sleep. The mind just keeps on investigating continuously.

So I had to restrain it with the *Buddho* mantra by repeating '*Buddho*' repeatedly and quickly, not allowing the mind to investigate and force it into calm. I had to drag the mind away from doing the investigation, which is the contention of *paññā* with the *kilesas*. It was not possible to tell whether I was using the sharp end or the blunt end of *paññā*. I was probably using the blunt end as I was so exhausted and tired. But the heart was still hell-bent on struggling with them. It was only after I had rested the mind that I realized what was happening. I forced the mind to take a rest by repeating *Buddho* very quickly and continuously, not allowing it to do any investigation at all. I really had to coerce it to get into *samādhi*, or else it would not get in. I had to really force it, but as it had already been used to coercion, it didn't take long for it to be subdued.

It began to slowly calm down, and eventually it became very still. At that point, it seems like you have now uprooted the thorns. Your strength, energy, and happiness, seem to arise out of nowhere, and spread throughout the whole body and all over the heart. Yet even when it has rested in this state of calm, you still have to restrain it. I could not let go of the restraint. As soon as I do, it would immediately withdraw from the calm and investigate. I therefore had to keep on restraining it. It became re-strengthened. When I felt that it was the right time for it to investigate, I just let it go. It immediately jumped right back to investigate, and became totally involved with it. Now it seemed like it was using the sharp end, for it didn't take long to destroy the *kilesas*. Therefore, *samādhi* is absolutely vital. When it is necessary to take a rest, you cannot afford not to. When the mind becomes extremely weary and dead-tired, it is not right to think that the results of your work can only come through your exertion alone,

without thinking about the importance of resting yourself so that you can become re-strengthened and able to do more investigation. You should therefore take a rest, go to sleep, take some food, and not be concerned with the time lost from doing this, as it is for the purpose of re-strengthening your body, so that you can do more investigation effectively.

It is true with both the mind and the body. In order for them to regain their strength and energy so that they can further attack and destroy the *kilesas*, *tanhā*, and *āsava*, it is definitely necessary for them to take a rest. When the mind has rested well in *samādhi* and is rejuvenated, then when *paññā* investigates, it will be like a sharpened knife. This is similar to a tired man trying to chop wood with a dull knife. After he has rested and the knife sharpened, then it doesn't take too much effort to cut the wood in two. It is likewise with *sati* and *paññā* of this level. Once it has regained its strength and energy, and gone out to investigate, it doesn't take long for it to kill the *kilesas*. You will then see the benefit of *samādhi*. This happens on a very subtle level of the heart. The *kilesas* are correspondingly subtle, and so are *sati* and *paññā*. They are all equally subtle.

The *sati* and *paññā* of this level are like water that flows very gently. The investigation of the mental objects—*vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*—and the investigation of *avijjā* are done by the *paññā* of this subtle level. This investigation cannot be done in a rough manner, like the investigation of the body. The situation will dictate this and you will know it when you get there. It is the same way when you shape a piece of wood. You first use an axe, then you use a plane to shave the wood surface. You cannot thereafter use either a knife or an axe, for it will just ruin the wood surface. It is the same way with the mind. What level of *paññā* should be used in the investigation will be obvious. You will investigate until you destroy all of the *kilesas* and see the truth. When the investigation is sufficient, then the mind will let go. If it hasn't yet let go, then it is not yet sufficient. Once the mind has thoroughly investigated, then it will let go. For instance, when you inves-

tigate the loathsomeness of the body, you just keep on investigating until it is satiated. Then the mind will let go of the lust for the body.

In the investigation of *saññā* and *sañkhāra*, where do they come from? They come from the mind. They deceive the mind, as they are the instruments of *avijjā*. So how can they not deceive the mind? If *sati* and *paññā* are not capable of catching up with them, then you will still be deceived by them. Therefore, you have to relentlessly analyze and differentiate them from *sati* and *paññā*. When you have investigated this many, many times, the investigation will eventually become satiated. It will first become satiated with the investigation of the body. Then it becomes satiated with the investigation of the *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sañkhāra*, and *viññāṇa* and will let go of them. So what, then, is left that it is not yet satiated with? What remain are just the mind and *avijjā* that are entangled with one another. But you do not yet realize this. This is where you get to see the subtlety of the *kilesas*.

When you finally come face to face with *avijjā*, you will see clearly that there is nothing more subtle than *avijjā*. You feel like you are staying in a tiger's cave. When the tiger roars and growls, you think the tiger is entertaining you. *Avijjā* is like a huge tiger, but instead of being fearful you become submissive to it, loving it and are possessive of it. This is due to the subtlety of the *kilesas*. The true and genuine master and ruler of the mind is *avijjā*, but it cannot withstand the power of *satipaññā*. Although the *satipaññā* of this level will first be deceived by the *avijjā*'s subtlety, luminosity, bravery, boldness and the delusion that this is I and mine, it will not be complacent. Though it might be taking care of *avijjā* unknowingly, it is also vigilant and observant. As this *avijjā* is *sammā*, how can the subtle changes of this *sammā* not be evident to *satipaññā* which is constantly watching, perpetually investigating and analyzing? How can they slip through? Eventually they will be revealed.

Satipaññā will then use this *avijjā* as the object of its investigation, just like all the other objects. So how can it withstand? It will eventually be broken up. Once *avijjā* is shattered, the mind then becomes

satiated, for this is the final fulfillment. The mind is satiated with the investigation of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches, and satiated with the investigation of the body, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. Once it has thoroughly investigated, it becomes full. All that remains in the mind is *avijjā*. All the bridges have been cut off. There is no way for *avijjā* to come out. It cannot now get out by way of *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa*. *Satipaṇṇā* now truly understands their nature. The inner bridge has been severed.

As far as coming out via the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches is concerned, this is irrelevant. There is no need to talk about these because the mind has already transcended them as it moves in closer and closer. What remains is just *avijjā*. Now it doesn't have any place to hide, so it stands out very clearly, because everything else has now been uncloaked. The truth of the body has already been unveiled. The truth of feelings, be it good, bad or neither, coarse or subtle, has also been exposed. But the most subtle of feelings is still found within *avijjā*. After *satipaṇṇā* has unveiled the truth of *avijjā*, then this most subtle feeling will disappear from the mind. As long as *avijjā* remains, this most subtle feeling will also remain. For this reason, whether it is correct or not, and speaking on my own authority because it is so clear within my heart, I dare to say that all the *arahants* who have already got rid of all the *kilesas* have no feelings in their hearts. I am not speaking about myself who is like a tiny mouse. How can an *arahant* have feelings within his heart? Whatever kind of feelings it might be, it is not found within the heart of an *arahant*.

Once the mind has become satiated with the investigation, it will stop. Once it is sated, it will no longer deceive itself. It will not be deluded anymore, not even with the state of purity. Once it becomes satiated, it will come to a standstill. This is contentment. It no longer grabs at this or that. There is no craving. This contentment progresses in stages by letting go in stages. Whatever the objects or conditions that it is satiated with, it will let go. It will keep moving further inwards until it finally becomes sated with *avijjā* and lets it go. The

mind will now be completely satiated. Then all the problems come to an end, and there is nothing further to do. This is the elimination of all forms of *dukkha*. They will all disappear when *avijjā* is eradicated by the power of *mahāsati*, *mahāpaññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* which are like the most advanced weapon system. This is the end.

From there onwards, it doesn't really matter where you live or what you do. Once the *sammāti* within the heart vanishes, whatever you do will be merely acting. The day and night will no longer be significant. Likewise with the days, months, and years, or Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, or the Year of the Rat, or the Year of the Ox, and so forth. They are all suppositions. It is alright to play with them when you are not deluded with them. But to play with them when you are deluded is not good.

This is the story of a mind that had to wage an uphill battle, nearly losing its life, and nearly losing itself to evilness and corruption due to the influence of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās*, and *āsavas*. This is the story of a dogged determination. This achievement is not above your ability. All that you have to do is to be serious and earnest. The Dhamma teaching of the Lord Buddha is beyond doubt in its ability to subdue the *kilesas*. There isn't a single *kilesa* that is sharper, keener, wiser or cleverer than *satipaṇṇā*, which is the *magga*. That is why it is called *majjhimā*, which means suitability. It is suitable for the removal of every kind of *kilesa*. This is my favorite definition of *majjhimā*. There will be a time when you will eliminate all the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion that will eventually come to an end. When all the *dukkha* is vanquished, it will disappear forever. There will be a time when we will put down our burden that we have been shouldering so heavily. There is an end to our exertion. We will then live in bliss. Is there ever an end to the worldly undertaking? Never! Even at the end of your life. When you die you will leave behind your work, your friends, your relatives, your father and mother, your husband or wife, and your own body. You will die leaving your work incomplete. But there is an end to your exertion, the conquering of the *kilesas*. There is an end to it. When the

kilesas have been totally vanquished, then this exertion will come to an end.

The Lord Buddha called this '*Vusitaṃ brahma cariyam*'. This can be simply translated as 'The end of your task'. The goal of the holy and chaste life is the elimination of the *kilesas*, which has now come to an end, because all of the *kilesas* have been totally eliminated. For those who have fully achieved this goal, their meditation practice from then on will be for the *vihāra-dhamma*, which is the maintenance for a peaceful coexistence between the body and the mind, and is left to each individual disposition and preference. For this practice has nothing to do with the removal of the *kilesas*. As long as the body still goes on, then there is still the necessity of maintaining it, feeding it, and giving it the proper exercise. This is quite natural. Everybody knows how much he has to eat or drink, how much he has to walk, stand, or take a rest, and go to sleep in order to keep the body healthy. It is the same way with those who have already become enlightened. They know how to take care of the body and the mind that still coexist with one another. But the heavy load that had oppressed the mind for a very long time has now been entirely discarded.

You must strive to achieve this goal yourself, for you are fighters, not cowards. You have to earnestly and seriously fight the *kilesas*, by putting all of your efforts into the meditation practice. You should not be doubtful of the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. Why must you be doubtful? Every aspect of the Dhamma teaching taught by the Lord Buddha is for achieving the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. His teaching doesn't aim at futility. Why are you doubtful? This doubt is the work of the *kilesas* designed to lead you astray. You have to be confident of the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*, and confident of your ability. You must use *chanda*, satisfaction; *virīya*, strenuous effort; *citta*, concentration; and *vīmaṃsā*, investigation in your practice. You must not practice blindly, lacking in *satipaṇṇā*. If you do, you will never achieve your goal. You will only amuse the *kilesas*.

The Dhamma Water

— June 13th, 1979

In a scorching and burning world, we cannot survive without the Dhamma teaching, which is similar to water that puts out fire. Without the *sāsana* or Buddhism, the world would be similar to that of a village or a forest that is being consumed by fire with no water to put it out. There can only be destruction. In a place where there is enough water to put out the fire, that place will be safe and secure. In a place where there is not enough water, that place will be left in a total state of devastation. This is similar to the hearts of the people living in this world which need the teaching, the Dhamma water, to quench the fires of *rāga*, *dosa*, and *moha*, lust, hate, and delusion. If we cannot use the Dhamma to totally extinguish this fire, at least we should try to diminish it. This is like an illness which needs the proper medicine to cure it. In sickness, some may die and some may be cured and live. It depends on the ability of the doctor whether the disease can be cured or not. If he cannot do it, then the patient will die. If he can, then the patient will survive. It is the same way with our hearts. If we have the Dhamma water, we can then extinguish the fire inside our hearts.

If our hearts are cruel and malicious, and we pay no attention to good and bad, right and wrong, heaven and hell, but only the things that we desire, then our hearts will be on fire. No matter how much we can acquire with our desires, if the heart is constantly burning and the Dhamma water cannot reach it, then the heart will always be ablaze. There will be more greed if we allow ourselves to pursue our greed, our *rāga-taṇhā*, our lust. We cannot curb our greed by constantly pursuing it through delusion, not paying any attention to right and wrong, but allowing ourselves to be led astray by the influence of the *kilesas*, *taṇhās* and *āsavaas*. Our hearts will then be on fire. Wherever we live, be it in a palace or a mansion, our hearts will always be consumed by fire because there is no water to put it out. This water is the Dhamma. So for this reason, the Dhamma is absolutely essential for all sentient beings, similar to water that is essential for putting out fire. As soon as the *sāsana* or Buddhism disappears from the world, then the world will be set ablaze. All sentient beings that live in the world will all be scorched by fire. There will not be any happiness. That is why all the sages like the Lord Buddha have to teach the Dhamma to enlighten people's hearts. Therefore, the importance of the Dhamma is foremost, and nothing can surpass it.

Our body and speech are the servants, while our hearts are the master. They obey the commands of the heart. Therefore, the heart is paramount. According to the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha's path of wisdom: *Mano pubbaṃ gamā dhamma, mano seṭṭhā, mano mayā*, meaning that all phenomena are preceded by the heart. The heart is the most suitable vessel for the Dhamma. When the heart has the Dhamma, then whatever we do, through body or speech, it will always be auspicious. But if the heart is corrupt, then whatever we do, we will always be consumed by *dukkha*. This *dukkha* is like the wheel of the cart that follows the track of the ox that pulls it. *Dukkha* will always follow those who do bad or evil deeds, while happiness will always follow those who do good deeds. One who has virtue in his heart is one who always carries with them the medicine to cure their illnesses.

Wherever he goes, there is always some form of cure for him that will alleviate his affliction.

Therefore, Dhamma is not something insignificant, something that we can disregard. We should not think that the *sāsana* is something merely inscribed on palm leaves or found just in the monasteries, that the *sāsana* only belongs to the *bhikkhus* and *sāmañeras*, that it only belongs to the Lord Buddha and the *arahant* disciples, that it only belongs to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. All of this is just misunderstanding. Because the Dhamma, in truth, is common property for anyone to use as they please. We can use it to quench the fire inside our hearts. Dhamma is the natural and common property of the world. One who seeks virtue, righteousness, gracefulness, and coolness, will not be off the mark if they take the Dhamma as their compass and guide. Nothing can surpass the Dhamma in wisdom. Where does *paññā* come from if not from the *magga*, the noble eight-fold path? *Sati* is mindfulness, or constant awareness of the actions of our body, speech, and heart. This is the path, the *magga*. This is *sammāsati*, right mindfulness. Our actions of speech and body that are right and proper are called *sammāvacā* and *sammākammanta*. They are the factors of the path, the Dhamma teaching of the Lord Buddha which is perfect and flawless.

We aren't good or bad simply because we're born human. Whatever class of people we belong to cannot be considered either good or bad. Truly, it depends on our conduct of body, speech, and heart, and whether these are conducted in the right or wrong way, the good or bad way. We can only be judged by our actions. Simply being born as a human being doesn't mean that we are good. The only thing good about it is that it is the result of our past actions, and that is a good result.

But as far as the good of the future and present is concerned, this depends on our conduct, and the training of ourselves following the right and proper way of the Dhamma teaching of the Lord Buddha that can make us grow in a good way gradually until reaching the

highest virtue. The Dhamma cannot be blamed for not making us good. For it is us who have to develop ourselves to be good. We aren't good and virtuous because we don't develop ourselves with the Lord Buddha's sublime Dhamma. How many sentient beings did the Lord Buddha lead out of the stream of *samsāra* and transform them into supreme human beings, like the *arahants*, the *anāgāmīs*, the *sakadāgāmīs*, and the *sotāpannas*, who have all purified themselves with the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha to the utmost of their ability. This is the way that people can be good through the way of Dhamma. Without the Dhamma teaching, we cannot be good.

Concerning those who have gone forth, these are the practitioners who have taken up the yellow robe and been ordained into the *sāsana* following the tradition established by the Lord Buddha and the *arahant* disciples. This yellow robe is dyed with the dye taken from the heartwood of the jackfruit tree, similar to how it was done in the past. This color is not desired by the world, but it is appropriate and suitable for the life of a *bhikkhu*. We have to realize that we have now taken up the yellow robe and been ordained in the *sāsana*, but the *kilesas* themselves have not taken up the yellow robe with us. The *kilesas* are inside our hearts. How can we make ourselves good if we do not get rid of the *kilesas*? The *kilesas* are the evil ones and the enemies of the Dhamma. Every kind of *kilesas*, from the coarsest to the most subtle, is antagonistic to the Dhamma. In order to remove them, we have to always fight them. Sometimes we have to put our lives at stake. If the *kilesas* do not die, then we will. And if we do not die, then the *kilesas* must die. First, we should at least subdue the *kilesas*, then in the end conquer them and totally annihilate them.

This is for the purpose of making ourselves respectable. From the first day of our going forth, it is only ourselves that have gone forth. The *kilesas* do not ordain with us. To go forth or to be ordained means to abstain from the things that we should abstain from, and to develop the things that we should develop. We are the ones who have gone forth, and we must take up the *Dhamma-vinaya* as our guiding prin-

cept. This is especially true with the *Vinaya*, the monastic discipline, the tool to curb and suppress the coarser kinds of *kilesa* which can be clearly seen by all. The *Vinaya* will keep the *kilesas* within the disciplinary bounds. It will restrain and suppress the *kilesas* that manifest themselves through the actions of body and speech that are initiated by the heart. And the Dhamma is used to correct the *kilesas* inside the heart.

Combating the *kilesas*, it is similar to the way the world wages war. For instance, in a boxing ring, the boxers put their lives at stake when they get into the ring. They put their whole effort into the fight, and while they are fighting they are not concerned with winning or losing, but only with exerting themselves to their fullest. If they have to lose their life, they are ready to give it up. This is an example for us practitioners to emulate. We must always consider every kind of *kilesa* as our enemy. There are many aspects of Dhamma. Dhamma is a tool or instrument. It also supports and lifts us. *Satipaṇṇā* is the tool to combat the *kilesas*. It will search and destroy *kilesas* wherever they may be hidden. *Saddhā*, which is faith or conviction, serves as a source of encouragement or support. This is the belief that the *kilesas* can be conquered, that we can defeat them. *Viriya* is another form of support, making us strive with the most diligent of efforts. This is the way to develop ourselves to be good and virtuous. This is the way to make the *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras* good *bhikkhus* and good *sāmaṇeras* according to the *Vinaya* and the Dhamma. With the *Vinaya*, they are graceful to behold in what they do and say. With the Dhamma, they are cool, peaceful, calm and graceful, having *satipaṇṇā* to take care of their hearts.

Every form of *kilesa* is harmful to us and must be eliminated. They must be removed or suppressed during every moment of our exertions. The results of our struggling with the *kilesas* in the manner of a follower of the Lord Buddha will be attained first at the morality level. Then we will move up to the *ariya* or enlightenment level, beginning with the *sotāpanna*, to the *sakadāgāmi*, to the *anāgāmi*, and finally to

the *arahant* level. These will be the fruits of our exertions in suppressing and removing the *kilesas*, stage by stage, according to our ability. These four levels of enlightenment, five including the morality level, are not beyond our ability and efforts, if we use the *Vinaya* and the Dhamma as our weapons to suppress and eradicate all of the *kilesas* inside our hearts.

No time and place is as important as the place where the *ariya-sacca*, the Four Noble Truths, are found. These four truths are *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha*, and *magga*. And where is *dukkha* found? It is found in the body and the heart. And where is *samudaya* found? It is found in the heart. The cause of bodily illness is not considered *samudaya* because it is not induced by the *kilesas*. There are things that will cause the body to become sick, but they are not as dangerous as the *kilesas* or *samudaya*, the heart's greatest adversary.

That is why the Lord Buddha has to expose the nature of *samudaya*, so we can see it clearly for what it is. It is *kāma-taṇhā*, *bhava-taṇhā*, and *vibhava-taṇhā*. The Lord Buddha said this in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, the First Discourse. *Kāma-taṇhā* is craving for sensuality. It is a form of *kilesa*. As far as *bhava-taṇhā*, craving for becoming, and *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming, are concerned, we already know what they are so I shall not discuss them in detail. I will instead discuss with you the root of the Four Noble Truths. Where are these Four Noble Truths? Where can they be found? *Dukkha* is in the heart. This is the most important fact. This *dukkha* is caused by *samudaya*—*samudaya* is its source. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*—where will this happen? Wherever *dukkha* arises, that is where *nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha* will appear. What gives rise to *nirodha*? What gives rise to the cessation of *dukkha*? It is *magga*, the path, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the middle way of practice.

There are eight factors in this path, beginning with *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right view and right thought. These are the two factors of *paññā* or wisdom. In doing any task, we usually choose a person who is wise like our leader. If we have an ignorant person as

leader, then they will usually lead our undertaking to failure. Nobody will trust such a person. Both *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right view and right thought, highlight the wisdom of the *magga*, the path. And where can this *magga* be found? This *magga* is one form of *cetasika dhamma*, mental concomitant, and similarly with *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*. This *samudaya* arises from *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. Where else can *samudaya* come from? When they cause the *kilesas* to arise, this is called *samudaya*, and when they cause the suppression and removal of the *dukkha* and *kilesas*, this is called the *magga*. Thinking in the way of truth and insight—this is called *paññā*. Constant awareness is called *sati* or mindfulness. *Sati* is *magga*, and it arises from the heart. It is the same way with the *kilesas* which also arise from the heart. But the *kilesas* oppress the heart and wear it down. They control and subjugate the heart, and subject it to a lot of affliction and hardship. They constantly place pressure on the heart.

Magga is the cleansing agent that is used to clean all of these *kilesas* so that the heart can elevate itself to the highest level, the state of freedom. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will steadily come about following the strength of the *magga*. When the time comes for the heart to achieve the final and total cessation of *dukkha* due to the strength and ability of the fully developed *magga*, then this will happen in a single instant. This is when the *arahattamagga*, or the path of *arahantship*, instantly extinguishes all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava* that converge and hide behind *avijjā*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will be the outcome. When the *magga* has totally extinguished the *kilesas*, then *nirodha* will come to fruition. When *nirodha*, which is the result of *magga*, emerges, then the task of extinguishing *dukkha* also comes to an end, right within that instant. That is why the Lord Buddha said that *dukkha* should be observed, so that we can see it clearly, although we already know it within ourselves, since we are not dead. How can we not know it? But the reason why the Lord Buddha told us to study *dukkha* is that although we all have *dukkha*, we never look at it and analyze its nature so that we can know how to overcome and get rid of it.

For this reason the Lord Buddha taught his followers a systematic way of investigating *dukkha*. The Lord Buddha said that we should study *dukkha* and relinquish *samudaya*, its cause. And how are we going to let go of *samudaya*? Here the Lord Buddha said it very briefly, but the meaning itself is extensive. In order to let go of *samudaya*, we have to make diligent efforts, with *satipaṇṇā* leading the investigation. No matter how hard this may be, we have to commit ourselves to the task. This is the way of relinquishing *samudaya*. This is the way of getting rid of all the *samudaya* or *kilesas* from the heart, by the application of the *magga*, the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the middle way of practice. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, will appear as a consequence. That is to say *dukkha* will disappear. These four noble truths do not happen separately. The way they are being discussed, it seems that they happen one by one. But really they all happen together.

When *dukkha* arises within the heart, the awareness that it has done so also arises at that same instant. The investigation into the cause of *dukkha*, that afflicts and disturbs the heart, also arises at the same time. Speaking of the disturbances of the heart, these are the *ārammaṇa* or mental objects or emotions that the heart has become attached to. For instance, when someone speaks badly of us, if we don't think about it, nothing will happen to our hearts. But when we think about it, we will become angry. This anger is called *samudaya*. When there is anger, how can there not be *dukkha*? It is this anger and ill-will that cause *dukkha* because we take the criticisms seriously. This is *samudaya* that causes *dukkha* to appear. How can one extinguish this *dukkha*? When we ask this question we are implementing the *magga*. This is when *satipaṇṇā* begins to investigate the deception of *saṅkhāra*.

Before, when nobody tells us of other people's criticisms of us, we are not aroused by anger. But when somebody tells us of this criticism that may have been made some time ago, we become angry and afflicted with *dukkha*. This is one form of *samudaya*. We are speaking of just one form of *samudaya*—anger. But there is also another side of *samudaya*—affection, like *kāma-taṇhā* or craving for sensuality, for

instance. They are *samudaya* or *kilesas*, and similarly with dissatisfaction, they cause ill-will, and anger. Now we are investigating *saṅkhāra*, which creates all the deceptions. *Saṅkhāra* is the deceiver, and so is *saññā*, with which we assume and presume. *Satipaṇṇā* or mindfulness and wisdom, must round up all the deceptions, bring them inside, subdue them, and finally eliminate them. *Satipaṇṇā* must prise *saṅkhāra* and *saññā* away from thinking about these anger and affection, and calm them down. This is the way of curbing and eliminating the *kilesas*. Once these *kilesas* have been curbed and eliminated—for instance, when thinking about the criticism of us has been restrained, then the *dukkha* will disappear.

This is because both *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are mesmerized by these deceptions. When *satipaṇṇā* realizes this, then they will stop, and *dukkha* will then vanish. When *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*, which are *kilesas*, have been subdued by *satipaṇṇā*, then *dukkha* will disappear, and *nirodha* will appear simultaneously. Don't waste your time speculating about the world and the universe. It is a heavy load to shoulder and doesn't do you any good, such as when you imagine about the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. This is just a waste of time. You should instead investigate, identify and remove the *kilesas* from your hearts. Otherwise, the *kilesas* will always remain inside your hearts to endlessly consume and afflict you all the time. All the *dukkha* arises in the heart. *Samudaya* is like an endlessly long string and the source of *dukkha*. If you don't cut this string with your *satipaṇṇā*, you'll never find any moral excellence and happiness from your going forth. As I have said earlier when we take up the robe, the *kilesas* do not take up the robe with us. We have to fight the *kilesas*, but most of the time we surrender.

There are not many practitioners who are capable of conquering the *kilesas* and attaining the highest fruit of *arahantship*. We have to face this fact and consider it many, many times. There is a great difference between the time of the Lord Buddha and our time as far as going forth or ordination is concerned. Nowadays people ordain

more as a ritual, which is in great contrast to the days of the Lord Buddha, when people went forth for the Dhamma. They went forth with a perception of the harm of the things that they had experienced as laymen. They had experienced so much that they reached the point where they became sick and tired of it. So when they took up the robe, they took it up with *saddhā*, firm conviction, and the desire to be free from *dukkha* and all the oppressive influences. Therefore, there is a great contrast between the *arahant* disciples during the time of the Lord Buddha—the way they exerted themselves and the way the *bhikkhus* exert themselves nowadays.

During that time, the teacher who taught the Dhamma was the Lord Buddha himself. Listening to the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is like receiving 100% pure gold. What the Lord Buddha taught was the real and genuine truth. The Dhamma that the Lord Buddha attained was experienced by himself and it was in accordance with the truth. He realized and experienced everything before teaching the *sāvaka*s. It was not necessary for the listeners to decide which was right and which was wrong. All they had to do was just to absorb the teachings. After they had listened to the Dhamma instruction, they then went away to exert themselves to their utmost ability with diligence and conviction in their practice what they have learnt. In every mode of exertion, their hearts were filled with *chanda*, *virīya*, *citta* and *vimāṃsā*—satisfaction, diligent effort, concentration and reflection. These four *dhammas* blended into one. How then could the result that followed not have emerged? And so it happened that some of them attained enlightenment on that mountain, in that forest, on that walking path, in that sitting position, standing up, or lying down. They attained enlightenment because they had earnestly committed themselves to their practice.

Both the Dhamma teaching and the teacher, the Lord Buddha himself, were both real and not dubious. Those who listened to the Dhamma had perceived the danger of living in the world of *samsāra*, so their hearts were ready vessels for the Dhamma. So when the Lord

Buddha taught the Dhamma to them, they were able to fully absorb it and they applied it in their practice until they attained the highest goal. They then became the Sangha refuge. *Sanghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*. This was the way that people took up the robe in the time of the Lord Buddha. You must not think that the Dhamma of this time and that time are different, or the *kilesas* of this time and that time are two different kinds of *kilesas*. Truly, the *kilesas* of that time and the *kilesas* of this time are one and the same thing, and it is the same with the Dhamma. The Dhamma of the past and the Dhamma of the present are the same Dhamma.

The differences are only in the teaching techniques and the ability of the teachers. The important thing is to find a teacher who truly knows the Dhamma, faithfully teaches the Dhamma, and has attained the highest level of enlightenment like the *arahant* disciples of the past. You should study with that teacher. They will give you the full benefit of the Dhamma teaching. You will not have to doubt their teaching because what they teach will be the true and genuine Dhamma. Where then can the Paths and Fruits be when you are ready for them? So as far as seeking a teacher is concerned, you should look for the best teacher, one who has attained the highest state of purity—the state of *Buddho* or enlightenment. So when you practice to the utmost of your ability and with unshakable faith in the Dhamma, then the result cannot be different from the *sāvaka*s. They must be the same.

People nowadays take up robes as a ritual, but those who took up robes in the past really had the purpose of getting rid of their sensual lust, their *kāma-rāga*. Some of them had grown weary of this lust even before they took up the robe, whilst others grew weary of it afterwards. Some of them even took up the robe without intending to remain so, but due to their underlying tendencies—their *upaniṣṣaya*, they eventually came to appreciate the Dhamma, took up the practice, and finally attained the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. In short, they took up the robe to give up their sensual lust or out of weariness of it, and

they really practiced to attain freedom. Nowadays, most people take up the robe as a mere ritual, just to accumulate the *kilesas* and sensual lust. For instance, the lust for wealth and status can stir up the sensual lust within our hearts. Some are driven to insanity by their cravings. If a *bhikkhu* takes up the robe for these reasons, can you say that he takes up the robe to get rid of *dukkha* rather than just accumulating *kilesas* and causing disgust amongst the laity? People can easily get tired of this kind of *bhikkhu* because they take up the robe just to accumulate more lust. What is the use of doing this? It is useless. Think about it! I am not exaggerating, for this is the truth. We can all see it. But if you take up the robe following the example of the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas*, then can the highest goal really escape from your practice? Your practice is really vital. So please take it to heart.

Every kind of lust is the product of the *kilesas*. You must always look at them as harmful to the heart, and always fight them. The word *phra* in Thai means *bhikkhu*, it also means noble. Don't be noble just in name, like a person with a noble name but who finds himself in jail. Let us be noble in quality. As a practitioner, you must not be heedless or complacent. In your conversations, don't get carried away, for this is a way of being heedless and negligent, and is contrary to the tradition of the *bhikkhu* and practitioner. You must always be mindful and cautious. Be very mindful in your conversations when you come together to work or have your refreshment. Watch your heart. As far as having refreshment is concerned, this is merely to keep your body going. But as far as the conflict between the *kilesas* and the Dhamma is concerned, you must always keep on fighting. If you ever want to acquire the most supreme and valuable treasure, it's essential that you must always watch out for *saṅkhāra* and *saññā*. As a practitioner, you must beware the chicanery of these two most significant *khandhas*.

As far as the eyes and visible form, the ears and sound etc., are concerned, they are not as incessant as the *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* that are always mesmerized by the thoughts that arise from the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava* that in turn entangle your heart. They continually exhibit

themselves. Even when you are doing walking meditation, they draw up images of the *kilesas* right in front of you. *Saññā* recalls the past. It remembers past experiences of visible objects, sounds, tastes, smells, and tactile objects and the accompanying emotions that disturb the heart. It is *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* that create the various feelings and emotions inside the heart. Even while you are doing walking meditation, you can be creating the *kilesas* right there and then. This is because you are continually being deceived by *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*, both day and night. As soon as you wake up, they begin to create the images of the *kilesas*. But you don't know this. Whatever topics *saññā* recalls, and *saṅkhāra* thinks of, restlessness, agitation, or dissatisfaction will follow, because they will only recall and think of issues that poison the heart. So how can the heart not be upset? If you are observant, you will know this. As a practitioner, how can you not know this? You will get to see very clearly how important *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are. They are constantly creating feelings and emotions to disturb you.

As a practitioner, you must be earnest and serious in your practice. Totally commit yourself! I would really like to listen to my students telling me about the results that arise from their practices, my students who have come to live with me and received my instructions that I have given them to the utmost of my ability. I have not hidden anything or kept anything secret from you concerning the various aspects and levels of the Dhamma. In every aspect of the Dhamma, be it the practice itself or the results from it, I have completely revealed it to you without hiding anything. What happened to this Dhamma that I have taught you? Has it become void, without any result? Is this the reason why you cannot practice and attain the result that I have explained to you? This is really something worth thinking about. The heart of the practitioner must be strong, and resolute. Don't be weak and wavering. This is not good, because it is contrary to the Dhamma principles. Weakness is not good for you. When you defy the Dhamma principles, you do it vigorously, but when you follow the Dhamma principles, you do it feebly.

As far as *samādhi* and *paññā* are concerned, you must not wait for them. Whenever it is appropriate to use *paññā* you must use it. *Paññā* kills the *kilesas*. *Samādhi* subdues them. They work together in subduing and destroying the *kilesas*. *Paññā* is terribly important. When you are investigating with *paññā*, and it suddenly strays into speculative thoughts and away from the truth, then you must first get back into *samādhi* to subdue the restless *kilesas*. You should use a meditation object that suits you to calm your heart. If you use the in-and-out breath as your meditation object, then you should be solely mindful of your in-and-out breath, and ignore everything else. Don't let anything distract you from your concentration. The heart likes to think a lot. The chief culprits here are the *kilesas* that push *saṅkhāra* to think, and *saññā* to speculate. They are a lot more restless than monkeys, making the heart behave like a monkey. For example, when you investigate the body with *paññā*, but you can't see the *asubha* or loathsomeness of the body, or *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā* of the body, then it's because the *kilesas* have taken over.

The heart is now hungry for other thoughts. So you must immediately curb it by using *samādhi*. Be earnest, really commit yourselves! After the heart has gained calm, then you should investigate again. You must astutely direct your investigation if you want it to be fruitful. Then you are really investigating with *paññā*. This is only possible when the heart is calm. You must always observe your investigation. When you practice mental development, you cannot avoid observing—you have to observe. You cannot rely solely on the techniques taught by your teacher. You have to also devise your own techniques. Otherwise you will not gain any wisdom. Any time when it is suitable to investigate, then you must investigate. You can investigate the *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā* of the body, or you can investigate the loathsomeness of the body, or any other way you like that accords with the truth and causes dispassion of the body to arise. They are the truth, but when the heart's view goes contrary to the Dhamma, then it is not willing to accept this truth.

What is your body like? Where does it come from? You must dig into it and differentiate it to see its true nature. You say that it is 'I' or 'You' or 'They' or 'Them', or that it is people, or an animal. Where does this body get its form? You must dig into its origins, which are the four elements of earth, water, air and fire. The body is mostly composed with the earth element, namely the hair of the head, the hair of the body, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the sinews, and the bones, and so forth. You can see them clearly with your own eyes. They are the earth element. Saliva, for instance, is the water element. The air element is the air that we breathe in. The fire element is the heat that digests your food. These are the four elements. But when the heart takes possession of this body, it then erroneously perceives it to be 'I' or 'They', or people or animals. This body is 'I' and it is 'mine'. The eyes, the arms, the legs and all the other body parts are all mine. Your heart generates these perceptions automatically. The same with animals. They don't have to be told because it's nature's way.

The *kilesas* are one aspect of nature. They do not need to be taught. These four elements combine to become the body and then become possessed by the heart. How long will they remain combined? From the time of conception, maybe ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years or more. From time immemorial you have been deceived by the *kilesas* to think that the body is I, is a human being, is an animal, is you, or is me, although it is just the formation of the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire. But the *kilesas* deceive you to think otherwise. When the body dies, where does it go? Do you still call it a human being or an animal? The earth element will return to earth, the water element will return to water, the air element will return to air, and the fire element will return to fire. They all return to their respective element. Can you still call this body a human being or an animal? Of course not! They are just elements, and truly so. But when they combine to form the body, why do you then give them a different name, although they are still the elements? You must investigate the truth with *paññā*. It is only the heart that can make this body move

around. This body is just the elements. When it dies, it just returns to the elements.

But you keep calling it I or mine from the day of your birth to the present. You have been deceived by the *kilesas*! Do you still want to be deceived by them? You will be deceived by them until you die if you don't see its true nature. If your *paññā* cannot catch up with the *kilesas*, then you will always think in terms of I and mine, and of animals and human beings. Even after the body has gone back to its respective elements, the *upādāna* or attachment to this view will always remain embedded within your heart. When it takes up a new body it will consider the body to be I and mine again. This will go on forever without ever coming to an end. This is the way to investigate with *paññā*. In order to clearly see the truth, you must investigate again and again until it is permanently impressed within your heart. Your attachment will disappear naturally when you have really seen the truth. You can't force the attachment to disappear. Only *paññā* can do this. When *paññā* has seen the truth, then the attachment will disappear.

Whichever part of the truth you've seen, then that part will be free. That is why you are taught to investigate, because once you have investigated and come to understand the truth, then you will let go of them, because they are all fake they are not the truth. You are defying the truth, and are constantly living with false truth in all of your postures, standing, sitting, walking, and lying down, both day and night. You don't know this, so you must investigate. Speaking about *paṭikkūla*, or the filthiness of the body, it is full of excrement. This excrement comes out through the hair of the head, the nails, the teeth, or the pores of the body. They are all over the body. There is nothing there that you can call pretty or beautiful. This body is merely wrapped with a very thin skin membrane. Is it really impossible for *sati* and *paññā* to penetrate this thin membrane if you really want to? What is the purpose of *satipaññā*? It is for digging out the truth, especially that of the five *khandhas* or aggregates.

You cannot eat *paññā*. It's only used for the investigation of the various parts of the body that the master of deception has taken hold of. When you have seen it clearly, then the *upādāna* or attachment will vanish. This *upādāna* is much heavier than a solid mountain. When you have seen clearly, you will let go of your attachment, and the heart will become loftier. It will continue to elevate until it finally arrives at the state of freedom or purity. Be earnest. Really commit yourselves to your practice. You have to have standards and goals. Don't be lackadaisical. Don't see other places as more important than the place where you'll find the truth. This should be your main criteria. Wherever you are, you should think of this criteria. It's your battleground. It's where the *kilesas* are found.

The Lord Buddha taught the Dhamma clearly. His teaching was well taught in every respect, capable of leading the practitioner gradually away from *dukkha*, eventually achieving the complete freedom from *dukkha*, without any doubts. So how can you have any doubts? The *kilesas* do not have a teacher, so how is it that they can become your teacher? The Lord Buddha tirelessly taught us the Dhamma. How then can the Dhamma not prevail over the *kilesas*? Your practice can conquer the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* have no teacher, but you have a teacher who has taught you very well. Why can't you then beat the *kilesas*, which have not been to school at all? You have always been on the losing side. This is no good. Normally, in the beginning you have to struggle very hard. This is because the *kilesas* have always been very powerful. They have always dominated your heart. So when you subdue them, you must use maximum effort, sometimes even putting your life at stake. When it is time to give up your life for the noble truth, then you must do it. Make the results appear and the light shine forth in your heart! When you see the truth that really impresses your heart, then you cannot help but utter "Fantastic! Now I know the truth of *dukkha*, the truth of *samudaya*, and the truth of attachment!" They cannot escape from *paññā*.

Be serious and earnest. Teachers that can really teach the Dhamma are very hard to find nowadays. There are many practicing *bhikkhus*, but very few of them have discovered or come across the noble truth from their practical experience. And what is the reason? It is degenerate. Although a banknote is merely a piece of paper, it is enough to burn a *bhikkhu's* heart. We all know that it is just a piece of paper. If you use it to roll a cigarette, it doesn't even taste good. But you are deluded by it. The heart will readily grab the fake things because it itself is full of fake things. So when two phony things come together, it is very easy for them to combine, because there is no truth in the heart. But when you have developed your heart through your practice and have, stage by stage, established the noble truth inside your heart, you'll then discard the fake things and the heart will change from being phony to being genuine. In the beginning, the practice is very hard, but you have to endure it. You have endured *dukkha* for eons in the past. In this life the *dukkha* is also pervasive. When the heart constantly builds up worries and anxieties, how can you avoid *dukkha*? These *khandhas* are the tool of the *kilesas* that enable the *kilesas* to constantly exhibit themselves. As soon as *kilesas* appear, *dukkha* also simultaneously appears. So how can you not experience *dukkha*? If you can't see the danger of the *kilesas*, you'll never see the Dhamma.

I have instructed you to the utmost of my ability and really want you to practice. I don't want to see zero results. When doing walking or sitting meditation, there is just sleepiness. How then can there be any result? So what are you going to do? Today it is like this. Tomorrow you'll do the same thing and get the same result. No new result to surprise the heart. You'll then become discouraged. The teaching that your teacher has given you will be meaningless because the *kilesas* win. They make no exception for any class of people. They dominate and influence your heart and make you suffer. You have taken up the robe for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas* through your own diligent efforts and strenuous exertions. Why can't you do it? When you have eliminated some of the *kilesas*, you'll see the benefits of your

efforts. When the heart has calmed down from the restlessness and agitation from your meditation practice, you'll see how valuable your practice is. You'll then move forward.

If you keep using *satipaññā*, it will mature. When you investigate the body and the other *khandhas*, the truth will gradually appear. *Paññā* will arise from your investigation. When you have seen the benefits of *paññā*, you'll want to investigate more and more until *paññā* becomes automatic. As the *kilesas* steadily diminish, your diligent effort will steadily increase until reaching full capacity. Then you'll always want to go into battle. To fight the *kilesas* will be your main preoccupation. Your laziness will disappear because it is the product of the *kilesas*. The more the *kilesas* diminish, the more intense will be your conviction and efforts. The more the *kilesas* disappear, the more the Dhamma will appear. When all the *kilesas* are totally eliminated, you'll then see that all the *dukkha* that used to consume your heart have all disappeared. The heart then becomes totally empty. Nothing can disturb or afflict it anymore, because you have totally relinquished your attachment with *paññā*. When *paññā* has investigated to the point of clearly seeing the noble truth, it will let go of everything. Then the heart becomes empty, devoid of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsva* that used to poison the heart in the past. This emptiness is the absolute Dhamma.

All that is left behind are the *khandhas* that still remain functional, just like the lizard's tail that still wriggles and wriggles after it has been cut off the creature's body. These *khandhas* will remain functional until death when they finally cease. They are insignificant and don't know that they are so. For instance, the body doesn't know that it is a body. Neither do *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* or *viññāṇa*. They appear and then disappear. *Saññā* recollects then disappears. *Viññāṇa* becomes aware of the sensual objects and then disappears, because *avijjā*, the main culprit, is no longer there to direct them. The *khandhas* then become the instrument of the Dhamma. Before, they were the instrument of the *kilesas*. But after the emptiness or absolute Dhamma

has appeared in the heart, then the *khandhas* are used to benefit the world, like the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas* who used the five *khandhas* to teach the Dhamma to the world. When all the *kilesas* have been eliminated, then all the *khandhas* will become the instrument of the Dhamma until death following the law of *aniccāṃ, dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*. They are *sammati* or conventional reality, and must follow the law of *sammati*. The *khandhas* are *sammati*, so are *aniccāṃ, dukkhaṃ* and *anattā*. They must go their natural way.

The one who has attained purity doesn't have any problems. He is free from worry. *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ*—*Nibbāna* is the supreme bliss. Where do you find it? When the *kilesas* have all disappeared from the heart, that's where you'll find it. What else are you going to seek? You have always been afflicted with *dukkha* because of the *kilesas*. But after the *kilesas* have all disappeared, where are you going to find any *dukkha*? And where are you going to look for *Nibbāna*? If you're still deluded, you will still seek it. But after you have become enlightened, you won't look for it any more. *Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ* is eternal. The Lord Buddha said that *Nibbāna* is permanent. When the heart has attained absolute contentment, and has let go of all *sammati*, it won't be upset by any problems, because it is totally devoid of them. What problems can there be? Living or dying poses no problem because they are part of nature. This heart has transcended all the problems of the world.

Calming the Citta with Paññā

— June 22nd, 1979

All of you who come here for instruction, please be earnest and resolute in your practice. I'll do my best to give you the instructions. Sometimes I cover everything that I know, and sometimes I only touch on a few points. But I have never hidden anything from you. I have told you all that I know regarding my practice and how difficult it was. I revealed it to you so you can use it as an example. It's not for showing off. When fighting the *kilesas* you have to be aggressive, or else you will not even scratch the surface of them. There are times when you can practice lightly, but there are also times when you have to commit your total effort. Such a time will come and it will happen within your hearts, and you will know it, if you practice with discernment and sound judgment. You'll know when you arrive at a situation that forbids you from retreating, that you must only go forward. You'll either lose your life or realize the truth. I myself have experienced this. I've never thought that I would become your teacher. Looking back at my stupidity and the restlessness of my *citta*, I never thought that I would be in this position. But the *citta* is not above training. It can be trained.

When the *citta* becomes very restless, you have to be forceful. You have to reduce your food consumption and intensify your exertion. You have to discipline yourself in every respect.

When the body weighs heavily on the *citta*, you have to fast. This is the way of training yourself. Even when the body is not oppressive to the *citta*, but it's still restless, then you must intensify your investigation to search and destroy the *kilesas*. When you are forced to totally commit yourself, then you will come to experience the result of your wisdom and mindfulness. I have a coarse temperament. I could not practice lightly but had to practice very aggressively in order to achieve result. That is why I can attest to you that in times of suffering, when you're driven into a corner, you can surpass it, you'll not remain stupid. During such a time, you'll be forced to think of a way out. When you do, then wisdom will arise. It is the same when you're surrounded by the *kilesas*, you'll be forced to figure a way of escape. You'll have to utilize *satipaññā* to get you out of the mess. The *kilesas* will then retreat, leaving you in a state of calm.

At such a time you'll gain confidence in your wisdom and mindfulness that is capable of destroying the *kilesas*. You'll never forget the result that arises from this strenuous exertion because it will be impressed in your hearts. This is why I want you all to use *paññā*. You shouldn't wait until you have established *samādhi* before using *paññā*. When you are developing calm, you have to commit your total effort. The *kilesas* are in the *citta*, and so is *satipaññā*. So there is no reason why *satipaññā* cannot get rid of the *kilesas* in order for you to calm down. If you are resolute, then the state of calm cannot slip from your grasp, and the *citta* will definitely calm down. You must not let the *citta* lead you astray, but rather you must use your mindfulness to direct it into calm. When you want to be calm, you have to closely watch the *citta* because the *citta* is the one that prevents itself from calming down by thinking endlessly; that in turn creates mental pictures to fool you. There is not a single moment in which the *citta* does not conceive these mental images. To see where the *citta* is leading

you to, you have to watch it closely. No matter how fast the *citta* becomes, mindfulness will be just as fast, because the *citta* can't escape from mindfulness. You will then get the *citta* to calm down. This is the way of calming the *citta*. In the beginning stages of practice, calming the *citta* can be quite difficult, but you should not let it obstruct your practice.

When you're about to pass away, the pain will be very severe, especially if you haven't developed any Dhamma in your heart. You won't have any mindfulness and wisdom to protect you, and you'll be entirely engulfed by pain. But if you have the Dhamma, you'll be strong and firm to face up to this final moment. The *kilesas* are strong, so you cannot be weak. You must be strong too. Usually it is the *kilesas* that are always strong, and you're always weak. You can't be weak but must be equally strong. When you've established some calm, you should investigate and develop *paññā*. Because the development of *samādhi* isn't restricted to being mindful solely of your meditation object, you can also use *paññā* to calm down the *citta*—this is called *paññā* develops *samādhi*. The calm that arises by *paññā* will make you very courageous, much more so than from concentrating on a meditation object. I really want you to experience this. What I have told you is from my own practical experiences and I have not added anything to it. This is exactly how it was. I am showing you the results that I've experienced within my own heart. It is the truth that is now within my heart, and I am telling you just this truth and nothing more. Be really earnest, and really commit yourself to the practice.

Don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna*. Just observe and focus your attention on the one who is confused, because this is the one who obstructs the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* from you. It's your thoughts, imagination, and delusion which are the thorns that are obstructing you from attaining the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. You have to calm the *citta*. Once the *citta* calms down, then happiness will arise and become the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*'s living proof. After you have emerged from this state of calm, then you should investi-

gate. You must investigate the body—look at it clearly. It is always with you. Why can't you see the truth of this body? It's merely a piece of skin wrapped around a skeleton, but you mistake it for a human being, a person, considering it beautiful and permanent. You are deceived by your own delusion, because the body is *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. It's a living cemetery. It's the same with everybody who lives in this world. You have to investigate to see this truth, and then you'll see the Dhamma. To think that this body is permanent is really the delusion created by the *kilesas*. If you believe the Dhamma, then you must not believe the *kilesas*. You have to investigate and analyze in order to remove the delusion created by the *kilesas*. Then you'll see that this body is not I or mine, not *niccam*, not *sukkham*, not *attā*, not permanent, pleasant, not a self. It's truly *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*—impermanent, suffering and not-self. Get to see it clearly. Investigate earnestly.

You have to have calm as a practitioner, and especially so as a *bhikkhu*. You'll really waste your human birth if you can't realize from your Dhamma practice peace of mind, freedom from suffering and *Nibbāna*. It'll really be a shame. So don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* because this is just the *kilesa's* diversion. You should follow the Dhamma which teaches you to look at the heart because the *kilesas* are in the heart, and the means of eliminating the *kilesas* are also in the heart. Where are the Four Noble Truths? Where is *dukkha*? The *dukkha* of the body and the *dukkha* of the heart are inside yourselves. You are their creator. Why then can't you see the truth of *dukkha*? And what is it that causes this *dukkha* to arise and consume your heart? What else can it be if not the *kilesas* which the Lord Buddha called *samudaya*—the cause of *dukkha*? It's in your heart. Who'll detect this *samudaya* if not *satipaññā*? You'll see the *kilesas* and the cause of *dukkha* within your heart with *satipaññā*. You must not speculate, but must delve into your heart because that's where the truth is. When it is time to use *satipaññā*, you must use it. You can do it, otherwise the Lord Buddha would not have taught you to do so.

Some of the *sāvakas* had to struggle just like you're doing now. You can see this from the scriptures. For instance, the Venerable Culapanthaka who could not memorize some chants for four months. So his brother got very disappointed with him. When they were invited to go for *dāna* with the Lord Buddha, his brother did not invite him, because he considered him very stupid. Because of this, the Venerable Culapanthaka became very depressed and took the opportunity to investigate the Dhamma using his *satipaññā*, and attained enlightenment right on that very day. When the Lord Buddha noted that not all the *bhikkhus* had come yet, he told someone to go and fetch the missing *bhikkhu*. The Venerable Culapanthaka, in addition to his enlightenment, had also attained the supernatural power of being capable of creating a thousand images of himself. So when the person to fetch him arrived at the monastery, he met many Culapanthakas, and did not know which one to invite. He returned to tell the Lord Buddha about this. The Lord Buddha told him to grab the first Culapanthaka that he saw by the robe. When he did this, all the other Culapanthakas disappeared.

The Lord Buddha already knew that the Venerable Culapanthaka had attained enlightenment because his brother disciplined him by not inviting him to go for *dāna* with the other *bhikkhus*. His brother did this for a reason, and the Lord Buddha did not reprimand him for it. His brother was already an *arahant*. You can see how difficult it was for them, but when they strived, they could eventually attain enlightenment. You're human beings like them. Although you might not possess any supernatural power, you at least have the power to subdue and destroy the *kilesas*. You must really commit yourselves—be really resolute and earnest. The *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna* are right here within your heart, but you just let the *kilesas* trample all over you. Not to be able to enjoy the taste of the Dhamma is really a shame for a practitioner. You tend to let yourselves be dragged away by the *kilesas* all the time. So you should be very strict with yourselves.

And what is *magga*? It's *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. You're already keeping *sīla*, so there's no need to talk about it other than *samādhi* and *paññā*. What prevents the heart from being calm? You know that it is because of the *kilesas* luring you away from your meditation practice. You must therefore apply *satipaññā* to calm the *citta* or use a mantra. But if using a mantra does not calm the *citta*, then you must use *satipaññā* to investigate what the *citta* is thinking about. It has been thinking from the first day of your lives up until today, but what good has this ever done you? You have been continually deceived by the delusion created by the *kilesas* within your minds. Aren't you tired of this? You get tired of many things, but why don't you ever get tired of being fooled by the *kilesas*? If you're really desirous of enlightenment, then you must use *satipaññā*. You have to ask yourselves what you are thinking about, because this is the way of using *satipaññā*. At this moment, if you're going to think, you must think of the Dhamma. You have to be really earnest in order to achieve results. *Satipaññā* will remove all the delusions that have blinded the *citta*, and gradually bring about *nirodha* through the development of the *magga*. Once the *magga* is fully developed, then all the *kilesas*, from the coarsest to the most subtle, will disappear.

You can develop *satipaññā* to defeat the *kilesas*. Then the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* will appear in your hearts. After the *kilesas* have been vanquished, then there is no need to ask where *Nibbāna* is. The *arahants* themselves never ask about *Nibbāna* because the word *Nibbāna* is just a signpost pointing the way to *Nibbāna*. For example, if you were to put up the name of this monastery at the entrance, it would not make any difference to you, because you already know that this is Wat Pa Baan Taad. But to those who have not come here before, it would make a difference. When they first arrived, they would ask 'What monastery is this?' After seeing the sign they would say 'Oh, this is Wat Pa Baan Taad.' Those who live in the monastery don't need the sign. Similarly with those who already know the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. They don't have to read about them because they already

know within their hearts. The important thing is to remove all the *kilesas*. Then there won't be any question.

What are *sammati* and *vimutti*? What is the real truth? The term 'Nibbāna' is *sammati*. What is it that is given the name *Nibbāna*, if not the purified *citta*? What else could it be? You have to purify your *citta*, and after you have done that, you will have no doubt. After you die, where will you be? If you've attained *Nibbāna*, this will not be an issue. It will only be an issue for those who still have the *kilesas*. Wherever they are, they will always be devoured by the *kilesas*. It is not *Nibbāna* that afflicts the world but the *kilesas*.

As practitioners, you must be resolute and earnest. Totally commit yourselves to eradicating all the *kilesas* from your hearts. There has never been a single *arahant* so out of his mind to ask what the state of purity is or what *Nibbāna* is. All that's necessary is to have your *citta* purified. Every question will then be answered. The question regarding the time and place of the Lord Buddha's and all the other Buddhas' entry into *Parinibbāna* will be answered in the purified *citta*. Looking from a purified *citta* you will understand because it's the same truth. They merge perfectly together. All questions will disappear the instant you attain the state of purity. Wherever you are, you will always be with the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, right within your heart. Once the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha have arisen in your hearts, they will become the *Dhammapadipo*—the Light of Dhamma. They all become the One Dhamma. As far as the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are concerned, this is merely a conventional way of describing these three aspects of the One Dhamma. But after they've appeared in your hearts, they will become the One Dhamma.

I translate *majjhimā*, the Middle Way, as suitability. This is the suitable practice for the eradication of the *kilesas*. If the *kilesas* are forceful, then the *majjhimā* must also be forceful. When the *kilesas* become more subtle, then the *majjhimā* must also become more subtle. When the *majjhimā* overwhelms the *kilesas*, it will then destroy all the *kilesas*, and will retire from active duty, because the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* or the

Middle Way which is the means of eliminating the *kilesas*, is *sammati*. The *kilesas* are also *sammati*. They are the binding *sammati*, whilst the *majjhimā* is the unbinding *sammati*. The Four Noble Truths—*dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *maggā*, are also *sammati*. *Nirodha* is the cessation of *dukkha*. Once *dukkha* has ceased, what else is there to do? At the final moment when *dukkha* completely disappears, you'll know that it has forever ceased. Why practice anymore? You've already achieved your goal. The one who knows the cessation of the *kilesas*, is not the Noble Truths. The cessation of the *kilesas* is what you're actually after. But the one who has attained this state makes no comment at all. He doesn't say that he takes or gives, for he has now arrived at the absolute suitability, the natural state of *majjhimā*, being in the middle of love and hate, just right, proper, and appropriate, being contented, not hungry, nothing is too much or too little. It's not affected by praises or criticisms because it's fully contented.

Concerning the four *maggas*, the four *phalas* and *Nibbāna*, if you haven't practiced, you'll always be in doubt. But after you've practiced and become enlightened you'll not be in doubt at all. At the final moment, when the *citta* completely gets rid of *avijjā*, it happens in a single instant. At that instant, the *maggā* merges with the *phala*. And immediately after that, it's mistakenly described in the scriptures as the *arahatta phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*, when in fact it's *Nibbāna*. Because when the *maggā* and *phala* are still in action, it can't be *Nibbāna*, because it's still *sammati*. It's similar to walking up the steps of the *sālā* or building, where you place one foot on the *sālā* floor whilst the other foot is still on the step. You haven't yet accomplished your goal. But when the other foot is lifted from the step and placed on the *sālā* floor, then right at that instant you've achieved your goal, which is similar to achieving *Nibbāna* although the scriptures describe it as the fruit of *arahantship*. When you get there it won't be an issue. The Lord Buddha had to clarify this point because had he not done so the *sāvakas* who had attained *Nibbāna* would have asked him anyway. 'Why didn't you mention this point?' That was the reason why the Lord Buddha divided these attainments into nine stages: the

four paths, the four fruits, and *Nibbāna*, in order to be precise and prevent any confusion amongst all the *arahant sāvakas* who must pass through these nine stages.

After you've attained the ultimate goal, all relationships will then disappear. When the path merges with the fruit, there's still a relationship. That's why the Lord Buddha emphasized that *nirodha* must be completely realized. *Nirodha* is the cessation of *dukkha*. In my own words, it means that you should strive for the total cessation of *dukkha*. But you usually interpret it to mean different from what it's intended to. Instead of exerting for the removal of the *kilesas*, you become embroiled with how to achieve *nirodha*. As soon as you've got rid of the *kilesas*, *nirodha* will appear. The truth and theory are two different things, two different worlds. The truth is absolute, whilst the theory can change and mustn't be used to measure the truth. For instance, when you hear about the heavenly abodes, or the paths, the fruits, and *Nibbāna*, you can't help but speculate, because your *citta* hasn't actually attained them yet. You can only commit them to memory. Although the *citta* may be able to remember by heart what *Nibbāna* is, the *citta* itself hasn't yet realized *Nibbāna*, for it's still fully possessed with the *kilesas*. This is what is meant by memory. Please remember this well.

But when the *citta* has passed these various stages of attainments by practice, they'll then become real. They are the truth. Your questions and doubts will be eliminated. For example, if someone tells you about London, England, all that you can do then is to speculate and imagine in your minds. But when you yourselves actually go to London, then what you've imagined in your minds will totally disappear, and be replaced by what you see. What you've imagined is false and will be replaced by what you actually see. What's left impressed in your minds will be the truth. It's the same with the four paths, four fruits, and *Nibbāna*. You remember them, but are always doubtful. But when you've realized them, all your doubts will be eliminated. The truth and memory are two different things. They are worlds apart.

For this reason, no matter how many *arahants* there might be, even if there were a million or more, there would not be any doubts or contradictions amongst them. Similarly with those who have gone to London, there would not be any contradictions amongst them, because they all have seen exactly the same thing. Before, you would have questioned: ‘What are the *maggas*; what are the *phalas*; what are the paths and fruits of the *sotāpanna*, or the *sakadāgāmī*, or the *anāgāmī* or the *arahant*?’ But as soon as you’ve practiced and passed through these stages, then you’ll know what they are. After you’ve reached *Nibbāna*, there’ll be no more contradictions because all the *sammatti* have disappeared. Doubts and questions are *sammatti*. After you’ve seen the truth, all the doubts and questions will disappear. The Lord Buddha called this *vimutti*, which means Freedom.

You’ve been shouldering the futile burden of memory and speculation for a long time. Why don’t you shoulder the truth for a change? See what it’s like, how heavy it is. Shouldering the burden of memory and speculation is a very heavy load, but you don’t realize this. You should carry the load of truth to see whether it is heavy or not, and to see the difference between them! You’ve learned many truths from the scriptures. Now you should learn the truth from your practice. If they’re not different, why would the Lord Buddha have taught you to practice? The Lord Buddha taught you to develop *pariyatti*, *paṭipatti*, and *paṭivedha* which means studying the scriptures, practice the teaching and then attain the results. *Pariyatti* is the studying of the Middle Way. You can study from the scriptures, or from your preceptor on the day of your ordination when he teaches you the five parts of the body—*kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco*, hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, and skin. You must then apply them in your practice by continually investigating these body parts to see them all the time. This is *paṭipatti* or practice. When you’ve achieved this, it’s *paṭivedha*, the gradual realization of the truth. *Paṭivedha* or the results from practice don’t usually appear all at once but appear gradually. When you’ve uprooted all of the *kilesas*, you’ll then achieve the full *paṭivedha* or result. All of your burdens will be shed. The problems

caused by the *kilesas* will all come to an end and you'll forever live in peace. The victory of the world is different from the victory of the Dhamma. The Lord Buddha said that no matter how many people you might have killed in battle, even if it were millions, it wouldn't bring you true peace and happiness. To destroy all the *kilesas* within your hearts is most supreme. To conquer yourself is the greatest victory. Don't you want this kind of victory?

Therefore, all of you who come to live here, and there are many of you, must watch your *kilesas*. You have to be especially mindful of the *kilesa* that thinks very highly of itself. This is very important. You should not display your *kilesas*, but should instead display the Dhamma if you want to live together peacefully. You should always follow the Dhamma teaching that exhort you to always have *mettā* or loving-kindness for your colleagues, regardless of whether they're good or not, accomplished or not. You should always treat them well. If they have achieved something, then you should praise them. Then you'll all live in peace, harmony and happiness. All of you come from different places, and have different temperaments. So you have to blend together to become one body.

The Four Satīpaṭṭhānas

June 27th, 1979 —

For the Lord Buddha and the *sāvaka*s, the Dhamma is most important. They weren't interested in building temples and monasteries, but were solely interested in their Dhamma practices. After they became enlightened, they were only interested in propagating the Dhamma teaching to the world, like Ven. Ajaan Mun, for example. Did he build any monasteries? All he ever did was to develop his *citta* to his utmost ability. After he became enlightened, he then tirelessly taught the Dhamma. You should take him as your role model. People all over Thailand and abroad have great esteem for him. After you've attained enlightenment, your ability to teach the world the Dhamma will be immeasurable. Think about it! This will only happen after the Dhamma becomes established inside the heart. The heart is, therefore, of paramount importance. After enlightenment, it will have extraordinary powers. Has there ever been a temple or a shrine that can teach the world the Dhamma and make people good? Have you ever seen any shrine capable of doing this?

I'm not speaking in contempt. I'm just saying this based on facts and common sense. I'm not saying that shrines should not be built.

In places where it is appropriate, I wouldn't object at all. But in places where it's not suitable, like in forest monasteries, then it shouldn't be built because it will only hurt those places. This monastery, for example, is the place for the development of the heart. After you've achieved this goal, imagine the benefits you'll give the world. I've carefully considered this point. Therefore, all of you who come here from the various parts of the country and the world, please be earnest and take this to heart. I always have compassion for you. That's why I have never let go of my responsibilities in teaching you. Although I may not always have the time to teach the laity, I always find the time to teach you. After you become enlightened you can then help the world by propagating the Dhamma, which will happen naturally.

When you have the treasure of the Dhamma, then you can share it. But to share something you don't have is pure delusion. To teach the Dhamma when you haven't yet become enlightened is counter-productive. You'll do more harm than good. The Lord Buddha and the *sāvaka*s didn't do it this way. They became enlightened first before they taught the Dhamma. If they hadn't yet realized the Dhamma, what could they teach? There's no truth in empty wind, no substance with which to attract people's attention, and no basis for others to depend on. But when we have established the Dhamma within our hearts, our teachings will become very invaluable. This is the benefit of developing the *citta*. So please become more determined—be serious and earnest in your practice. Don't speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* to be in various places other than in the body and the *citta*, for they are found right in these two places which make up the five *khandhas*. Take this to heart.

When the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects contact the heart they will entrap it with love and hate. It's therefore imperative to investigate them with *paññā* until the heart has understood their true nature and let go of them and retreated inward. *Paññā* will constantly feed the heart with the right information to prevent the heart from being confused, anxious or worried. When it's time to

develop *samādhi*, it'll be easily achieved. The heart will be cool and calm. You must solve your problems with *paññā* when it's appropriate to do so. Don't be idle. *Paññā* is extremely important, whilst *sati* is the workhorse that directs your practice and keeps you mindful and attentive, and enables *paññā* to investigate at its fullest. When you've seen the results of your investigations with *paññā*, you'll become encouraged to intensify your investigation further. This is similar to a businessman who has made a profit: he will be encouraged to work harder. But if he keeps losing, then he'll become discouraged and lazy. It is the same way with the development of the heart. When you've gained some results and progressed, you'll be encouraged to intensify your efforts.

Don't remain idle like a tree stump, lacking appreciation for the Dhamma. Don't get involved with worldly matters because they are all devised by the *kilesas* to oppress, depress and delude the *citta*, causing it to be totally ignorant of the truth and Dhamma. When you walk or sit in meditation you only do it with your body, not with your *citta* because it's involved with worldly matters, with the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, with the past, and with the future, which cause it to be restless and agitated. How then can you profit from your practice? When you're not profiting but losing you'll become discouraged and lazy. This laziness is created by you and it's you who has to pay for it with *dukkha* that devours your hearts in every form of existence. This is the fruit of laziness, so you must see its harm. You must use your *satipaññā* to devise a way to overcome your laziness. This is the way of a wise man. Developing yourself is much more important than developing anything else. Whether it is hard or easy, it's not beyond your abilities.

The Lord Buddha taught the 84,000 Dhamma discourses to suit our temperaments and abilities. They can be summarized into three categories namely, *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. So they aren't really that many, and involve just the body and the *citta*. Why can't you develop them? When you do walking meditation or *caṅkama*, you should

have continuous mindfulness. It is the same way when you do sitting meditation or *samādhi*. You're your own master when you practice diligently. You mustn't think that mastering yourself is a thorn, and doing what you like is a good thing, for this is the *kilesas* whispering to your heart to lead you astray. If you see practicing diligently as your adversary and see the *kilesas* as your friends then you might as well be dead because you'll repeatedly be born and die, again and again.

Therefore, you must really be earnest. Really commit yourself. The practice environment in this monastery is fairly suitable, though not quite like that in the time of the Lord Buddha when they were mainly forests and mountains. But there are quite enough forested areas here. I am trying my best to help you in all respects because I really consider your welfare. I can tell people who come to this monastery, regardless of their social status, not to disturb your practices. I'm not afraid of anybody. I'm only afraid of contradicting the Dhamma. I have more respect for the Dhamma than for anyone else. When it's time to speak the truth, I will do so. I can tell them not to disturb you, because you're meditating. 'Don't bother them!' I will tell them. 'They're practicing. If they see you coming they'll have to move somewhere else. You'll disturb them.' I will also tell them when it is the proper time to see you. If they're disappointed or dismayed, that's not my concern, because speaking the truth should be the norm. There is nothing wrong with that. If it's wrong, it's because they're thinking wrongly. They don't know that it's essential to have privacy during practice.

If sitting meditation is hard on your body or if you're not engaged in any physical activity, then you should do a lot of walking meditation instead. At the same time, you should also develop your mindfulness because your practice depends significantly on it. In your investigation, you should consider your body as well as other people's bodies, both male and female, to see their true nature, because this is the way of developing *satipaṇṇā*, mindfulness and wisdom. *Magga* can be developed by investigating internal and external objects, be-

cause *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*, is created by clinging to both of them. Attachment to forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, which are outside the heart, is a form of *samudaya* that arises when you become attached to this or that person, this or that thing. You must, therefore, develop *satipaṇṇā* to eliminate this attachment because *satipaṇṇā* is the *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. You can investigate anybody's body, male or female because they can all be the object of your investigation. You must investigate by using the Dhamma teaching as your guide, for instance, investigating to see the loathsome nature or *asubha* of the body, to see its filthiness or *paṭikūla*, to see it as a cemetery, and to see it as *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā* because they are the truth. You can investigate either your body or someone else's body.

You must always fight the *kilesas* because they've always been your enemy and are inside your hearts. Most of the time it's the *kilesas* that have the upper hand and you don't even know this. How can you not know when you're knocked out by your opponent? If you do, you'll be spurred into developing your *satipaṇṇā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to fight and eventually destroy all the *kilesas*. This is the way of a fighter. If you fight like mad with all your might, you'll eventually win. If you don't fight, you'll never achieve any result from your sitting or walking meditation, such as calm or insight to encourage you to strive harder. When it's time to be tough, you must be tough. When it's time to go easy, you go easy. When the *kilesas* are aggressive, you must also be equally aggressive. If you should die, so be it! I, myself had been in this situation. I am not speaking without anything to back up what I say. When it's time to let it all out, I really let it all out. When this happens, I can assure you that you'll achieve results and destroy the *kilesas*. You have to investigate using your own devices because each practitioner has a different temperament and abilities. But let me warn you that the *kilesas* always like to be weak, and the Dhamma always likes to be resolute and strong, and can overcome weakness. Wisdom can overcome ignorance. It is the *kilesas* that make you ignorant, but the *kilesas* themselves are not ignorant. In fact they're very

clever. Therefore, you must develop *satipaṇṇā* to gradually eliminate ignorance from your hearts. The splendor of the heart will then gradually appear.

The treasure of the Dhamma is vital for the world's well-being, without it the world would be burning hot. Wealth alone can't make you happy, peaceful and cool. For this reason, the *sāsana* or the Lord Buddha's teaching is extremely essential. The *sāsana's* critics accuse it of being a narcotic and an addiction. If you've never practiced or benefited from the *sāsana*, you'll probably not be able to answer their accusations. They criticize the *bhikkhus* for doing nothing. But they never find fault with the pots and pans for not plowing the rice fields, because they are cooking utensils not ploughs and perform different functions. A battery charger is for charging batteries. The *sāsana* is for charging your courage and uplifting your spirits. This is the purpose of the *sāsana*. If a sick person doesn't seek help from a physician, how can he get well? He can only become a corpse. Think about it! Patients need physicians and medicine. If they think relying on physicians and medicine is harmful or addictive, then they will surely die. It's the same with people who are afflicted with the *kilesas*. They are mentally ill. They can't tell right from wrong, good from bad. They need the *sāsana* to tell them, and cure them of their illness.

Greed, hate, and delusion are mankind's deadliest threat. If left unchecked, they will tear the world apart. If you use the *sāsana* to subdue and eliminate them what harm can this do? How can the *sāsana* be harmful or addictive when it makes people good and the world peaceful? How can medicine and physicians be harmful and addictive to patients? Narcotic drugs will destroy you, but the *sāsana*, physicians and medicine won't. Only the dead don't have to rely on anything, but the living still do. They have to rely on medical professionals for their physical well-being and the *sāsana* or the Dhamma teaching for their mental health. Cars need roads to get to their destinations. Patients need physicians and medicine to get well, whether this is an addiction or not is irrelevant. To accuse the *sāsana* of being

a narcotic drug is just dirt that comes out of dirty mouths and dirty minds. Common sense will tell you that when you're sick, you need physicians and medicine to make you well.

It's the same with the *citta*. When it's still afflicted with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsaava*, then it has to rely on the Dhamma teaching to show it how to remove them. When it has finally removed them, it'll transcend both good and evil and won't need the Dhamma teaching anymore. It's like walking up the stairway to this *sālā* or building. As soon as you reach it, the stairway becomes irrelevant. You don't cling to the stairway. The *sāsana* doesn't teach you to cling. When you're cured from your illness, you won't need your doctor and medicine anymore. It's the same with the *citta*, when it has fully developed, it will no longer need the *sāsana* and will let go of it naturally. Right now you must exert yourself to the full. Use your *satipaṇṇā* to help the *citta* eliminate the *kilesas*. It's the *kilesas* that are the addiction! But the critics don't say this. If the Dhamma helps you remove the *kilesas*, how can it be harmful? It's the *kilesas* themselves that are harmful and have been for eons and countless existences. But you don't know this. It's very hard to find someone who's really sick of the *kilesas* to the point of ditching them. They've attached themselves to the heart and are completely hidden from view. Why doesn't anybody criticize them for doing this? It's only fair that the *kilesas* should also be criticized. You should think sensibly and fairly.

Mindfulness is extremely important, and you mustn't be without it. You should devise different techniques to entice the *citta* to practice. Then your mindfulness will become continuous. For example, you can try a different mantra or a new method of practice. Then you're really developing your *satipaṇṇā*. I also practiced in this way. You have to apply *satipaṇṇā* in your investigation of the body, your own body and other people's bodies until you see clearly the body's true nature. In the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, or the Four Foundations of Mindfulness Discourse, the Lord Buddha said that you should alternately investigate the internal and external body and then compare

them. This is the way of developing the *magga* or the path and the correct way of investigation. It's the same way with the investigation of the inner and the external *vedanā* or feelings. Actually, the external *vedanā* here isn't about other people's feelings but about the bodily or physical feelings, whilst the internal *vedanā* is about the mental feelings. I've gained this insight from my practice and I'm profoundly convinced of this, but I do not deny that the external *vedanā* can also refer to other people's feelings.

But this is very far from the four *satipaṭṭhāna* that are within you. If the internal and external *vedanās* are not in the body and the *citta*, where else could they be? Then the four *satipaṭṭhāna* would not be complete. But truly, the four *satipaṭṭhāna* are complete in each individual, so you can see them vividly and clearly if you investigate them. *Dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga* are also in the body and *citta*. When you're absolutely convinced that they're in yourselves, it doesn't hurt if you compare them with those of other people. You can investigate anyway you like, but your findings mustn't contradict the truth or the Dhamma. The Lord Buddha taught you to be wise, not stupid. What's essential here is for you to practice until the *kilesas* disappear from your hearts by the power of your *satipaṇṇā*. This happened with my investigation of *asubha* or the loathsomeness of the body. When I got myself really involved with this investigation, I became so disillusioned with the body that I burst into tears. I said to myself: 'So this is how to see the *asubha* of the body!' When *satipaṇṇā* probed into the body, it would slowly decompose and disappear like pointing a torch at it.

You should investigate until you see this *asubha* image clearly in your mind. Don't imagine or speculate. When you've seen the truth of *asubha*, you'll ditch the perception of beauty right away because you can see that it's just *paṭikkūla* or filthy, and it's made up of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. How then can you be deluded? You've now seen the truth of *asubha*, and realize that it was your imagination all along that obliterated the Lord Buddha's Dhamma.

You can now see how powerful and clever the *kilesas* really are in deceiving you to mistake loathsomeness for beauty. According to the Lord Buddha, the body is *aniccam* or impermanent, constantly changing, and it's just the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. But the *kilesas* manage to convince you that it's permanent, it's a human being, an animal, you or I. According to the Lord Buddha, the body is *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, but the *kilesas* wipe it all out by convincing you that it's otherwise, just like the critics of the *sāsana* who wipe the *sāsana* out by labeling it harmful and addictive.

The Lord Buddha said that the body is *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā*, but you see it otherwise. When you believe the *kilesas* you'll wipe out the Dhamma teaching. *Asubha* can be seen very clearly, but you don't see it. You see beauty in the body instead. But after you've seen the truth of the body, how can you go on contradicting it, and perpetually shoulder the burden of this contradiction? You'll definitely let go of the perception of beauty after you've seen the truth of *asubha* and seen the harm of your attachment that results from your investigation based on the Dhamma teaching. When your perceptions don't contradict the Dhamma teaching, you'll see the truth. The heart will let go of this wrong perception and become empty, peaceful, and at ease. You'll then investigate for more truths.

You must investigate the *asubha* of the body, as well as all the organs of the body, such as the muscles and sinews that hold the bones together, and the skin that wraps the entire body. This skin is like a shroud, a garment in which a corpse is wrapped. How can it be beautiful? You must investigate until you see the truth. Then you'll let go of your misperception naturally. No matter how dark this perception may be, it's just like the darkness of the night. After you've turned on the light, the darkness will disappear. It's the same with *satipaṇṇā*. Whatever object it investigates, that object will become illuminated. No other light in the world can be brighter than the light of *pañṇā*. The light of the sun can't pass through opaque objects, but the light of *pañṇā* can penetrate through every object. One who has this light of

paññā is called *Lokavidū*, the knower of the cosmos. All the truths that you've realized with *paññā* and are firmly established within your heart are similar in nature; they are all *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*.

You should choose the method of investigation that suits your temperament. If you enjoy investigating the *asubha* of the body, then you should concentrate on this investigation until you truly see the loathsome and filthy sides of the body. You'll definitely see the truth and discard your delusion if you're not lazy and don't let the *kilesas* lull you to sleep. The reason why you're still attached to this body is because you're still deluded and think that the body is I and mine, that the body is an animal or a human being. You then become attached to the body and brush aside the Dhamma teaching. But after you've investigated with *paññā* and realized the truth of the body, then your delusion and attachment will disappear. You'll leave the body alone. Then you'll be *anālayo* or devoid of any sorrow because you've completely severed your attachment to the body. You'll become blissful, light and at ease, and feel like a businessman who has made a lot of money and become very rich.

Next, you must investigate *vedanā* or feelings. The Lord Buddha said that they're merely feelings that appear and disappear. They can be good, bad, or neither good nor bad feelings of either the body or the mind. How can there be a human being, an animal, you or I in them? After you've investigated them using *paññā*, you'll see that they are merely mental objects or phenomena. As far as *saññā* or perception is concerned, it's the most subtle of the five *khandhas*. It'll quietly create mental images to fool you. On the other hand, *saṅkhāra* or the thought process will stir before it begins to think. You can distinctly feel this stirring. But with *saññā* there's no stirring at all. It'll create images to deceive you long before you realize it. The *citta* is continually deluded by these five *khandhas*. They deceive it with *sammati* or relative truths that are created by *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*. With the power of *paññā*, you'll discover that you've been deluded all along. When you probe the *citta* with *paññā*, you'll see the mental images appear

and then disappear and you'll realize that they are all created by the five *khandhas* and you have unknowingly become deluded by them. These images are not real. The *citta* is deceived by the five *khandhas*. It has taken whatever the five *khandhas* conjured up as the objects of its pleasure and sorrow for eons. Regarding *viññāṇa* or cognizance, it flicks on and off. It flicks on to acknowledge the sense data and ideas as they occur, and flicks off when they disappear, similar to a lightning flash, or the light of the firefly.

When you've developed *satipaṇṇā* by continuously investigating the activities of the *kilesas*, you'll become distrustful of the five *khandhas* and want to know their true nature. You'll then earnestly investigate them and will eventually realize the truth. Then you'll know that they are merely physical and mental phenomena. Actually, whether you realize this or not they still are what they are. But due to your delusion and desires, you mistake them to be something else. These desires are *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*, and originate from the *citta*. Now, as *satipaṇṇā* advances with its probe, the scope of the investigation becomes narrower as *satipaṇṇā* understands more and more, and eventually converges on the *citta*. Whatever now appears, you'll know that it comes out of the *citta*, not from *saññā* or *sankhāra* because *satipaṇṇā* is now capable of differentiating them. As soon as the *citta* produces them they will immediately disappear, just like the light of a firefly. Once *satipaṇṇā* has caught up with the *citta*, it can't go on creating them. When *satipaṇṇā* is always watching, they can only appear and disappear.

Satipaṇṇā will now put forth an all-out effort in waging the final battle. All that is left now is *avijjā*. Both *avijjā* and the *citta* have become one and the same thing as they are blended together. If you're possessive of the *citta*, you'll also be possessive of *avijjā*. If you cherish the *citta*, you'll also cherish *avijjā*. If you're attached to the *citta*, you'll also be attached to *avijjā*. If you blindly believe the *citta*, you'll also blindly believe *avijjā*. For both the *citta* and *avijjā* are together. *Satipaṇṇā* will now keep on advancing with its probe because it's the only thing it

can do. Retreating is not possible. When the investigation has been consummated, *paññā* will then drop its atomic bomb on its target and completely demolish it. Then the seed of births and existences, *avijjā*, will be completely destroyed and you'll see clearly that there is no more birth and death for you. The Lord Buddha said that this is the end of the holy life: *vusitāṃ brahmacariyaṃ*. As soon as the *citta* has been freed, the knowledge that freedom has been realized will appear simultaneously. This is where the *bhikkhu's* endeavor comes to an end, not anywhere else, but right here.

After *satipaññā* has crushed *avijjā*, all of its enemies will also be destroyed. *Satipaññā* which has been investigating relentlessly, will now itself stop investigating because it has nothing more to do and no problem to solve. There aren't any *kilesas* left to be eliminated. After the master of the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, the ceaseless cycle of birth and death, has been destroyed, then everything else comes to an end. The result obtained from your strenuous exertion will surpass everything else. Your misperceptions will all be removed. You'll perceive the present clearly. Whether you live or die, you'll have no more problems with the past, present, and future. It's no problem how you may die. After you've attained to the level where there are no more problems, then everything else ceases to be a problem. So there is no problem for an *arahant* when he passes away. An *arahant* can pass away in any posture, either standing, sitting, walking, or lying down. He can pass away in any position of his choosing, just like what Tan Ajaan Mun had said in his biography. And what's the reason for this? It's because the *dukkha-vedanā*, which is *sammati*, can't enter the *citta* to cause any more trouble. So why couldn't an *arahant* pass away in any position that he sees fit, when he has already transcended *sammati*? *Dukkha vedanā* is *sammati*, and remains in the body. It can't enter the *citta* of an *arahant* to cause any trouble. So there is no reason why an *arahant*, for his last act, can't pass away in any position that he finds appropriate.

The Ovādapāṭimokkha

July 12th, 1979 —

The teaching of all the Buddhas as encapsulated in the *Ovādapāṭimokkha* can be summarised into three main topics. One, *Sabbapāpassa akaraṇaṃ*: to avoid doing any kind of evil. Two, *Kusalassūpasampadā*: to develop wholesome or meritorious actions, which really means the development of wisdom. *Kusala* means skillfulness, mastery or wisdom. Three, *Sacittapariyodapanāṃ*: to purify the *citta* until it becomes bright and pure. *Etāṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ*: this is the teaching of all of the Buddhas. These three endeavours form the basis of the Lord Buddha's teaching. He then elaborated further, *Anūpavādo*: to abstain from criticising others. *Anūpaḡhāto*: to refrain from hurting others. *Pātimokkhe ca saṃvaro*: to adhere strictly to the monastic discipline. *Mattaññutā ca bhattasmiṃ*: knowing the right measure of dispensing with the four living requisites, such as eating moderately. The Lord Buddha said that we should know moderation and the right measure, which means knowing what is suitable or appropriate. *Pantaṅca sayanāsaṇaṃ*: to seek and dwell in seclusion and solitude. *Adhicitte ca āyogo*: to develop the *citta* until it becomes sublime. *Etāṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ*: this is the teaching of all the Buddhas.

These are the verses that are recited at the end of the *bhikkhus'* fortnightly meeting to review the *Pāṭimokkha*, the monastic discipline.

You have to be resolute with the Dhamma teaching. Don't merely skim over it or after having read it and committed it to memory, then claim it as your own possession, because it's not yet your genuine possession. It's only a memory of the Dhamma teaching that you have to correctly apply in your practice. It can't be considered your true possession yet. The Lord Buddha called this *pariyatti* or theoretical understanding. However much you might have studied, it's still *pariyatti*, theoretical study. *Paṭipatti* is the practice of Dhamma for the removal of the *kilesas*, and the development of moral excellence. This Dhamma is the *magga* or path to the cessation of suffering, which fundamentally consists of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. You've got to do this yourselves. *Paṭivedha* is the gradual and complete realization of the four noble truths. It's the result gained from practising Dhamma. First, you've to study either from the scriptures or from your teachers, especially from your *upajjhāya* or preceptor who taught you at your ordination the five *kammaṭṭhānas*: *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco*. These five *kammaṭṭhānas* are considered to be your most important tools for uprooting births and existences, for the destruction of the *vaṭṭa saṃsāra*, and for the removal of the *kilesas* and *taṇhā* from your hearts.

You have to uproot the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsavas* using these *kammaṭṭhānas* because they like to hide behind *kesā*, the hair of the head, *lomā*, the hair of the body, *nakhā*, the nails, *dantā*, the teeth, *taco*, the skin, *aṭṭhi*, the bones, and the rest of the thirty two parts of the body.

You have to study them to see their true natures. Then the *kilesas* won't be able to hide behind them because *paññā* will gradually expose them. Wherever you are, you mustn't lose sight of this undertaking which is highly sophisticated and subtle. It should be done continuously, not periodically like working for the government or seasonally like farming that starts in the morning and finishes in the evening. This is how the world does its work. You mustn't use this

worldly method in your Dhamma practice to develop moral excellence and eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsavas*, because it's ineffective. The world's undertaking has time frames, schedules, and seasons, for example, the civil servants and factory workers work from nine to five, whilst farming is done seasonally.

But your practice is delicate, comprehensive, intensive and strenuous, but not wearisome. It's a delicate piece of work because the *kilesas* are very subtle. For this reason, you have to probe and investigate continually both day and night, sitting, walking, and lying down, except when sleeping, and it must always be foremost in your mind, having *sati* always directing it. You must practice all the time, using any *kammaṭṭhāna* of your choice to eradicate the *kilesas*. For example, you should mindfully investigate the hair of the body, the hair of the head, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the flesh, the bones, or any other parts of the body with your resourceful and versatile *paññā* probing and analysing. You mustn't do it blindly, nor speculate aimlessly. When you haven't developed any *paññā* yet, then you must first rely on *sati* to calm your *citta* by curbing your thought process using any *samādhi* method that I have previously explained. This will help consolidate the strength of the *citta*. After the flows of your thoughts retreat and converge inside the *citta*, the *citta* will become strengthened. Normally the *citta* likes to drift and scatter its thoughts aimlessly. There isn't a single moment when the *citta* is free from thinking aimlessly, except when it's sound asleep. When it's not, then it will be dreaming instead, which is another way of thinking aimlessly.

If you're intent on bringing to fruition the complete cessation of suffering in your hearts, then you must strive in developing the *magga* or the path factors such as *sati*, *samādhi*, *paññā* and *virīya*. The objects of your investigation, like *kesā*, *lomā*, for instance, are also the *magga* and can be found everywhere if you just look at them objectively. Without *sati*, the *citta* will drift aimlessly and become weakened. It will then definitely gravitate toward the ever-present lures of the *kilesas*. For this reason it is necessary to use force and discipline to free

your *citta* from the enticements of the *kilesas* and *āsavaas*, which are like magnets that attract your *citta* to fall under their spells and influence, that drive you to be born, to die, to suffer, and to become deluded. The *kilesas* and *āsavaas* are the main culprits. You mustn't think that it is anything else. You must therefore summon all of your efforts to develop your *sati* until it becomes *sampajañña* or continuous mindfulness. Being always mindful of and attentive to what you're doing, and doing it purposefully is *sati*, or the correct way of practice. This is right exertion, and it is also the *magga*.

This exertion is completely different from all other exertions. If you truly intend to be free from *dukkha*, you'll not be concerned with the time. If your determination is full to the brim, you'll always be exerting, enduring and persevering. No matter how difficult it gets, you'll not waver, but will always be tough and resolute. This is due to the unyielding strength of your resolve, acting like a magnet that galvanises your diligent efforts and energy. You'll become stronger and more resolute. You mustn't be fond of or engage in worldly activities that you've already experienced from the first day of your birth. You should by now lose all interest and curiosity. If you still enjoy them, you'll still cling to them. As far as practitioners are concerned, the world is the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* are *sammati* that ceaselessly oppress the heart, and never stop to rest like other workers.

To develop the Dhamma you must therefore rely on the continuous application of your diligent efforts. You have to strive and exert yourselves to the utmost. *Chanda*, one of the factors of the *iddhipāda* or the key to success, is crucial to your accomplishments. With the *iddhipāda* you can achieve any objective. By definition *chanda* means to delight in the exertion for freedom from suffering. *Viriya* means to strive relentlessly in all postures of exertion. You must constantly watch your thoughts to see which direction they are heading. They almost always head in the *kilesas'* direction. If there is *sati*, then the *kilesas* will retreat. But if you don't have any mindfulness, then the *kilesas* will attack you. *Citta* here means being attentive. This is the

citta of the *iddhipāda*. You mustn't let yourselves and mindfulness be far away from your exertion, for this will lead you to your objective, which is freedom from *dukkha*. You've to tirelessly attend to your exertion because it's part of your practice. *Vimamsā* means *paññā*, which is an indispensable tool for the destruction of the *kilesas*, and for making the heart sublime, magnificent, courageous, bright, skilful and discerning.

The *citta* must always be possessed with *satipaññā* to supervise it, because the *citta* itself can't tell good from bad, right from wrong. It has to rely on *satipaññā* to tell it, and to keep it safe and secure. If it's not protected by *satipaññā*, then it will definitely follow the *kilesas*. If you don't have any *satipaññā*, then you must be insane, because *satipaññā* is extremely vital to your sanity and tells you what's right or wrong, good or bad. A deranged person usually wanders aimlessly along the streets, pays no heed to what is right and wrong, and drifts following his whims and fancies because he doesn't have any *satipaññā* to supervise his actions, and to tell him whether they are right or wrong. He isn't rational because he doesn't have any *satipaññā*. If you're totally devoid of *satipaññā*, then you're crazy because your heart merely knows, but it can't tell right from wrong.

Your actions will be directed by the all-pervasive and powerful *kilesas* whether you're sitting, standing or lying down, and wherever you go. It doesn't bother you how filthy you may be because you can't tell the difference between filthiness and cleanliness. You can't distinguish, you merely know, but you don't know good from bad, cleanliness from filthiness, right from wrong, and what's proper from what's not proper, like sitting in the middle of the intersection and causing a traffic snarl. Your heart is completely under the influence of the *kilesas*. You don't have any *satipaññā* to help you discriminate between things. If you have enough *satipaññā* like normal people do, then you're not crazy, but this normal level of *satipaññā* is not enough to eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsavas*, as you would like to. You have to rely on a higher level of *satipaññā* that is developed by your

Dhamma practice. Then you'll be able to destroy the *kilesas*, and establish calm.

To keep the *citta* concentrated on your meditation subject and not drift away to other thoughts, you must always have *sati* directing it. The *citta* will then attain calm. It'll only gain calm with *sati*. When it's time to investigate, you must do it with the resourceful and ingenious *paññā*. For example, investigating your own body and other people's bodies, and then comparing them. This is the correct way of developing the *magga*. Then you'll always see the noble truths because they're everywhere, especially the truths of *dukkha* and *samudaya* that pile over the hearts of every sentient being. Are *dukkha* and *samudaya* worth desiring? *Samudaya* is the creator of *dukkha*. How can you find any happiness from them? For this reason, you have to counter them with another noble truth, which is hostile to them and is the weapon to destroy them. This noble truth is the *magga*, the application of diligent effort and strenuous exertion.

You have to investigate with *paññā* so that you can see clearly the noble truths. What is there in your body? You have to investigate according to the truth, and must not contradict the Dhamma teaching. If you do, you'll be under the influence of the *kilesas*. You have to examine the top, the middle, the bottom, and each side. The top is the head, and the bottom is the feet. Look into this heap of noble truth which is your body or the *rūpa-khandha*. You must also look inside. What is there inside this body? There are pieces of bones connected together by the sinews, wrapped by the skin and cushioned in between by the flesh. Externally, it is covered by a very thin sheet of skin, and that's all there is to it. However, you can't see this yet because you're so deluded. You should be very ashamed of your *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*s. You shouldn't really be deluded with this thin layer of skin, but you are, because the power of the *kilesas* far exceeds the Dhamma that is needed to defeat them.

You haven't yet developed the Dhamma or *satipaññā* to be effective enough to destroy the *kilesas*. For this reason, the *kilesas* can still

infiltrate your investigation. Though you might try to investigate this body to see it as *asubha*, or repulsive, as *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, the *kilesas* can still prevent you from seeing it as such. All you can see is a human being, I, and mine. You see this heap of filthiness or *paṭikkūla*, this living cemetery as a living person, attractive, and delightful. This is how you see this body, every piece, every organ. This is how you contradict the Dhamma and are beguiled by the *kilesas*. It's, therefore, absolutely vital to develop *satipaṇṇā* to direct your investigation. You have to investigate over and over again until you see the truth. You have to see the truth of *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco*. When you truly see it, you'll be overcome by your disillusion. This has happened to me. When I got to see it clearly, I was so deeply moved by it that tears started rolling down my cheeks. I couldn't help thinking: 'Why? Why? Why didn't I see this body like this before? I have been investigating this body from the first day of my going forth, for the purpose of seeing the truth of this body following the teaching of the Lord Buddha. But why didn't I see this before, and why today? It's as if this body just appeared today although it has always been with me for all these years. But why didn't I get to see it until today?'

I was really impressed by this realization. Whenever I looked at any particular part of the body, *paṇṇā* would spread over me like ink spreading over blotting paper. This is how *paṇṇā* will probe, then the truth will appear, and I became profoundly moved. *Paṇṇā* examines every aspect and every organ of the body, both the top and the bottom part, as they are all the same, impermanent and repulsive. So, how could I not be impressed? When I visualized the body gradually decomposing, I could see this very clearly. It gradually decomposes and dissolves. What will it look like when it's dead? I had to keep on visualising until the body began to decompose and dissolve, leaving behind just the skeleton. I became more impressed whilst the *citta* became very light, as if it was about to fly. During the time that I was investigating, my heart became deeply moved. That's the way you'll see the body. I saw it that way.

But you won't see the body the same way every time you investigate it. You'll see it differently each time. But it's still definitely seeing the truth of the body. You also won't be moved with the same intensity, because each realization differs from one another. The emotional impact, therefore, has to differ accordingly, depending on the nature of your investigation. This is the way you should investigate with *paññā*. You have to keep a tight rein on your investigation, not allowing it to stray from your object of investigation. You can investigate the body as a body internally, externally, and both internally and externally. For example, you can investigate any particular part of the body, such as head-hair, body-hair, nail, teeth, or skin. This is contemplating the body as a body. You can investigate another person's body, and then compare it with your body. The Lord Buddha had clearly elucidated in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* or the discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, that you should investigate both the internal and the external body for the removal of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, *āsava*, *avijjā* and *upādāna*. This is the task of the *bhikkhu*. This is how you should investigate.

You shouldn't be concerned or worried about anything. Just think that you're alone with a heap of bones that you carry wherever you go, whether you're walking, sitting, sleeping, or discharging excrement. You're entirely consumed by your concern and worry for this body, because it's its nature to do so. The more you become attached to it, considering it to be I and mine, the more heavy will your worry become to the point where you'll not be able to put forth your exertion. Whatever you do, you'll become very tired and weary, weak and exhausted, devoid of any mental strength. This is how to lose to the *kilesas*. To become enlightened, the Lord Buddha and the *sāvaka*s had to traverse the road of the four noble truths, the road of *dukkha* and *samudaya*. Let's face it, *dukkha* is *dukkha*. Wherever *dukkha* appears, that's where you have to probe. You have to examine this *dukkha* and the object that is undergoing *dukkha*. Separate them apart to see their true nature, because according to the natural principle, *dukkha-vedanā* is a mental phenomenon. It isn't the flesh, the body, or the skin, the

body-hair, the head-hair, the nails, or the teeth, which are physical phenomena.

Even when *dukkha* is completely engulfing the body, the body doesn't know that it's being afflicted with *dukkha*. It doesn't know anything. The *dukkha* that appears also doesn't know *dukkha* or any particular part of the body. None of them know anything. They merely appear because it's their nature to do so. You should investigate with *paññā* to see them as they are, then you'll be able to tell them apart. You should look at *dukkha* until you realize its true nature. What gives rise to this *dukkha*, and where does this *dukkha* appear? You should examine with *paññā* the object that's being afflicted with *dukkha*. You must not retreat, but must really concentrate on your investigation of the bones that are being afflicted with *dukkha*, and are about to burst apart with you feeling a lot of pain. What is really being afflicted with *dukkha*? Is the bone really being afflicted with *dukkha*? In a dead person, is there any *dukkha*? When the bones are being burnt, do they show any signs of pain, show any signs of anxiety, or show any signs that they are being afflicted with *dukkha*? Of course not!

The skin, flesh and bones are similar in nature and don't know what they are. It's the *citta* that interprets and defines them and then becomes deluded with its own interpretation and definition, by thinking that they're *dukkha*, that they're me and mine. Once *dukkha* and the body become entwined, the *citta* will be duped into shouldering a lot of *dukkha*. If you investigate with *paññā*, you'll see very clearly that *dukkha* is just a phenomenon or *sabhāva-dhamma*, and the body is also a phenomenon. All of your interpretations and definitions are the work of *saññā* that's being manipulated by the *kilesas* that use *saññā* to conjure up the notions that this or that object is afflicted with *dukkha*, that they are this and that. You have to keep on investigating. Is the *citta* *dukkha*? Are they the same thing?

You must now separate the *citta* from *dukkha*. The *citta* merely knows. It's not *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is just *dukkha*. Bones are just bones. *Dukkha* is real, so is the *citta*, the one who knows *dukkha*. After you've

analyzed up until the point of seeing the truth clearly, then the *dukkha* and the *citta* will separate. Then the *dukkha* won't be magnified and get out of hand. No matter how painful the body might be, it won't afflict the *citta*, because the *citta* now thoroughly understands the nature of *dukkha*, the nature of the body, and the nature of the *citta* itself, due to the investigative power of *paññā* that enables the *citta* to see them as they are. You can now live in peace and in comfort. This is the way when one investigates with *paññā*.

When you get into a crisis, *paññā* will step in. You can't remain ignorant and helpless. When you're up against the wall, you'll have to rely on yourself to develop *satipaññā* to get you to safety. This has already happened to me. I'm telling you this from my own experience and not from speculation. I said to myself: "You're not forever ignorant or stupid. When you're in a crisis, you can become wise and smart, because you'll be forced to develop *paññā* to deal with the crisis, like when you're driven into a corner by *dukkha*." Every part of my body seemed to burst apart. That was how severe the *dukkha* was. But I kept on investigating with *satipaññā* until I understood the nature of *dukkha*, the nature of the body, and the nature of the *citta*. Then the *dukkha* wouldn't intensify. Even if it does, like when you're about to die, it would merely be the *dukkha* of the body. The *citta* wouldn't be affected in anyway; it would remain calm and collected. You'll see this very clearly.

So how can you have any qualms about *dukkha* or death. Because *dukkha*, death and the *citta*—the one who knows *sukha* and *dukkha*—are all real. *Paññā* is also real, they all are real, so they won't disturb each another. At the time of death when the *dukkha* becomes very severe and you can't stand it anymore, then you should just let it happen. You've been investigating birth, ageing, illness, and death from the very first day of your practice. So when death beckons, you shouldn't run away from it if you practice for enlightenment. After you've become enlightened, you won't become deluded again. What could you be deluded about, when they're all real? You wouldn't be

bold or fearful either. What is there to be bold about? What is there to fear? They are all *sammati* or conventional reality. But if you're not enlightened, you'll still be fearful and bold. When it's time for you to be bold, you'll be bold, for this is the nature of *paññā* or *magga*, to be fearless in facing up to *dukkha-vedanā* or pain. You'll keep on fighting relentlessly until you die. When you traverse the path for the cessation of *dukkha*, you have to be bold. But after you've achieved your goal, after you've become enlightened then there won't be any fear or boldness left, because you've arrived at the realm of normality, where everything is perfect, peaceful and natural, and where nothing can cause it to increase or decrease, because it's the absolute reality.

This is the way of investigating with *paññā*. You have to be resourceful, and versatile. It will be helpful if you can come up with different techniques every now and then. When you continually investigate, *satipaññā* will be very powerful, and you'll be able to probe the entire body, as well as the entire world of *samsāra*. You'll investigate everything, internally and the externally until you become enlightened. Then you'll become a *Lokavidū*, a knower of the world, one who has truly realized his true nature, as well as the true nature of the world, the true nature of *samsāra*, and the true nature of *sammati*. What then is there to be deluded about? Such is the power of *paññā*. You should therefore vigorously develop this enterprising *paññā*, and must not remain complacent. You're now living in a secluded and quiet environment. I have tried my best to provide you with as much time as possible for your practice, so that you can concentrate your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* on rescuing the heart, which is constantly calling for help, from all the oppressive *kilesas*.

Whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, your hearts are constantly being oppressed and subjugated by the *kilesas*. You must, therefore, help your hearts with your *virīya*, *sati*, *paññā* and *saddhā*, in acquiring freedom, or at least to alleviate some of your *dukkha*. To alleviate *dukkha*, you have to curtail *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. If *samudaya* is not curtailed, then your *dukkha*

won't be alleviated. Therefore, *samudaya* is the chief culprit. In the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* or the First Discourse, the Lord Buddha pointed out the three aspects of *samudaya* namely, craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, and craving for not-becoming. They are in your hearts and not in the scriptures. The real craving for sensuality or *kāma-taṇhā* is not in the scriptures, but in your hearts. The scriptures just list the names of *kāma-taṇhā*, the *kilesas* and the Dhamma. You have to rely on the Dhamma to guide you in your practice because it's the only correct way. You should first study and commit them to memory, and then apply them in your practice of mental development.

You have to strive and exert yourselves to the utmost at all times, day and night. If you're not engaged in any physical activity, and your body becomes very lethargic, then you should do a lot of walking meditation to exercise your body. If you do a lot of sitting meditation, it can be very painful to the various parts of your body, and the utilisation of your body postures is not in balance. This is not good for your health. You should equally stand, walk, sit, and lie down. After you've got out of the sitting position, you should then do walking meditation until you get really tired before changing into another posture. This is the proper way of practising mental development. It's also healthy for your body, and makes your body function smoothly. During the three month period of *vassa* or the rains retreat, you should intensify your practice. Don't be concerned with anything. Your food and living requisites have been plentifully supplied by the laity. You take up the *dhutanga* or austere practices in order to consume and receive a small amount to speed up your meditation practice. But you end up getting more than you normally do. Look at the number of times that you have to empty your bowls on your almsround!

That's the lay devotees' way of making merit by generously supporting this monastery. But you shouldn't take the lay supporters for granted or get intimate with them. You should always be intimate with the Dhamma and take the Dhamma as your refuge. As far as

being hungry or full, having plenty or not is concerned, this is just the nature of this world that is full of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. Nothing in this world is certain, but you shouldn't be concerned. You should consistently concentrate on your practice. This is the correct way. As far as the *dhutanga* practice of not accepting any food after *piṇḍapāta* or almsround is concerned, I have practiced this ever since I began my teaching career to serve as an example for my students to follow. You should really exert yourselves. Don't waste your time wondering about other people's business. You should only look at your heart that is constantly craving and producing a lot of *samudaya*. You should take control and discipline your hearts with the various techniques of practice and *paññā*. It can be tedious if you keep meditating with the same meditation subject. You should try different techniques of *satipaññā* to turn your *citta* around. It's not good when your practice becomes dull. You should use *paññā* to come up with new initiatives and ideas that will attract your interest. I myself have done this before.

Investigation Methods

— July 18th, 1979

It's not unusual for a Dhamma practitioner, who traverses the path to the cessation of *dukkha*, to encounter problems that arise from practice, with the only exception of a *hippābhīṅṅā*, one who becomes enlightened quickly. But for you ordinary practitioners, there will be problems to solve. You'll have to muster all of your mental resources to solve them. Your mind will be spinning like a *Dhamma-cakka* or wheel of Dhamma. When you're developing *paññā*, this is the way it will be. In developing *samādhi*, you'll have to use *sati* to control and subdue the *citta*. When there is no *sati* to control it, the *citta* will ceaselessly think and conjure up images to deceive you, although they are just shadows. The producer of these images is inside the *citta*, but the shadows are projected outward to fool you to become obsessed with them. This will happen to every practitioner. If you don't know this fact, then your *citta* will never calm down. You should, therefore, always watch your *citta* with *sati*; then when it begins to conjure, you'll feel that there is something emerging. But you usually won't know this because it only emerges when you're not mindful. You'll

only realize it after it has already conjured up these images. By then you'll already become deluded with them. They are merely shadows.

All of your conceptualising is created by *saṅkhāra* that keeps on conjuring up thoughts and images without end. You then become deluded and obsessed with them by creating more thoughts and images. You might think that you're sitting meditating, but actually you're being obsessed with your thoughts because you're not watching your *citta* where your thoughts and images are created. *Sati* is not watching, so how can the *citta* find any calm. You should always keep this in mind. This is the way it really is, it has already happened to me, so I really know it. If it hadn't, how could I tell you? When you're developing calm, you must focus your mindfulness at the *citta* where you're agitated and restless thoughts are being generated. *Sati* is a mental factor that functions as a watcher. You should develop it to watch the *citta* where all your thoughts and mental images are created. You must not speculate or theorize, you must experience it. Just concentrate your awareness right at the *citta* to see what the *citta* is generating.

If you use a mantra as your concentrating device, then you should be solely aware of your mantra whilst keeping on reciting the mantra. This kind of *saṅkhāra* or mental concoction is not *samudaya*, but *magga*, because it doesn't make you restless or agitated, but it makes you calm. It'll curb your thoughts and imaginings that make you restless and agitated. Dhamma doesn't make you restless and agitated, but your thoughts on worldly matters will. This kind of *saṅkhāra* or mental concoction is *samudaya*. No matter how much it concocts, it'll never stop or be contented. It will keep on thinking and deceiving you, both day and night, without any beneficial result. If you're seeking benefit, you should develop your *sati* to be firmly embedded in your mind, by concentrating your attention at your mantra if you choose it as a device to calm your mind. After you have developed some calm, you should begin investigating with *paññā* the thirty-two parts of the body or *rūpa*, or investigating the feelings or *vedanā* (that

can be *sukha*, *dukkha* or neutral), of the heart and of the body. Keep on investigating with the methods that work for you until you become enlightened.

When the *citta* calms down, the *kilesas* will all gather inside, and all cravings will temporarily disappear. This state of calm will serve as your base camp where you'll rest, recuperate and plan your next move. Without calm you'll always be restless, agitated and disturbed by what you see, hear or think. This is the way of feeding your heart with the poisons of *dukkha*, worries and anxieties. After you've rested enough and emerge from this state of calm, you should then investigate with *paññā* the external body, either the body of a man, a woman, or an animal, and compare it with your body. They are similar in nature: they are filthy or *paṭikkūla*; they are repulsive or *asubha*; they are impermanent or *aniccam*, and they get old, get sick and die. This is true with everybody. The *citta* should ceaselessly investigate with *paññā*. *Sati*, which is indispensable like household medicine, must be ever present. *Sati* must accompany every task, like the development of calm or *samatha*, and the development of insight or *vipassanā*. If *sati* is not directing your investigation then it will turn into speculation or *saññā*.

In the beginning stages, your investigation will generally be *saññā* or speculation, because you haven't yet experienced the result of your investigation. To achieve results you have to rely on *sati* to continually direct your investigation until you see the true nature of the object under investigation. Only then will *saññā* turn into *paññā*, and eventually become entirely *paññā*. *Saññā* will then disappear. From then on your practice will be smooth sailing. It's rather difficult in the beginning stage of your practice, either in developing calm or *paññā*. But you shouldn't let this difficulty block your path. The reason why you can't exert at full capacity is because of your fear of difficulty. You're weak and lazy, and won't make any progress. Your heart is filled with interest for mundane matters, that by now you should see as harmful. You've engaged with these worldly activities from your

childhood days and should see the damage done to you by thinking of them now.

You're now striving to emancipate yourselves from the *kilesas* with your Dhamma practice. You should therefore concentrate all of your efforts into this task. Your exertion will be futile if there is no *sati* directing it. *Sati* is indispensable for both walking and sitting meditation. You must always have *sati* when you meditate for calm or *paññā*. *Sati* must always oversee your meditation practice. If you haven't achieved any result yet, it's because you have very little or no *sati* at all. What's the reason for this lack of *sati*? It's because you're not putting enough effort into continually developing *sati* to grow to its full potential. Similarly with developing *paññā*, in the beginning stages it's an uphill struggle, because you haven't yet seen what *paññā* can do. When you do, you'll be so hooked and absorbed in your investigation that it can turn into *uddhacca* or restlessness, one of the higher fetters or *saṃyojana*, because you got carried away. *Uddhacca* is the *citta*'s obsession with its investigation. This *uddhacca* is not the *uddhacca* of the five mental hindrances that an ordinary, unenlightened person experiences, or the consequence of thinking about the affairs of the world; rather, it is the result of relentlessly investigating with *paññā* to reveal the *ti-lakkhaṇa* or the three characteristics inherent in all conditioned phenomena.

Sati and *paññā* when fully developed will be ever present and relentless with their investigation from the very first moment that you arise from your sleep. I had never speculated that it would be like this until it actually happened to me. From the first to the last moment of my waking hours, I was never off-guard or absentminded. Listen to that! This is how *sati* and *paññā* can become, functioning automatically all the time. How then can you ever be off-guard? For you have now attained the level of automatic *sati* and *paññā*. During the time of the Lord Buddha, this is called *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*. Tan Ajaan Mun always exhorted his students to develop their *sati* and *paññā* to become *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*. He would say: "How else

can you compete with the deception of the *kilesas* that have accumulated in your heart for eons and countless existences? Your heart is entirely filled with these very powerful *kilesas*, leaving no room for the Dhamma at all. If your *sati* and *paññā* isn't up to par how can you subdue and vanquish the *kilesas*? To eliminate the *kilesas* completely, it's, therefore, vital to develop *sati* and *paññā* to become more powerful than the *kilesas*."

Tan Ajaan Mun would always forcefully exhort his students, for he was a man of fortitude and determination, bold and courageous, nimble and efficient. He would teach in a straightforward, honest and sincere manner and was always smarter than the *kilesas*. Whatever kind of trick the *kilesas* might have up their sleeves, he would always know how to outdo them with his wit and skill. As practitioners, you must, therefore, follow his example if you're going to take possession of your *citta*'s greatest and most supreme treasure. But right now, your *citta* is completely surrounded by the *kilesas* that prevent you from seeing what the real *citta* is. All you can see is just the *kilesas*. All your thoughts and perceptions are shaped by the *kilesas*. Not a single moment are they shaped by the Dhamma. When you're overwhelmed by the *kilesas*, then all the mental phenomena will be led by the *kilesas*, because you haven't yet developed any *sati* and *paññā*. To beat the *kilesas*, it's therefore imperative for you to seriously and earnestly develop *sati* and *paññā* to overwhelm them.

When you continually nurture your *sati*, it will gradually grow to its full potential. As far as *paññā* is concerned, you mustn't think that it will grow by itself, without doing any investigation, regardless of what level of *samādhi* you might have accomplished. There are many practitioners who believe wrongly that *paññā* will appear automatically following the realization of *samādhi* as suggested by some texts. How can this be possible? What I have clearly experienced in my practice was otherwise; how then can I be deceived by this belief? Do you know how many years I was addicted to *samādhi*? It got to the point where Tan Ajaan Mun had to forcefully drive me out of my

samādhi addiction. I had to start traversing the path of *paññā*, by probing and investigating with the firm and steady support of *samādhi* that provides the *citta* with ever present contentment and satisfaction, because it was very strong and firm, the highest level of *samādhi*. But did *paññā* arise automatically from this level of *samādhi*? No, it never happened!

I had become so skilful in establishing *samādhi* and stopping all my thoughts that it took me just a few minutes to do it. After the *citta* had entered calm, all that remained was this knowingness that I became addicted to and thought it to be *Nibbāna*. I didn't know that there were all sorts of *kilesas* still hidden within it, and never thought of it, because I didn't have any *paññā*. But when I began to investigate with *paññā*, I started to see them and wanted to remove them. I would then keep on investigating until all the *kilesas* were eliminated. I could now see the benefits of *paññā* as it kept on advancing. The more results I achieved, the more I became motivated to investigate. Eventually, I would blame my *samādhi* addiction for preventing me from advancing in my practice. You should keep in mind that regardless of the *samādhi* level you might have attained, it won't automatically generate *paññā*. If you don't investigate, *paññā* will never appear. If *paññā* were to arise by itself, then it should have happened to me because I had already developed the highest level of *samādhi*. But *paññā* didn't appear. If you develop *samādhi*, you'll only get *samādhi*. If you want to develop insight, you'll have to investigate. You'll then acquire insight or *vipassanā*, which means clear understanding of the inner nature of all phenomena.

You mustn't be complacent and remain idle. You should investigate as soon as you've withdrawn from calm. Each level of calm will support each corresponding level of *paññā*. This is the correct way to practice, and it will save you a lot of time. You won't have to worry about whether you're doing it correctly or not because you have me to guide you. All you have to do is follow my advice. Your practice will be easy, because you've no doubt in your mind. I've no doubt in

my teaching because I have clearly experienced both the path and the fruit, like when I told you about *sati* and *paññā* relentlessly and ceaselessly investigating to remove the *kilesas* with assorted investigation methods to suit the different kinds of *kilesas*. From the time I woke up to the time I went to sleep, there wasn't a single moment when I was off my guard. I kept investigating until I went to sleep. This actually happened to me! However, you shouldn't try to duplicate it. This is not the way to practice. You should use it as a guideline. It doesn't have to be identical, but you must more or less adhere to my instruction. What I've told you here is a true story of my uphill struggle in developing my *sati* and *paññā* to their full potential so they can continually investigate to eliminate the *kilesas* without ever being off-guard. It will be like this when *sati* and *paññā* are fully developed.

You've got to work really hard in your quest for enlightenment and the paranormal that are hidden in your *citta* for them to become marvellous and wonderful. But right now it's worthless and filthy, because it's being completely covered with the worthless and filthy *kilesas*. It's, therefore, imperative to wash them away with your diligent effort. You should apply all of your *paññā* resources available to you, and not solely wait for your teacher's advice. By devising your own investigation methods, your *paññā* resources will never be depleted. Your teacher can only show you how to do it, but you have to adapt it to fit your practice. Then it will be your true and genuine possession.

To develop your *paññā* resources, you have to investigate the body's loathsome nature or *asubha*. You have to reveal this repulsive nature by going on a *kammaṭṭhāna* sightseeing trip, investigating repeatedly your body from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet, and then back up and down again and again. You should also investigate the skin that wraps around the body. What is being wrapped by this skin? It's a bunch of filth or *paṭikkūla*. The skin itself is also filthy. Only the surface of the skin that's good enough to look at. Then, there is sweat and grime that you have to constantly wash off. You've to

continually investigate the body if you want to advance speedily in your practice, because the body is one of your major battlegrounds. *Kāyagatāsati* or the development of mindfulness of the body is absolutely necessary as long as the *citta* still clings to the body. You've got to keep on investigating with *paññā* until you clearly see the true nature of the body.

When you're establishing calm, you shouldn't be concerned with *paññā*. You shouldn't do any thinking at all, but should only be mindful of your meditation subject or theme. You mustn't let the development of calm and *paññā* to get in each other's way. After the *citta* has calmed down, rested and emerged from calm, it's time to investigate with *paññā*, without being concerned with *samādhi*. This is the correct way of practice. You should do one task at a time, like directing water to flow through just one channel, because it'll be very efficient. If you're concerned with *paññā* while doing *samādhi* and vice versa, then you'll be distracted and inefficient. You won't make any progress in your practice if you're not earnest and resolute. When you do walking or sitting meditation to develop calm, you shouldn't be thinking about anything else but your meditation subject. You shouldn't think about the world. The world will not disappear. All there is to this world is just birth and death that piles on top of one another, and has always been so. The affairs of this world are about birth and death, about dissolution and separation. It'll always be like this, so why should you have any concern?

The body that you take for a walk, stand up, put to sleep, discharge excrement from, and constantly feed, is changing all the time. It was an infant. Now it has grown up. What's this growth really about? It's about *aniccam*, *dukkham*, and *anattā* which accompany this growth. There aren't any benefits from the growth of the body, but there are benefits from the growth of your *sati* and *paññā*? If your *sati* and *paññā* don't grow, you'll never know how to free yourselves from *dukkha*. You'll cling to and die with the body. You'll go on endlessly taking up birth, ageing, illness, death and *dukkha*. If you want to destroy

this cycle of rebirths, you'll have to earnestly investigate the nature of the body. If you have to endure *dukkha* from your practice, let it be. Nobody born into this world can experience only happiness. From birth to death you'll experience happiness and suffering, whether you're rich or poor, clever or foolish. This body makes no exception for anyone, because *dukkha* is inherent in every body. You've experienced *dukkha* before, so you shouldn't be discouraged by the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion. This kind of *dukkha* is for the supreme result. It's the *dukkha* of an *ariya* or Noble One. It's the *dukkha* for the elimination of the *kilesas*, for freedom from *dukkha*, and for the destruction of the cycle of rebirths.

No matter how severe this *dukkha* might be, you're willing to face it. All you need to have are your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* battling this *dukkha*. You mustn't just endure *dukkha* without doing any investigation, for this will be of no benefit. However much *dukkha* appears, *paññā* must probe into *dukkha* to see *dukkha* as it truly is. That it's just a phenomenon. And to see clearly that the body and the *citta* or knowingness are also phenomena. *Saññā* or supposition arises and ceases. It supposes the body to be I, and to be mine; it supposes this feeling to be *sukha*, and that feeling to be *dukkha*. These are all deceptions. When you've thoroughly investigated and seen it truly, the body will then be just body, *vedanā* just *vedanā*, and the *citta* just *citta*. You will then have achieved the establishment of the four *satipaṭṭhāna* or four foundations of mindfulness. You can also call the four *satipaṭṭhāna* the four noble truths or the four *ariya-sacca*.

Be serious and really exert yourselves. Don't relent or become discouraged. I have great concern for all you. That's why I have to constantly teach you. Otherwise your *citta* will become slack and dull. You have to arouse your *citta* and develop it with the Dhamma in your practice. If you're drowsy, wash your face or find some other ways to overcome your sleepiness, like the ways the practitioners during the time of the Lord Buddha did. What's the purpose of inscribing what they did in the scriptures, if it's not for the purpose of teaching you?

If you sit meditating and become drowsy, then you should get up and do walking meditation instead. If you're still sleepy, then you should follow the examples of the noble disciples or *sāvakas*. One of them walked into the water. After he was knee-deep in the water and still couldn't get rid of his sleepiness, he'd go deeper. And if he was still sleepy, he would soak some grass with water and put it on his head before he could get rid of his drowsiness. He would then investigate until realizing full enlightenment. Listen to that! I think he's already highly attained. But this sleepiness makes no exception of anyone, highly attained or not.

That's why he had to devise with his *sati* and *paññā* practical methods to free him from *dukkha*, and to overcome his drowsiness by walking into the water or place soaking grass on his head. He must be highly attained because he didn't relent in his exertion. The body, however, felt drowsy and wanted to take a rest.

Now consider the case of the Venerable Sona, who exerted himself with walking meditation until his feet became blistered. Because he was so relentlessly and ceaselessly engrossed in investigating with his *sati* and *paññā* that he completely lost track of time. This wasn't a proper way to practice being overly obsessed with his investigation. This is *uddhacca* or restlessness, being so preoccupied with his investigation that it made him forget to take time off to rest in *samādhi*. Had he alternated his investigation with resting in *samādhi*, this would then be the correct way to practice. Like a workman who becomes tired and hungry after a hard day's work, he then takes a rest and feeds himself. The next day he will work some more. It's the same with the *citta*. After it has investigated until it becomes exhausted, it has to rest in *samādhi* or calm, where all activities of the *citta* are halted, leaving the *citta* with just the knowingness and tranquillity. After it has fully rested, the *citta* will be strengthened and after withdrawing from calm it'll investigate with *paññā* again. *Paññā* is similar to a knife that has been resharpened and the workman who has regained his strength from eating and resting. It'll now have the strength and

sharpness to swiftly destroy the *kilesas*. The Lord Buddha said that *paññā* developed with the support of *samādhi* is very powerful.

A cook who has all the cooking ingredients ready can cook up any dish he likes. But if he doesn't cook, then these ingredients will remain ingredients. Vegetables will remain vegetables, chillies will remain chillies, and meat will remain meat. How can they become stew? *Samādhi* will also remain *samādhi*. It'll not become *paññā* automatically if it's not use to support the *citta's* investigation. *Samādhi* can only strengthen the *citta* and make it powerful. After the *citta* has established *samādhi*, it will be contented and strong, and will be ready to investigate efficiently. *Samādhi* can't destroy the *kilesas*. It can only temporarily subdue the *kilesas*. But *samādhi* is an indispensable support for the development of *paññā* because the *citta* that has become contented from *samādhi* can investigate efficiently and won't turn into speculation or *saññā-ārammaṇa*. When you've eaten your food and rested, you can then work to your fullest capacity. What's it like for you to work when you're hungry? You'll be inefficient, and your temper can arise very easily. When you investigate without the support of *samādhi*, your investigation will go astray, will turn into speculation and won't produce any result. *Samādhi* is, therefore, an indispensable support for the development of *paññā*.

The Lord Buddha said that the *paññā* that has been developed with the support of *samādhi* is very powerful. The *citta* that has been developed by *paññā* will definitely be freed from the *kilesas*.

It's only *paññā* that can destroy all the *kilesas*; *samādhi* can't. But it plays a very vital supporting role. *Sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* are like staircases. You need *sīla* to get you to *samādhi*, you need *samādhi* to get you to *paññā*, and you need *paññā* to eliminate all the *kilesas*. To be freed from all the *kilesas* is the greatest reward. It's the consequence of your fearless exertion and your willingness to sacrifice your life for it. This is the goal that you should aspire to. All the *dukkha* that you experience in your practice are nourishments that nurture and develop your heart, and deliver *Nibbāna* to you while you're still alive.

You have to be resolute and earnest with your practice. In developing the *citta*, you've to follow the Lord Buddha's teaching. You've to be strict with yourselves. Anything that opposes the Dhamma should be considered to be the *kilesas*. You have to resist them until they're all destroyed.

When you've attained absolute perfection, there won't be any resistance left. After you've purified the *citta*, there will be nothing to resist you. You'll see that what had been opposing you were just the *kilesas*. When your *citta* becomes pure, there will be nothing to oppose you. You'll have nothing to push or pull you because you've realized the ultimate freedom from the world. To you, the world doesn't exist although you're still living in the world with the body that you're no longer attached to. In your *citta*, there is just this indescribable knowingness, and only you know very well what it actually is. This knowingness is free from all attachments. Nothing can hurt, oppress or manipulate it. It exists independently and naturally. What is there to pull and push it? It's only the *kilesas* that constantly push and pull. You have to eliminate them forcefully. You must not retreat. If you want to be free from *dukkha*, you mustn't be deterred by the *dukkha* that arises from your exertion to destroy every kind of *kilesa* that goes against the Dhamma. You have to oppose the *kilesas* because the *kilesas* oppose the Dhamma. This is where you have to fight and face the *dukkha*. This is the *dukkha* for victory. It's right here. You must not look elsewhere, in this place or at that time. They are only the places and the times of your exertion. But the *kilesas* that you want to eradicate are inside your *citta*. This is where you've got to fight.

The Lord Buddha taught you to live in the forest because it's a suitable place for your exertion. But you don't follow his teaching and overlook the *kilesas* that are oppressing and hurting your *citta*. This is wrong. You've to be serious and earnest with your practice. After the *citta* is freed from all the *kilesas*, it'll be like floating in space, free from the earth's gravitational pull. Floating in the space of the *citta* and the space of the Dhamma is living in this world free from all attachments

between the body and the *citta*, unlike before when you've to shoulder the burden of your body. This attachment or *upādāna* can really cling and becomes a very heavy burden for taking the body as I and mine. But after you've investigated and truly realized the body's true nature, you'll let go of the body. You mustn't contradict the Dhamma teaching because you'll be following the *kilesas*. No matter how hard and difficult your practice might be, you've got to keep on exerting. You mustn't retreat. Dhamma goes this way, so must you. You have to resist the *kilesas*.

Dhamma teaches you not to have affection, so you mustn't have affection. If you've any fondness, you have to remove it. You've got to find out its cause and eliminate it. The same with hate. The Dhamma doesn't teach you to hate. When the *citta* has reached the middle or natural way, it'll see that both affection and hatred devour the *citta* like the parasitic vines that devour the tree that they grow and depend on for their nourishment. The nature of the *kilesas* is to consume. They will sap the *citta* and afflict it with a lot of *dukkha*. You've got to get rid of them all, then you'll realize perfect bliss. Then it won't matter whether you live or die. Death is just a conventional reality or *sammati*, and living is just a string of sense experiences of visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile sensations that have existed in this world for eons. They were here long before you were born, and will still be here long after you're gone. What can you expect out of them? There's nothing in this world that is really fantastic. If there was anything in this world apart from the Dhamma that was wonderful, then many people would have already become fantastic and wonderful.

But it's not so, because wherever I go, I can only see mountains of *dukkha*. I can see this very clearly just by observing. The oppression of the *kilesas* is very severe. They drag you away from the Dhamma, incite you to defy the Dhamma, and force you to follow them. If you're weak then you'll always follow them. Their attraction is very strong. That's why you've got to build up a lot of strength and develop *sati* and

paññā to fight them. Whenever they drag you, you must resist with all your might. It can then be said that you're opposing them. If you always follow them, then it can't be said that you're fighting against them because you're being dragged by the nose. You have to keep on opposing them. When they become weakened, the Dhamma will become stronger. When the *kilesas* seem to have disappeared, you'll have to search for them with the automatic *sati* and *paññā* or *mahāsati* and *mahāpaññā*. When you find them you'll fight and destroy them, and search for more. That's why the *citta* at this stage is always busy because the *kilesas* of this level are so subtle they have to be searched for which is work for the *citta*. When it finds the *kilesas* it has to fight and destroy them which is also work for the *citta*. The *citta's* work will come to an end only when all the *kilesas* are totally eliminated. This is the work of the *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu* or meditating monk.

You've got to keep on investigating until you become fully enlightened. Then your work will be accomplished. This is *vusitaṃ brahma cariyāṃ*, you've now accomplished your task, there's nothing more for you to do because all of your attachments have been removed from the *citta*. Before this you're attached to everything, from visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations to the *citta* itself. This is how powerful the *kilesas* are and how far they will become attached. After you've investigated and removed your attachment to all the visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile sensations, you're then left with your attachment to the *citta*. This attachment or *kilesa* is *avijjā* that coexists with the *citta*. You become inadvertently attached to it because you don't know that this is *avijjā*. Even *sati* and *paññā* of this level can at first be outwitted. You can imagine how subtle this *kilesa* is! That's why this *avijjā* has been anointed the ruler of the three realms of existence. You now have to investigate until it's completely eliminated. Then there'll be no attachment left. The *citta* will no longer be attached to the *citta*. If there is still attachment to the *citta*, it isn't yet freedom. You're not yet free from *avijjā*. But when *avijjā* has been completely destroyed, then all of your attachments will disap-

pear. You'll then enter into the space of the *citta* where you'll never become attached again.

You have to destroy all the *kilesas* before you can enter the space of the *citta* which is comparable to the outer space where it's totally devoid of any attracting force. When you do, you'll truly understand the nature of the *citta*. When there's nothing left inside the *citta*, then there'll be no attachment to the *citta*. The *kilesa* that causes this attachment is called *avijjā*. It causes the *citta* to become attached to itself and become egoistic. After *avijjā* has been destroyed then the ego will disappear. There'll be nothing left to attach to. The *citta* will become like outer space devoid of any attracting force. It will live in this world devoid of any attachment for all living beings and the five *khandhas* like the body, feelings, perceptions, thoughts and sense awareness that appear and disappear as it is their nature to do. They don't know what they are. The body doesn't know that it's the body. It's the *citta* that calls it the body and becomes attached to it. The same with feelings, perceptions, thoughts and sense awareness. After the *citta's* delusion has been removed it'll realize that everything is *aniccāṃ, dukkhāṃ* and *anattā* and realize that it had been deluded all along. When it sees this truth, it'll let go of them and will become empty like outer space, existing in solitude. This is the solitary existence of this indescribable knowingness. Nobody can describe it correctly. But the one who experiences it knows what it is and knows it's impossible to describe it. You've got to practice hard. This *svākkhāta* or well-taught Dhamma is genuine and fresh. It's the middle way of practice, *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, that's very suitable for the eradication of all kinds of *kilesas*, at all times.

Looking Always at the Heart

July 23rd, 1979 —

The diseases of the heart are chronic. They can easily flame up and it is very hard to curb them. So as we gradually correct and remedy these diseases, we should at least try to get some calm in the process, so that the *citta* can be cool and peaceful. This is good and proper for us as *bhikkhus*. If we cannot find any calm in our hearts, then we will be like the lay people, and there will only be restlessness and agitation inside the heart. We must therefore focus our attention on the truth and Dhamma of the Lord Buddha. In every text, the Lord Buddha told us to take care of and restrain the *citta* and the sense organs. When the sense organs come into contact with the sense objects, one should not delight in them, like forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects.

Listen! The Lord Buddha said that we should not take delight in them. We must take this to heart. The Dhamma has been well taught, and what it teaches has no mistake in it. It teaches that we should not take delight in forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects when they come into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body. And how can we practice so that we don't take delight in these

things? We need to have discipline and control, and investigation to prevent the *citta* from taking delight in or having aversion for them. Or else we cannot be called practitioners. We must constantly concentrate on taking care of the *citta*, for this is the duty of the practitioner—one who takes care of his heart. Apart from taking care of the *citta*, one must also nourish it. This nourishment is the calming of the *citta* or the calming of the heart, providing the heart with coolness and peace. Then we must also investigate with *paññā*, for the purpose of uprooting those harmful things inside the heart. This is the way of giving nourishment to the heart by our diligent effort in our various modes of exertion.

I was a young *bhikkhu* once, and was possessed with all sorts of *kilesas*. This I have never forgotten. I don't remember much about the *dukkha* that I experienced as a layperson, but I remember very well the *dukkha* that arose in my heart as a *bhikkhu*, and this experience of *dukkha* taught me a very good lesson. When I was studying the texts, all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* never seemed to appear or become apparent, but when I began to practice all of these *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* came up from nowhere. They really gave me a strong fight and I had to struggle with them with all that I had. During the days of my practice, I could never gain any ease and comfort while doing nothing. This is part of my temperament. Whatever I do I really commit myself to, and the determination that I had for Dhamma was not just mere determination. I was determined for the Dhamma of deliverance from *dukkha*, and this determination was firmly embedded inside my heart. Before I took up the practice of the *Sāsana-dhamma*, I was already convinced that it is possible to attain the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. There was no doubt in this because I had a strong belief in the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, though I was not totally certain of my conviction.

But when I went to Tan Ajaan Mun and heard his Dhamma, I was then totally convinced and believed in the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*—totally one hundred per cent, was the belief. All my doubts about the

magga, *phala* and *Nibbāna* had been dispelled because Tan Ajaan Mun had shown them to me in every respect. And so my determination was total, without having anything to bring it down. So as it was like that, my exertion and diligent effort were at their maximum. So when I took up the practice, I really concentrated on my work of *bhāvanā* so that I could get to see the marvels of the *citta* again. I had experienced this only three times in all the time that I had spent studying the texts, and I was really determined to master and take hold of this *citta*. I would not retreat, but struggled, coped and combated the *kilesas* that had been ruling over the heart for so long. I had to do it to the utmost of my ability by putting my life at stake. Therefore, my exertion had to be very intense and I had to experience a lot of *dukkha* and hardship.

The *dukkha* that arises from one's exertion is similar to the *dukkha* that a boxer experiences in the ring. He doesn't pay much attention to it because he is being very careful and on his guard, and is totally committed in his effort in knocking down his opponent. So he is hardly bothered by this *dukkha*. It was the same way with me—I forgot all about this *dukkha*, the *dukkha* that arose from my exertion, and did not even think about it. This was because my exertion was so intense that I was constantly fighting and fighting. And it cannot be beyond your ability, so please listen well and take this to heart. All of us have the *kilesas* in us, and we have been carrying them with us for countless lives. It is my conviction that as long as the *citta* still possesses with *avijjā* within it, it will always continue on to take up new births, and then die again and again. I believe in this conviction firmly, and nobody in the whole universe, in the entire three worlds, could ever come and contravene this belief, because I strongly believe that when one dies then one also takes up birth. This is what I believe, and I have found verification of it as I have practiced and attained the more subtle Dhamma. I could see the cause and the source of birth, ageing, sickness and death, and what is the cause?

It is the same old cause that functioned in the past, and this is *Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā*—ignorance causes the arising of *saṅkhāra*. It

cannot be anything else but this. We have all experienced *dukkha*, so we should not see anything good in this world but just the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, or in short, just the Dhamma. It is only the Dhamma, the teaching of the Lord Buddha that can uplift us from *dukkha* through our exertion in applying this Dhamma, using it to help and uplift ourselves. Please don't ever imagine that you can find any marvel or rarity from anything in this world, to the extent where you totally forget about your exertion, the truth, and Dhamma, and turning this truth and Dhamma, which is the most supreme, into something useless or worthless, by seeing those things that have no worth or value as the real essence. This is a misperception, and is the understanding which follows the commands of the *kilesas*, which we have always followed in the past without ourselves being aware of it.

Dhamma must always be opposing the *kilesas* because the *kilesas* always oppose Dhamma. For this reason we must accumulate and develop *satipaññā* so that we have enough of it to combat the *kilesas*. *Satipaññā* is the means or tool with which to combat the *kilesas*. Not a single type of *kilesa* can surpass *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, diligent effort. You must be firm and tough because you are a man and a *bhikkhu*. Be earnest and resolute. Don't be weak or discouraged. Both discouragement and weakness are the *kilesas*. They are not the Dhamma. This is not the way of Dhamma and this way of thinking is not in line with Dhamma. This kind of thinking is on the side of *samudaya*, which will cause more *kilesas* to afflict us with more *dukkha*, thus creating more discouragement in us. The result that we seek will never appear, and it will be contrary to our purpose and intention, and our determination for Dhamma. The *kilesas* are always permeating and hiding within us, so we cannot be off-guard. This is because as soon as we are off-guard they will hit us. Remember this point well because the *kilesas* are always waiting. As soon as *satipaññā* is off-guard, then the *kilesas* will emerge. As soon as we are off-guard, then *saṅkhāra* will begin to concoct.

As far as *saññā* is concerned, it is a lot more subtle than *sañkhāra*, as far as I can observe this *khandha*. When *sañkhāra* concocts, it stirs suddenly, but *saññā* doesn't stir at all. As one establishes the *khandhas* to become still and quiet, and one begins to observe to see which *khandha* will arise first, *saññā khandha* will slowly permeate out like ink permeating across a piece of blotting paper. It slowly flows out until it creates a picture—a mental image, and then it will cause *sañkhāra* to begin to concoct the various stories following the image that has been created. All of these pictures or images that are created by *saññā*, all come out by themselves. *Saññā* draws up the images by itself, and then *sañkhāra* takes hold of these images and begins to concoct the various concepts and stories about them. This is how it will happen when we are off our guard.

If it is hard, we should endure it. We should not be concerned about this difficulty. As practitioners we should never be bothered by the hardships that arise from our exertion. The Lord Buddha went before us, and he experienced all sorts of hardships and difficulties. So when he taught the world the Dhamma, he selected and refined the teaching and came up with the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of Practice. This is the shortest and most direct way. Please follow this path, no matter how difficult or easy it may be, for this is the shortest and most direct way to go. Let us not be concerned with the hardship for if we tread the roundabout ways, we may eventually get lost and not reach our destination. We must stick to this path. We must make our hearts brave and courageous. Be tactful and versatile, and watch out for the *kilesas*, for they will whisper to us right inside the *citta*. Please don't ever think that the *kilesas* are anywhere else but right inside the *citta*. In the scriptures there are only to be found the names of the *kilesas*, or the names of Dhamma, or the names of greed, hatred, and delusion, or the names of *rāga-taṇhā*, be it in the Book of the Discourses, or the Discipline or the *Abhidhamma*. They only contain the names of Dhamma, and the names of all sorts of *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* that manifest themselves inside the hearts of all sentient beings.

The Lord Buddha expounded and pointed to the heart, but a few years after he had passed away, the Dhamma was collected and put into the scriptures so that it could be used as a signpost pointing out the way. We then study these texts and become attached to them by taking up the knowledge that we have committed into memory as our own knowledge. One thinks that one is wise and discerning, although the *kilesas* are constantly consuming one's heart, and burning it worse than an erupting volcano. Such is the way when we commit things into memory. It can only increase the *kilesas* by letting us think that now we know the truth, and that we are very wise from doing a lot of studying. But this is the wrong way of learning. The correct way is to learn about the names of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, and the technique and method of coping and correcting and getting rid of these *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. Then we must take up this learning and apply it inside our hearts, for this is where all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* are.

Where are *rāga*—lustful desire—and *dosa*—hatred and anger—found, if they are not found within the heart? They are found in the heart, and this is where they exhibit or manifest themselves. Where are cravings and ambitions? The texts or the scriptures never exhibit the greed, hatred, and delusion for us to see, but all of these things actually exhibit themselves right within our hearts. They are right here, so we must turn around and hit them right at this point. The *kilesas* are found here. Don't look in the scriptures, for that is merely a compass pointing towards the heart. I am not speaking in contempt. There is both internal and external Dhamma. The texts are merely the external Dhamma which serves as a compass or a signpost pointing back towards the heart so that we can practice and develop this heart. That is really the message of the texts. Don't turn into worms eating up the paper. Let's do it at this point because this is where the Lord Buddha attained his Enlightenment.

Be courageous and joyful. In your practice you must always use *sati* and *paññā*—mindfulness and wisdom, because they are the most important weapons. In your exertion *sati* is the foremost. It is the

primary weapon. Even in the beginning stages of practice, you must depend on *sati* as your primary weapon and when you begin to investigate with *paññā*, you must also depend on *sati*. That is why *sati* is always vital. That is why the Lord Buddha said that *sati* is always needed in every circumstance. The Lord Buddha said all circumstances—there is no exception at all. Whatever you do, whether it is the internal or external work, you must always have mindfulness. You really must try to develop your *sati*. Don't be interested in or pay attention to other things. Don't ever have the idea that forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects, or other people, are harmful to us. They are merely the creations or concoctions of the heart that create images and concepts to fool ourselves, bother and disturb our heart. The one who really stirs up trouble is the heart itself. It is the heart that creates all sorts of troubling affairs.

You must always look at this point. When you have continuously observed and watched this point, then you will eventually come to realize that all the troubles that have been created come out from this point, this you will find out for yourselves in the heart. Once the heart comes to calm, then all the troubles also disappear. During that time the world is not apparent, although the world is there, but the heart doesn't give it a thought. Because at that time the heart (knowingness or awareness) remains just with itself, not concocting any concepts about anything. It is likewise with the five *khandhas* that are found within us. Once the *citta* does not form any concepts about them, then they become just like any other objects that we can see with our eyes. They are like the four elements—the earth, water, air, and fire. These things form no concepts of themselves. It is we who form these concepts and give them names or labels like calling them earth, water, air, and fire. That thing is a mountain, a tree, a man or a woman. We just keep on forming concepts without end. This is the way of building up insanity because there is no mindfulness. But when the *citta* doesn't form any concepts, and is very cautious and watching itself very carefully, then it is as if there is nothing there.

Then we can really have fun in analyzing and investigating the main cause that creates all the problems inside the heart. But if the *citta* still cherishes the various concepts and thoughts about this and that, then this is really the work of the *kilesas* pushing us outward. The *kilesas* fool us and lead us to go out and be involved with the external things, rather than being concerned with the internal things. They fool us and lead us to go and chase after shadows. The real *kilesas* are found within the heart but we never have the chance to capture them. That is why we must concentrate all our effort right at this point. If we cannot yet pinpoint the spot where the *citta* is concocting the various concepts, then we must depend on our meditation object to take us there. Be solely aware of just the meditation object and nothing else. It can be ‘*Buddho*’, ‘*Buddho*’, ‘*Buddho*’, or anything else, but the point is to only be concentrated on that particular object. Constantly focus your attention just on this meditation object, so that eventually your awareness will become continuous. Then the flow of the *citta* that goes out to the various objects will now begin to be drawn back, as it cannot withstand the power of discipline and control. This flow of the *citta* will steadily return back to the *citta* itself which will then calm down. One will gain coolness, and one will be able to see this very clearly. This is one aspect of practice, and it is the same way with the investigation of the body.

Every piece and part of this body is *asubha* and *paṭikkūla*—loathsome and filthy. This is the truth. Our perception and view that runs contrary to Dhamma, the seeing that this body is ‘I’ and ‘Mine’, as people and animals, this is precisely the *kilesas*. You must, therefore, try to investigate and analyze this body, in both aspects of *paṭikkūla*, or filthiness, and the *dhātu* or elements. And what are the elements? They are the earth, water, air, and fire, and *mano*—the knowing element which is the heart. You should also investigate that. As far as people are concerned, after they have been born and die, does the body have any value or worth once it becomes a corpse? Is there any value in a dead person? There is none. It cannot even compare with a fish. When a fish dies, one can take it to the market, and similarly

with all the other kinds of animals. Every piece and part of them becomes useful after they die because it can be sold in the market. But with people, once they die, their bodies are not useful at all. In order to be useful, we must, therefore, do what we can now whilst we are still living, especially we who are *bhikkhus*, because we are of a special breed. Our duty and work is to cultivate and develop ourselves so that we can release ourselves from the *kilesas* and *āsava*. And we have full support from the lay people without them coming here to bother us at all. You must therefore exert to your fullest. Be resolute and earnest.

In your investigation of death, you must investigate so that you can really get to see the truth of it. In this whole world of *samsāra*, every person, every man, every woman, every animal, must all die. Wherever they may be, there is always a cemetery. Even right here where we are sitting there is a cemetery, for there are all sorts of little animals or organisms that die all over the place. It is just that we never think about it in that way. We don't think of it as a cemetery. We just call it a *sālā* or assembly hall. In our bodies there can be found many organisms living inside us, like the germs for instance—they are one form of animal. And inside this body there is nothing that one can call attractive or beautiful. You must investigate and analyze to see according to the truth of the Lord Buddha. The *kilesas* tend to see it as something beautiful, as people, as animals, as 'I', as 'mine', and this attachment to this view, our *upādāna*, is much more tenaciously fixed than a nail driven into a piece of wood. It cannot be easily dislodged. This is because of the influence of the *kilesas* or our misperception of things. We must, therefore, uproot and correct this misperception which is truly the work of the *kilesas* with the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, using *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* diligent effort. We must get to see it clearly. We have to establish our perception so that we really see this body passing away because death is the undeniable truth.

So why can't the *citta* accept this truth? What is the cause or the reason for it? And it is the same way with *paṭikkūla* or filthiness—it is all over this body, and it is also the truth. It is really that way, so why cannot the *citta* see it like that? What is the reason? You must therefore probe and examine until you can really see it as such. You must open it up and reveal it with your *sati* and *paññā*. This work and undertaking is your work, and nobody can help you do this work. Your teacher can merely point out the various means and techniques of doing it. In doing this work, you must do it yourself. *Attāhi attano nātho*—you are your own refuge. When you have heard the instruction from your teacher and learned the various techniques, then you must use and apply these techniques in your practice. The benefit that you gain while listening to the discourse of your teacher, is that either you will gain calm, or you will learn the various techniques and methods of practice. But other than that you must help yourselves. This is essential. You should really get into it.

I really have great concern for all of you, and that is why I always have to give you instruction. Although it can be hard on me, I try to struggle along. We are living in a Buddhist country which is the most suitable environment for us to strive for the elimination of *dukkha* by the means of our exertion and this is our sole duty as *bhikkhus*. I try my best to prevent other people from coming to disturb your exertion in your practice, because the most vital factor for a practitioner who is striving for the realization and penetration of truth is in his exertion that is, in his walking *caṅkama* and sitting in *samādhi bhāvanā*, having mindfulness as the most important tool in that exertion. This is more vital than anything else. I do not see any other work in the world that is more challenging than the work that we are doing, such that I could be led into doing anything else, like building projects that might interrupt the exertion and ruin this most important work. I only do this extracurricular work when it is extremely necessary. But if it is not really necessary, I would not do it or allow anyone else to do it.

I want you to do this work. That is, you should concentrate all of your effort that you have spent in doing other things, on the work of overcoming and uprooting the *kilesas*. When we have many *kilesas* in ourselves, then we experience a lot of *dukkha*, and this *dukkha* is caused by nothing else but the *kilesas* right within our hearts. Please really take this to heart, and do keep in mind that the intensity of your *dukkha* is proportional to the intensity of the *kilesas*. There is nothing else that can cause the heart trouble and hardship but just the *kilesas*. Please listen well and take this to heart and really see the menace of the *kilesas*. Then you will be able to exert to your fullest. It is the only way to catch up with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, which have been so powerful and domineering for such a long time, and have been so for countless eons.

So are we still willing to go on being born and dying, again and again? In these three worlds of existence, who is the one who stands out as the most extraordinary? There is nobody else but the Lord Buddha—he was the first to truly realize the peril of the *kilesas*. Apart from him, nobody could perceive this. No one could perceive the danger of *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*, greed, hatred, and delusion, or *rāga-taṇhā*, lustful desire. Everybody was obsessed with and deceived by them, and had to wander in the cycle of births and deaths over and over again without being able to find anything definite or certain. The only thing that was certain was their *kamma*. But again, what they had done—that is, what kind of *kamma* they had made could not be of any guarantee either, because they did not know what they had done or kept an account of their deeds.

The Lord Buddha saw the danger of greed, hatred, and delusion, and he exerted to the utmost of his ability, putting his life at stake and striving and struggling against the *kilesas*, until finally attaining victory and becoming the world's greatest Teacher. He attained the pure heart, and this is the knowledge and realization of the Lord Buddha, which differs from the knowledge and realization found in the three worlds of existence. No one else could have attained this knowledge

that can be used to cope with, suppress, or defeat the *kilesas*, and all those things which are harmful to the heart, as the Lord Buddha did. He then taught us how to achieve it. We have all set up our determination to come here to listen to the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha so that we can take it up and practice it, and it is only we who can practice it to the utmost of our ability.

You must therefore commit yourselves to this work. I would really like to see you experience the calm that will arise from your meditation practice. Furthermore, I would also like to see you use *paññā* in your investigation, following what I have explained to you concerning the internal and external objects, or the investigation of the body. But if you are inclined to investigate the external objects, then you must set them up in front of your mind. Whether it is the form of a man or a woman, you must take the form that is the most detrimental or harmful to your chastity. In the beginning, if you are not certain of yourself, then you should not set up this form too close to you, but instead put it at quite a distance. You must establish this form and make it break down, decompose, go rotten, and disperse. Establish it with the vultures and dogs scavenging and devouring this body. Set up as many forms or bodies as you like. Establish all of them so that they appear loathsome, filthy, and as a living cemetery. Then you must turn this inwards into your own body, and then compare your own body with those bodies. You have to investigate this again and again and again.

You have to coerce the *citta* to traverse this path. You must not let it go out to perceive all the attractive and pretty things, for is it really pretty, beautiful, or attractive? Of course not, there is no such thing! This is merely looking for trouble. The *kilesas* create trouble for us and we tend to believe in them. Where is this charm and beauty? All there is is a collection of filth. We must look into this filth so that we can see it very clearly, following the way that the Lord Buddha described it to us. You should really investigate it. Then you should bring it closer and closer, at the time when having investigated you notice that the

citta has become bold and courageous. Move it closer and closer towards you, so that you can see it very clearly. Next, you must form the image of beauty, and spread the image of *asubha*, or loathsomeness, all over it, similar to the way you might pour petrol over something and then set a match to it, letting it go up in flames. This is the technique of *satipaṇṇā*, and it is up to each individual to come up with it, for they are all *magga* or path to enlightenment.

Saṅkhāra is concoction. If it is the *kilesas* that influence this concoction of *saṅkhāra*, then it falls on the side of *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. But if *saṅkhāra* is influenced to concoct the truth of Dhamma, then it is the means of correcting and overcoming the *kilesas*, similar to the way one analyzes and investigates the parts of the body in their various aspects of *asubha*, loathsomeness, or *paṭikkūla*—filthiness, as a living cemetery, and as it decomposes, until it eventually breaks down into the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. These *saṅkhāra* fall on the side of *magga*, the Path. This is the means of correcting and uprooting the perception of beauty of an individual, of people, or of animals, so that one can see them decompose and break down into the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. How then can one have any affection for this body? It is merely earth, water, air, and fire. It is the same way with a pile of corpses—does anyone have any affection for these corpses? When one looks at these corpses, there can only be sadness and sorrow, aversion and creepy feelings for them. How then can one see this body as attractive and beautiful?

One must investigate this again and again repeatedly. *Satipaṇṇā* must force one to make the *citta* tread on this path of investigation continually, and then one will be fighting and battling with the *kilesas*. If we only investigate this way occasionally, once in a long while, then it is not possible to consider this to be the work of investigation to combat the *kilesas*. This is useless. This is not the way of exerting for the sake of Dhamma and the truth.

As a follower of the Lord Buddha, you must be earnest and resolute—really commit yourselves in this work. There are many tech-

niques of *paññā* that we can come up with. If we can calm the *citta* with the means of *sati* and *paññā*, then we must do so, and if we can calm the *citta* with the use of a *parikamma* object like ‘*Buddho*’, then we must use that particular method. Or if we can calm down the *citta* by our command, that is, if we can calm the *citta* down any time we want to, then it means that we already know the way of getting the *citta* to calm down. Then you must investigate with *paññā*. You must not remain idle and lie clinging to this state of calm. I was stuck in this state of calm before, and I have told you this many times, so I shall not repeat it again.

If one clings onto one’s *samādhi*, then one can only gain just this *samādhi*, and one will never be able to progress along the Path. But when one begins to develop *paññā*, then one begins to see all the things that come into contact and be involved with oneself, and one can manage to cut them down and get rid of them. Then one can search and dig for them further, struggle with them, cope with them, and eventually destroy them, with the means of our *sati* and *paññā*. This is the way of developing our *satipaññā* to become strong, piercing, bright, sharp, and absorbed in this investigation, and it is up to each individual practitioner to devise his own different techniques of *sati* and *paññā*.

What has been elaborated here is only presented in general terms, and it is up to each practitioner to come up with the different specific means of coping with his problem. When you have come up with your own technique, then this becomes your own possession, and you should not let what the teacher has presented to you slip out of your hands and go down the drain, for this will be of no benefit to you. You must take what the teacher has given you as your source of investment in your business of practicing, so that you can come up with more profit. No matter how much one has studied in higher education, one cannot help but become the tools of the *kilesas* if one doesn’t have any Dhamma inside one’s heart. The *kilesas* can really enjoy using one who has learned a lot and studied a lot. When there

is no Dhamma inside the heart of one who has learned and studied a lot, and who is an influential person, he can only create a lot of damage and trouble for others and himself, without him realizing it.

This is because one's *lobha* or greed, and one's ambition, and one's delusion in one's power and position of influence, blocks one from seeing these things and from being aware that one has done wrong to other people. But if one has some Dhamma, then one must know. Why be so greedy? When one dies, one just lies in a coffin. The *bhikkhus* just come and chant the *kusalā-dhammā*, the meritorious Dhamma. But once the body has been cremated, all that is left is just bones and ashes. So why be obsessed with greed? When one has enough to eat and a place to live, that really is enough. Why then be so greedy? Greed never makes people happy, and neither does one's hatred and anger make one happy. It is the same way with *rāga-taṇhā*, sensual lust. When it arises, it really makes people struggle like a dog in heat. Where can any happiness be found? But when all these things disappear, then one doesn't grasp or struggle for things. When the *citta* calms down, it will not be grasping at things. And when one has totally got rid of all of these disturbing influences, then there will be no grasping or struggling inside one's heart at all. Nothing can disturb or bother one anymore, and this is what the Lord Buddha means by freedom.

One can then see very clearly that what was harmful to oneself was one's greed, one's delusion, one's hatred, and one's sensual lust. They are like heaps of fire or like volcanoes erupting and burning one's heart constantly. Before we never saw their harm, but now we can see it very clearly. Once one has learned the nature of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, and has dispersed and scattered them from within one's heart, then wherever one looks outside and sees other people, one cannot help but understand every action that people take, because one now understands the driving force that urges people and oneself to do these things, because they are of the same nature. The things that people do are usually driven by the *kilesas*, but they don't

realize that. You must, therefore, try to learn the deceptions and tricks of the *kilesas* within your hearts. Get to see them very clearly. You must be very careful in observing your heart—take care of it well.

When greed, hatred, and delusion, and *rāga-taṇhā* arise, please realize that they arise out of the heart, because it is the heart that creates them. It is the heart that conjures them up, and it is the heart that is always in the state of hunger. You must look at the heart and investigate what it is hungry for. You have to analyze the object of hunger so that the heart will get to know the nature of this object and then lose its curiosity and hunger for it. For instance with *rūpa* or form, the form of a woman is inimical and harmful to a man. One must investigate this form or body to really see the truth of it—not that it is a man or a woman, but that it is just made up of various bodily parts, like the hair of the head, the hair of the body, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the flesh and the sinews, for example. Apart from that, there is just filth all over the body. How can there be any beauty in it? Then one must mentally decompose the body. When a person dies, his body slowly decomposes, and becomes rotten and fetid, and eventually scatters and disperses into earth, water, air, and fire.

Get the heart to see this very clearly. Then this misperception, this presumption and assumption, will steadily diminish. It will lessen and lessen. The truth will increasingly become more distinct—the truth of *asubha*, loathsomeness, *paṭikkūla*, filthiness, and the truth of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and air. They will all become obvious. The truth about the four elements is the truth on a very subtle level. When one has entered into the knowledge of the four elements, then one has entered into the subtle truth. What then can come and bother the *citta*? This is the way of correcting the *citta*. This is the way of correcting ourselves. We must take a good hold of *sati* and *paññā*. We must not remain idle. We must come up with the various techniques and means and methods that will develop ourselves.

I really want to see all of you experience the Dhamma, for it is within a hand's reach—because it is right within our hearts. The at-

tainment of deliverance from all of these things is right within the heart, and all the *kilesas* are also found right within this heart. The *sati* and *paññā*, mindfulness and wisdom, that will penetrate and pierce the *kilesas* are also found right within ourselves. But why can't we pierce and penetrate the *kilesas*? On the other hand, when the *kilesas* want to pierce us, they seem to be able to do so very efficiently. When we want to pierce the *kilesas*, all we can do is to poke at their shadows, not the real *kilesas* themselves. We have always been deceived by the *kilesas* to go after something else other than them. The real *kilesas* are right within our hearts. The deceptions are found right within our hearts, but the *kilesas* that deceive us draw up the pictures and images and project them to the outside, and fool us to go and chase after shadows. So we never seem to be able to achieve anything. We must now turn around to look inside to find where the principal culprit is. It is right within the heart. When one attains calm, it is inside the heart, because when the *kilesas* are subdued, they are subdued within the heart, and *satipaññā*, the tools to curb the *kilesas*, are also found within the heart. Be really earnest, and really get into it. When we have attained some calm, then it will be possible for us to see clearly what the *citta* is like. We will be able to differentiate between the *citta* and the *khandhas*. Even though it might not be clearly distinct, we will at least see the difference between them.

The calmness, cool-heartedness, and brightness of the *citta* will become apparent corresponding to the intensity of our exertion in correcting and overcoming the *kilesas*. The enormous change in the *citta* will come when one begins to investigate with *paññā*. The more the *kilesas* are being eliminated by *paññā*, then the more skilful and adaptable will be the *citta*. The conditions of the *citta* namely feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and awareness will steadily change and become more and more subtle as we progress in our practice and exertion. All of these are *sammatti* or mundane, and until all of the things that are involved with the *citta*, even the most subtle things like *avijjā*, have been eradicated, then the *citta* will cease to exhibit any changes. It will now remain stable and unchanging. As we progress in our

practice, the change will steadily occur, following the change of the *sammati-dhammas* found within the *citta*. There will only be change on the good side, and will become more and more subtle. This is because good is *sammati*, and so is evil, and so is wholesomeness and unwholesomeness. They are all *sammati*. When one has come to this subtle level, one will understand this. And once one has attained and passed beyond this stage, then one will become one who has relinquished or let go of both good and evil. It means that now one has let go of all *sammati*, both the good and evil, the coarse and the subtle. One has now let go totally of all *sammati*—none of this *sammati* is found within the *citta* anymore. All that is left is just the natural state of knowingness.

Therefore, I am not very certain about the translation of the Pāli verse that says *Sacitta pariyodapanam*, which translates as “Purify your *citta* until it attains the state of luminosity.” If it had been translated as “Purify your *citta* to the state of purity,” then I could accept this wholeheartedly. Furthermore, consider the Dhamma which says “Behold, *bhikkhus*, the true original *citta* is luminous, but the *kilesas* act like visitors, which make the *citta* become dull.” The Lord Buddha did actually describe this true original *citta* as the original *citta* of the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, the Cycle of Birth and Death. The Lord Buddha did not say that the true original *citta* is purified, and for what reason? This is because the original *citta* of each individual has *avijjā* deeply embedded within it, without any exception. That is why the Lord Buddha said “Behold, *bhikkhus*, the true original *citta* is luminous.” But it was due to the *kilesas* that came in, which means that whatever comes into contact with the *citta*, the *citta* then takes up that object to be its own or itself. This is what is meant by the *kilesas* coming in as a visitor. The Lord Buddha spoke in *sammati* or mundane terms.

But when one has purified the *citta* until reaching the state of purity, then this state of luminosity ceases to be an issue. This is because this state of luminosity which is stated in the *Dhammapāda*, must be met with by the practitioner who will come across it. When

he has arrived at this state of luminosity, the *citta* that is luminous, then he has come face to face with *avijjā*, or the *avijjā-citta*.

This luminosity, or the magnificence of *avijjā*, is the most subtle level of the *kilesa*. *Avijjā* is the most clever and most deceptive of the *kilesas*. So when one has attained that state, then the *citta* becomes very luminous and very bright. One then becomes deluded with that state of luminosity. This thing is really like a trap or a deception. It is not the real thing. It is only after this luminosity has broken apart that one attains the state of purity, the purified *citta*. This purified *citta* doesn't take up any more birth, but the luminous *citta* will still take up birth. It is always ready to take up birth, because this luminosity itself is the creator of birth. But once this luminosity has been dispersed, then there is nothing left within the *citta*. During practice, as one progresses to the different stages, at the stage of *samādhi*, there is one form of calm. It has its own foundation, the firmer the *samādhi* of the *citta*, the firmer will be its foundation. It is not easily shaken by anything, and for this reason *samādhi* is very good nourishment for the *citta*. The *citta* will not be restless or agitated, or hunger for anything, because it has *samādhi* as its nourishment. For this reason, the Lord Buddha taught that one must now develop *paññā* because now the *citta* is full and content. One must take this *citta* which is now full and content with *samādhi*, and put it to work by investigating with *paññā*, for it will then be able to perform its duty at its fullest.

It is not like the *citta* that is still hungry for other things, because when it investigates in the way of *paññā*, it will all turn into *saññā-ārammaṇa*, memory. The only exception to this is when one is driven into a corner and one has no other means, then one must use *paññā* to do the investigation on some occasions which I have discussed before, in what we call 'Paññā develops *samādhi*'. This is when one is restless and agitated, and one cannot calm down the *citta*. One then has to investigate and find out the cause of this agitation and restlessness. This then becomes a special case, a special occasion. Where is this *citta* going? One now must begin to investigate and dig into it, not

allowing the *citta* to go out of the confines of the *kammaṭṭhāna*, the forty meditation subjects. One must keep on probing, examining, and investigating, until eventually the *citta* calms down due to the power of *paññā*. One will become very bold and courageous from this practice of *paññā* that can coerce the *citta* to enter into calm. When one withdraws from this calm, one feels sublime and majestic, and this is one case of *samādhi*.

The reason for discussing this is because it really happens within the circle of practice for some people, although it might not happen to others. It happened to me, and that is why I have written about it and discussed it. I wrote about my own experiences, and there were no fabrications there. That is how it actually happened. It was when the *citta* became restless and agitated, and when I tried to investigate any aspect of Dhamma, the *citta* would not accept it. It kept on going in a different direction, so I had to be tough and strong in trying to discipline the *citta*. I had to investigate with *paññā*, using it to round up the *citta*. This is similar to being in a close encounter or in close combat, until the *citta* cowers and calms down. This manner of calming the *citta* with *paññā* can really bring the *citta* to be tame. When the *citta* enters into calm, it enters with boldness and bravery. And when it withdraws from the state of calm, it does so with courage and it becomes very grand and magnificent. This is one special case, but generally it is the way of *samādhi* develops *paññā*. *Samādhi* is the support for *paññā* because *samādhi* is good nourishment for the *citta*. It is the support for *paññā* that lets that *paññā* keep functioning and doing its work without hungering for other things, so that one's investigation doesn't turn into *saññā-ārammaṇa*—memory, because the *citta* will now perform its function as it has been told, and this is the purpose of *samādhi*. It is one form of foundation.

Now, when one begins to do a lot of investigation with *paññā*, this foundation of *samādhi* seems to have completely disappeared. But this is not comparable to one who does not have any *samādhi* at all. This is because the *citta*'s total awareness now revolves around *paññā*. The

awareness of the *citta* doesn't remain with the *citta* so that it forms *samādhi*, for it has now come out from the power base of *samādhi* and now turns to *paññā*; so now the base of *samādhi* that one used to have has totally disappeared. Where does it go? All of it has now gone and concentrated on the development of *paññā*, because the *citta* now does not want to take any rest. So when one wants to enter into calm, one must really force the *citta* to come and rest in *samādhi*. When one has to do this, the *citta* will indeed enter into *samādhi*, but one must really force it to do so. Once the *citta* no longer goes against our will, then it will have to follow our command. This is because the *satipaññā* of this level is capable of controlling the *citta*, since at this stage there is nothing except the *citta* and *sati* and *paññā*. There is nothing else to become involved with it. There is nothing that can come and drag away the *citta*, so that when one has to try to coerce the *citta*, it really means that one has to drag the *citta* away from the work that it has been doing. One has to do this dragging away with *sati*, so that it can come and rest itself in the state of calm.

I had to control and master the *citta* to remain calm by using the *parikamma* object of *Buddho, Buddho, Buddho*. I haven't forgotten this because I had to repeat it very quickly, or else the *citta* would go out and do more work. Not that it would have gone out to be immersed in the pleasure of anything, it wouldn't. The *citta* had no interest in anything else at all. The *citta* at this stage has no interest in anything in the whole universe. It is now totally immersed in the pleasure of doing the investigation with *paññā*, and that is why at this stage it is called *uddhacca*, restlessness. That is, it is too engrossed in this investigation, and this is one of the higher fetters, the *saṃyojana*, for now the *citta* has gone overboard. Instead of resting in the calm of *samādhi* so as to replenish itself and recuperate and serve as the base for *paññā*, it doesn't do so. But when it gets too exhausted, it will eventually have to come and rest in *samādhi*, when it cannot go any further from exhaustion. It must take a rest. So when it gets too exhausted and tired to the point when it cannot go on anymore, then it must return and rest in the state of *samādhi*.

After having rested long enough to gain strength and become very light without the burden of the work, then it will just get right back on to the work very energetically, and become wholly concentrated on the work of investigation. At this stage, the base or the foundation of *samādhi* is no longer there to be found. From my own experience, this is what happens. The base of *samādhi* was there during the time when I concentrated my whole effort into the development of calm and *samādhi*. But then I was not interested in the investigation of *paññā*. But when I began to concentrate on my investigation with *paññā*, then that base of *samādhi* entirely disappeared. As far as the luminous *citta* is concerned, this is not the base of *samādhi*—it is something else. The more *paññā* can cleanse the *citta*, then the more luminous the *citta* becomes. When it is the time for it to be empty, this emptiness can be seen very clearly. I could see this emptiness—the *citta* being empty of the body, the *citta* being empty of everything else. Whatever I looked at appeared like shadows; they were just like shadowy images. Looking at a whole mountain, or a solid rock, they just appeared like shadowy images. The greater part of the *citta* is empty, and it seems that there is no solid rock—just an image of the rock. Walking on the ground, it also appears shadowy—the *citta* appeared to have penetrated it. It just happened that way.

And as far as the body was concerned, it was comparable to the globe of a pressure lantern, for inside it was very bright and very clear. This is the emptiness of the base of *samādhi*, or the emptiness of the base of the *citta*. It does not really feel right to describe it as the emptiness of the base of *samādhi*, but when I describe it as the emptiness of the base of the *citta*, that does feel right. That is, I feel very positive about this description. In the state of *samādhi*, it is also empty, but when one begins to focus the *citta* on the external things, then it is not empty anymore. But when it is empty by virtue of the base of the *citta*, then wherever one looks at or focuses on the *citta*, everything appears to be empty. But it is not empty of itself. When the time comes for the *citta* to finish its work, then it has to come back and investigate itself until it becomes totally empty. Before, wherever one looks, one

sees everything as empty, but oneself is not empty. One is still carrying the burden. One is still carrying the full load of *avijjā* and *taṇhā*. Speaking of this *taṇhā*, it is not the coarser kind of *taṇhā*. This *taṇhā* or desire that we are speaking of refers to the affection for, the intimacy with, and the attachment to the brightness and luminosity of the *citta*.

One must now investigate at this point. When all this luminosity has broken up, then it truly becomes empty. There are three kinds of emptiness: the emptiness of *samādhi*, the emptiness of the base of the *citta*, and this ultimate emptiness in which everything is empty. Everything external is empty and the base of the *citta* is empty and the *citta* itself is also empty. All problems have disappeared. Then there is nothing else to investigate, and one knows this within oneself. One has no doubt or questions about what *sandiṭṭhiko* is. That is, knowing within oneself and experiencing this within oneself. Though one might never have known or experienced this before, now one knows and there is no doubt about it. There is no more problem or work to be done, and one can see this very clearly. What is there to do anymore, and what is the object of this work? Now there is nothing to come and be involved with the *citta*. The *citta* now is just merely the *citta*. There is no self, animal or people, no I or them. They have all disappeared. All forms of *sammati*, and the *sammati-citta*, are no longer apparent. What else is there to do?

One has experienced all the hardship in one's exertion from the beginning to the end. The exertion for the development of *samādhi* is very hard work. It is really hard on the body because one has to abstain from food and sleep or sit for a very long time in *samādhi*. This is really *dukkha*. It was very hard in the development of *samādhi*, and when the *citta* had established some foundation, it became very hard on the *citta*, and the more developed the *citta* became, the more subtle everything got, and the harder the work was. But one is no more concerned about this hardship and difficulty than about the work for the realization for the truth and Dhamma, and everything that became involved with the *citta*. But this hardship was no problem,

and when one had fully exerted to one's utmost ability, one would eventually come to conquer the *citta* and accomplish one's work. And one's *satipaṇṇā* that has been revolving like a *Dhamma-cakka*, a wheel of Dhamma, will also lose its purpose. They all fall into place naturally. One's diligent effort in the application of *satipaṇṇā* that has been so intensified, turning around relentlessly and incessantly, eventually and naturally stops, because there is nothing else to do. There is no more problem to solve. There is nothing to be corrected.

Paṇṇā is used for correcting and clearing away the *kilesas*, but is there now a single type of *kilesa* found within the *citta*? If one is certain that there is none, then what is there to fight? What is there to cope with, or to struggle with or encounter? Can you battle or fight with empty wind? There is an end to the work of Dhamma, but as far as the work of the world is concerned, there can never be an end to it. From the first day of one's birth, there is work to do continuously until the last day of one's life, and even then one has still not finished one's work. People die worried and concerned for their work, their friends and their relatives. There isn't a single *citta* that can pass away with *sugato*, going to a happy state, without having any worry, or *anālayo*, without having any desire left. There are only *cittas* that die with worry and confusion and entanglement with all sorts of things. So how can there be any happiness when one goes carrying a burden with oneself? The work that one did before one passed away was not completed, and when one passes away, someone else will have to take over one's job. This just continues on and on. There isn't a single person in the world who can accomplish his task, because as soon as he finishes one job, there is a new one coming up, all the time. People keep on doing it, but are we going to be bold enough to take up this task as well?

Is it possible that we can get into the mundane work and accomplish it before we die? Can you be really certain that you can finish this work? If you are not certain of this, why don't you take up the work that is certain, like the work that the Lord Buddha promised? He

said that if you take this work of a recluse, and then attain the *vusitariṃ brahma cariyam*, that is, the end of the holy life, then you will really complete and accomplish your task. There won't be a single *kilesa* that could be revived so that it can come and fight with us anymore. Once it is totally got rid of 100%, then it is totally got rid of forever. From that moment on, one will never have to be in doubt, for instance by thinking 'Could this *kilesa* arise again, now that I have destroyed all of them?' It will not happen for they have now all been destroyed. It has all disappeared. They have all been truly got rid of, and from there onward there is only happiness, ease and comfort. As far as all the anxiety and worry and confusion is concerned, and all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava* that used to afflict one's heart like an erupting volcano are concerned, they have all disappeared. This volcano has been extinguished by the water of the Dhamma and the truth. Extinguished are all the fires of *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha*. They have been quenched by the water of the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of Practice.

Once the water has been splashed over this fire that has been afflicting the heart, and has totally extinguished it, then all that is left is just coolness that will last forever. This is *akālika*—timeless. The Lord Buddha said that this is, '*Akālika-citta, akālika-dhamma*'—the timeless *citta* and timeless Dhamma. They are both one and the same thing. Once one has arrived at this stage, both the *citta* and Dhamma are one and the same thing. One can either call it the *citta* or the Dhamma, for there wouldn't be any contradiction. All that is necessary is for the *kilesas*, that are notorious for their contradiction, to disappear from the heart. There will not be any contradiction—nothing to go and contravene anything else. One cannot find anything to contradict one because the *kilesas* of contradiction have all disappeared. That is, the *kilesas* that contradict Dhamma. Once the *kilesas* have been wiped out, there is nothing left to contravene, and nothing left to serve as a contradiction.

One will then be at ease and peaceful. You see, the work of a *bhikkhu* does have an end. You must really get into it. Don't be lackadaisical or vacillating, or grope in the dark like blind men. Don't be halfhearted and uncommitted, for this is like groping for something when you don't know whether it is an eel or a snake. Then there will only be uncertainty and doubt.

Dukkha

August 4th, 1979 —

As a practitioner, one must be truly committed to Dhamma. One's heart must always be turning towards Dhamma. One must not allow the flow of the world, which is the *kilesas*, to come into one's heart, to trample on and afflict it, for this is the flow of the *kilesas*, and they must not be allowed to incite and disturb the heart, which we are taking care of with our utmost effort, to the extent where we are willing to put our lives at stake for it, solely for the sake of Dhamma. We must constantly be on the lookout for harm and perils. We must not be insensitive to those things which are harmful to us. We must always set up this understanding, and then we can be considered as people who practice Dhamma with mindfulness. This mindfulness is the constant awareness of things that are harmful and beneficial to oneself. One must be constantly aware of those things which are beneficial or harmful to oneself. One must always be careful and cautious, and one must get rid of the things that should be got rid of. One should also develop, nurture, and take care of the things that one should be taking care of, and this is our own heart.

This heart is the property of two possessors. However, it is the *kilesas* that have been ruling over it for a very long time. We ourselves cannot make an account of all of the forms of birth that we have gone through, and the process of birth, ageing, illness, and death, that we have undergone right on up to the present day. This is the work of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* that lead us to be born and die and experience *dukkha* and hardship. All of them are harmful to us. Every form of existence that we take up is filled with *dukkha*. *Dukkha* is inherent in every form of birth because when one takes up birth, one must also take up death. Both birth and death are a pair or a duality. Therefore, whenever there is birth, there is also *dukkha*. The Lord Buddha said that the one whom *dukkha* does not fall on is the one who does not take up birth, for this is the only way to totally wipe out *dukkha*. If one doesn't take up birth, then one doesn't have to experience any *dukkha*. If such is the way, then, what is the cause of *dukkha*? Due to birth, *dukkha* arises; so what is the cause or origin of birth? The origin of birth is *avijjā*, the King of Delusion that is deeply embedded within the *citta*, to the extent where it is not easy to differentiate or tell them apart. It is, therefore, necessary for us to commit our total effort, to the extent where we will even give up our lives if we have to.

When it is time to intensify one's effort, one must intensify it. When it is time to make a hard drive, one must make a hard drive. When it is time to fight, one must really fight. When it is time for one to be moderate, one will know that for oneself when the time arises. However, one should not take it upon oneself to decide when it is the time to be moderate or to take it easy or relax, when in reality the time is not right to be so. Concerning this, one can sometimes be misled. The practitioner himself will know the right time to take a rest, to relax, to enjoy ease and comfort while breaking away from his strenuous exertion. The way to rest the *citta* is to enter it into the state of calm and cool-heartedness. There can be such a time. But when one enters into battle against one's opposition with the means of *satipaṇṇā*, then one must totally commit oneself to it. One must consider the *dukkha* as the *sacca-dhamma*, the truth, and one should not consider *dukkha*

as oneself, for this is the principle of truth and Dhamma. This is the correct principle which is right and proper.

The *dukkha* that arises within the body is important. It is something that one can see very clearly and distinctively. The *dukkha* in the *citta* can arise as a consequence of the *dukkha* of the body. This is one aspect of *dukkha*. The *dukkha* that arises in the *citta*, even at the time when the body is not afflicted with any pain or illness, is the *dukkha* that is entirely created by the *kilesas*. The *dukkha* that arises in the body due to illness or from sitting in the same position for a very long time can cause the *kilesas* to arise. The *citta* will be restless and agitated and will be concocting various ideas. This is caused by the *kilesas* of attachment. The *citta* will become confused, and will concoct the idea that the *dukkha* within the body belongs to oneself, and that the entire body is oneself. If we see that we and the body are one and the same thing, then when there is *dukkha* within the body, we will feel that we ourselves are experiencing *dukkha*. So when we see that we are experiencing *dukkha*, then we will become concerned with ourselves. We will not want to experience *dukkha* and this desire not to want to experience *dukkha* is *vibhava-taṇhā*.

Then we will not be able to look for the truth because we will not be able to find a way to reach the truth or follow the truth principle that says that *dukkha* is an aspect of truth. This is the principle of the *sacca-dhamma*, the truth. A practitioner, who has clearly seen *dukkha* within his heart as an aspect of truth, will then not be overwhelmed by *dukkha*, no matter how severe this *dukkha* might be. This *dukkha* will not be able to trample on and afflict him or cause him to waver. I have experienced this myself and I am not speaking without anything to back me up. I have clearly experienced this and that is why I dare to relate this to you, without being concerned with whether I am showing off or not. I speak from the truth principle, and what I teach is following the truth principle, aiming only for your benefit and befitting the effort that you have made in coming to me for instruction. I instruct you to the utmost—to the fullest. *Dukkha-vedanā*, painful

feeling arises from many causes. It can arise from illness. But please keep in mind that it is the same old *dukkha-vedanā* that we call the *sacca-dhamma*, the truth. The *dukkha* that arises in the various parts of the body, or the *dukkha* that arises from sitting for a long time, are all the *sacca-dhamma*. We must take that *dukkha* as the target for the investigation. We must investigate back and forth between the heart and the body where it has permeated. Look and see in which part of the body this *dukkha* has arisen.

For instance, the pain in the legs or in the various organs of the body—one should take the point where the *dukkha* or pain is most profound, and then take that as the point where one establishes one's mindfulness, and investigate with *paññā*, analyzing, differentiating and isolating the *dukkha* so that you can see its nature very clearly. We must observe the *dukkha* to see that it has no other characteristics apart from its being *dukkha* itself. It is unlike the body which has various characteristics since it is made up of the different parts. We must compare and examine all the different parts, and then we must turn inwards towards the *citta*. These three things are terribly important. We must not wish for *dukkha* to go away because the desire for this *dukkha* to disappear is *tanhā* or craving. This will just increase the *dukkha* and one will never have one's wish fulfilled. Instead of this being *magga*, the way for the eradication of *dukkha* from the heart, or curbing the *dukkha* within the body, it merely increases or intensifies the *dukkha* of both the body and the heart. This is the way if one wants or desires *dukkha* to go away. One must neither make any wish nor have any desire. When *dukkha* arises, it arises whether we have the wish for it to arise or not.

We should investigate *dukkha* to see it as it actually is, by differentiating and setting apart those things which are involved with *dukkha*. Find out which part of the body is being afflicted with *dukkha* and take a good look at it. The *citta* must be revolving constantly. This revolving of the *citta* is actually the turning around of *paññā*. *Paññā* probes and examines for the cause of this *dukkha*. When *dukkha* inten-

sifies, then the *citta* cannot get away from that particular spot. It must be turning around very rapidly—this is the way of investigating the *sacca-dhamma*, and the way to contend with one's enemy. One must differentiate the body, look at it, and examine it. One must also differentiate and set apart *dukkha-vedanā* and examine that. This *vedanā* is merely *dukkha*, but in itself it doesn't know that it is *dukkha*.

And the body—although it might be afflicted with *dukkha*—in itself does not know that it is so afflicted. Who is the one who says that this body is afflicted with *dukkha*, and that the *dukkha-vedanā* that appears is *dukkha*? Who says that this is so? If it doesn't come out of our *saññā-ārammaṇa* or memory, where else can it come from? So in the end we cannot help but look into the *citta* itself. Now if the *citta* itself really suffers from *dukkha*, then let us really look into it closely for ourselves. We must look or see it with *paññā*, see it with discrimination, and see it with discernment. Don't just look simply because we only want to look at it. If we look just because we want to get to know (without doing any investigation), this is not the way of looking for the truth. The point is that we should not have any desire, but merely to probe and examine into the truth itself. This will be the natural way of investigation, the *majjhimā* way. If we have any desire, then this will be *samudaya*, and the cause of *dukkha* will arise.

Therefore, even if the *dukkha* afflicts the body to the extent where it will break apart, then let it break apart. As far as the disintegration and integration of the body is concerned, they are just a pair or a duality. It is natural for them: if they can be formed together, they can also break apart. The main point here is to expose the truth about these three things that are interrelated or combined. See it clearly with *paññā*. One must get to see the pain in the body clearly. One must see it clearly with *paññā* until one can see that the skin is merely the skin, and the flesh is merely the flesh. It is the same way with the sinews and bones and the rest of the parts of the body—they are merely as they are. They themselves don't know that they are experiencing *dukkha*, even though the *dukkha* is like a scorching

flame. They themselves don't know that they are undergoing *dukkha*, and the *dukkha* itself doesn't know that it is *dukkha* either. This *dukkha* doesn't know that it is making others suffer, so who then is the one who forms up the presumption and assumption about these things? One must turn around and look inside the *citta*. When looking at the *citta*, one should look the same way one looks at the body and at *dukkha-vedanā*. One must look with continuous attention and mindfulness. One must look with the intention of finding out the truth. When one gets to find out the truth, then the *citta* will merely know. Can this knowing be one and the same thing with *vedanā*? And if this knowing, and *vedanā*, and the body, are one and the same thing, when *dukkha-vedanā* disappears, how is it that the *citta* still remains?

The *citta* has always been here from the day of our birth. But this *dukkha-vedanā* only arises now. If they are one and the same thing, how is it that this *vedanā* doesn't appear at the moment of birth? And how is it that it can disappear? It should not disappear if the *citta* has not also disappeared, so truly they are not one and the same thing. This investigation must be constantly turning around. As far as the desire is concerned—that is the desire for *dukkha* to disappear—one should never bring it into the investigation, if one doesn't want to enhance *dukkha* and accumulate more *kilesas* which is *samudaya*, the cause of *dukkha*. Then one would be knocked down and one would not be able to make it through. When one is about to pass away, one will be helpless. One who sets his heart to investigate and observe the *sacca-dhamma* is the one who will gain victory, and the one who will be able to withstand to the end. Although he might not have got rid of all the *kilesas*, he would be able to stand on his own with mindfulness and wisdom, *sati* and *paññā*. *Sati* and *paññā* are absolutely vital for taking care of the *citta*, and when the *citta* has attained deliverance, then there is nothing else to talk about. What is there to talk about?

In training and disciplining oneself, one must be bold and courageous, firm and resolute. One must not be feeble or weak. One must not see anything in this world as more worthwhile than Dhamma, or

than the knowledge and insight that will deliver us from the *kilesas* and *āsava* that are entangled within our hearts, for we can gradually emancipate ourselves from these things until we are totally free from them. The supreme treasure is the *citta* that has attained deliverance or the *citta* that has developed the various stages of virtue. They are similar to the treasure or possessions that we have accumulated. The more we accumulate them, the more valuable they become—that is, their worth and value increases—until we arrive at the state of contentment. We must develop the *citta* to this state of contentment. We must not be shaken by the *loka-dhamma*, the worldly influences, for they have been as they are since time immemorial. This world is full of birth, ageing, illness and death, confusion and trouble that afflict all people and every kind of animal. There is no true peace and happiness in this world. Where are we going to find happiness in this world? We will never find it because there is only *dukkha*. There is the physical *dukkha* when one has to strive and struggle to make a living. When we have desire or craving for possessions, this is also a form of *dukkha*. Whatever form of supposition we set up, we always get attached to it, like a piece of paper which we suppose is a banknote and can be used as currency. We know it very well within our hearts that this is just a piece of paper but we are still deluded with it. Our greed for it is just immeasurable.

Lobha and *dosa*, greed and hatred, are so severe that they shake the whole world. Is there any happiness in them? *Lobha*, or greed, is one form of fire. When our body is normal—that is when it is not afflicted with any disease, it is quite comfortable and at ease, but when there is any illness then the body is afflicted and disturbed. It is the same with the *citta*. When it is not afflicted with the diseases of the heart, *lobha* or greed; for instance, it will remain in quite a calm and peaceful state. But as soon as this disease of greed happens to strike the heart, then the heart will turn into fire and become troubled and annoyed. Can't we see its harmfulness? *Dosa*, or hatred, is like a shadow that follows *lobha*. When we cannot acquire the things that we want according to our desires, then we become angry. The world has these

things as the masters of the heart. So if this is the case, then who in this world can have any happiness because the nature of these things is fiery. Wherever they are, they must always scorch and burn, and totally consume that place. Neither happiness nor comfort can come out of them. Even when one dies, if these things are still full within one's heart, one will never be able to find any happiness. One will never be able to find any basis to hang onto. One will die worried, concerned, and possessive of everything. One will pass away in confusion and worry. One will be consumed and burned through to the next birth. One will never come across the real essence at the time of one's passing away.

This is because one is deluded with *sammāti*, conventional truth. One thinks that *sammāti* is the real truth which it is not while on the other hand Dhamma and virtue which are the real truth and the treasures that can provide us with cool-heartedness, trust, and confidence, are never accumulated by us. So how are we going to come up with any confidence? Therefore, the building up of virtue inside the heart is terribly important for wise people, especially for us who are the *bhikkhus*, the practitioners. We must be really serious, really earnest. The *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of practice, is always suitable for lifting us out of *dukkha*. We should, therefore, depend on and take on the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* as our path of practice and as the tool for the eradication of the *kilesas*. No matter how many *kilesas* there are, they must all arise from the heart. All that is necessary is to develop and produce enough *sati* and *paññā* to counter the *kilesas*. When the *kilesas* are subdued, then happiness will arise. We will then come to see the harmfulness of the *kilesas*. Whenever the *kilesas* appear within one's awareness, then one will become afflicted and feel uncomfortable. One will feel ill at ease immediately when the *kilesas* appear. The more the *kilesas* appear, the more afflictions we will have to endure.

We must curb them with *samādhi*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*—diligent effort. When we manage to curb and restrain them, then we will feel at ease, comfortable, and happy, for this is the quality of one who

practices Dhamma. At the same time, we will realize the harm of confusion and trouble that is caused by the *kilesas* oppressing the heart. We only have one undertaking or work to do. For a *bhikkhu*, there is no other work that is really genuine or of any worth other than the work of correcting and uprooting the *kilesas*. This is the work of extracting the thorn of the *kilesas* from the heart with our ability. This is in accordance with Dhamma, and follows the example of the Lord Buddha. When we become weak and discouraged, then we should reflect on the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas*, noble disciples of the past. We should think of them when we take up our refuge; they are our *Buddham saraṇam gacchāmi*, and *Sangham saraṇam gacchāmi*. But we must not merely reflect upon them; we should think about them and try to follow their example. We have to ask ourselves 'Are these *sāvakas* ordinary human beings, or are they *devatās*, celestial beings?' They are just people like us.

Some of them even came from the very delicate and high classes, like those of Kings, for instance. They had never had to endure the physical hardship of the body, and they had plenty of possessions and wealth. But they gave them all up, by seeing them as things of little value and significance. Some of them were high officials of the court, and some were merchants, rich and wealthy men. All of them were fully possessed with great wealth, honor, and dignity. So why did they give up all of these things, take up the practice of Dhamma, and finally attain Dhamma and become famous? They attained the supreme state, and at the same time they also could see the insignificance of those things that they left behind. They were not the 'real things' and were not as worthy as Dhamma, and that is why these people were able to attain Dhamma. Whatever class or family they came from, once they had gone forth in the *Buddha-sāsana*, they then devoted themselves to the practice of Dhamma with diligent effort. Even Kings were willing to give up their Kingships and take up the lives of recluses or *bhikkhus*, just like any other *bhikkhu*. Look at the degree to which they were able to adapt themselves! For this reason

they were able to attain the status of great Sages, to whom we pay respect and esteem.

We have to take up their example. During the time of the Lord Buddha, this was the only kind of undertaking, or the only work, that the *bhikkhus* were doing. This is the work of walking meditation or *caṅkama*, sitting in *samādhi*, and the work of *bhāvanā*, mental development. This is the work of a *bhikkhu*. When they had conversation, they did not talk about politics or about business, or about any other social activities. Nor did they talk about men or women. They did not bother about these things because these things are the affairs of the world which they had left behind, due to the perception that these things are harmful. That is why they got away from these things, and made sure that these things did not come in and bother and disturb them. They only took up the Dhamma as their support after they had left those things behind. All the work that they had done in the world they had entirely let go of. The only work that they did now was the work of a *bhikkhu*, which is the *samaṇa-dhamma* or meditation, which slowly leads to peace, happiness, and tranquility. Wherever they were, they all disciplined and trained themselves with Dhamma, and they all consistently attained the result. They all attained the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, in the various places like the forests, mountains, and caves. This was because they constantly exerted themselves, so how could the Fruit not become apparent?

When they carried on a dialogue, they carried on a dialogue on the *sallekha-dhamma*, topics of effacing the defilements. These *sallekha-dhamma* were the topics of their conversation, and when they talked about these Dhamma, they were called *sallekha-kathā*, which means the conversation about the way of deliverance or the cleansing or the uprooting of the *kilesas*. *Sallekha* means to cleanse or uproot. And what does this consist of? What did those people during the Lord Buddha's time talk about? The basis of conversation for a *samaṇa* has bounds and limits. I will elaborate the first of these topics of conversation, although I have elaborated this many times before. But there are

newcomers that may not have heard it before, so I will say it again. Please listen very carefully.

The first topic is *Appicchatā*, which means one who is content with little. The Lord Buddha did not teach us to be content with many material things that are offered by the lay people. However much or little one might receive, one is only happy with just a little. This is the best way of practice.

The second topic is *Santuṭṭhi* or *Santosa*—be content with whatever is available with regards to the requisites. One mustn't bother or make solicitations to the lay people concerning these things. One just uses whatever is available. This practice ranks second in moderation to the first practice of *appicchatā*, being content with little. One has to be really firm and resolute if one practices in this manner.

The third topic is *Vivekatā*: delighting in seclusion. One has seclusion for one's dwelling place, and one guards the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body that have contact with the forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects. And one also guards the heart, befitting the nature of the *samaṇa-dhamma*, contemplative life. One cultivates the quietude or seclusion of the heart. If the heart is not able to find quiet, one will not be able to find any happiness. That is why it is vital that we curb and restrain the flow of the *citta* with our diligent effort. If we can find peace and seclusion, then it is possible for the *citta* to calm down. Then happiness will arise, and this is what is meant by *vivekatā*, the delighting in seclusion.

The fourth topic is *Viriyaṅrambhā*: continuous and consistent exertion in all four postures of standing, sitting, walking, and lying down. One is constantly directing one's exertion with mindfulness. With mindfulness it is then possible to exert oneself, and this is *viriyārambhā*, the topic of conversation on the application of diligent effort.

The fifth topic, *Asaṅsakkanikā*, means not mingling or socializing. One doesn't socialize with one's fellow *bhikkhus* or the lay people.

The sixth topic is *Sīla*: morality. One strives to keep one's *sīla* pure, and to make sure that one's *sīla* doesn't have any blemishes and lapses. One must protect and cherish one's *sīla* the same way one protects and cherishes one's heart. *Sīla* and Dhamma are one and the same thing. The coarser kind of Dhamma is called *sīla*, because it has to restrain and curb the actions of body and speech, with the heart responsible for their actions.

The seventh topic is *Samādhi*: calm and stability of the heart. One relates to another about the various techniques of practice, regardless of what type of *samādhi*. One should talk about them, because each one will be able to learn and gain some benefits from this talk. When one talks about *samādhi*, one can discuss and relate the various characteristics of *samādhi*. This is because there are many different ways of disciplining the *citta*, following the different characters and personalities of people.

The eighth topic is *Paññā*. One talks about the depth and profundity of the discernment, and the various techniques of *paññā*. One should discuss them so that one can share this information with one's fellow practitioners, so that others might benefit from it.

The ninth topic is *Vimutti*: the state of deliverance. This is the most desirable subject of conversation, and the most desirable state. It is the consequence that arises from *appicchatā*, wanting little, and all the way up to *paññā*.

The tenth topic is *Vimutti-nāṇadassana*: the knowledge and insight that one has attained *vimutti*.

These are the ten *sallekha-dhammas* that the practitioners and the *bhikkhus* during the time of the Lord Buddha talked about. They only talked about the truth and Dhamma, which accords with the Dhamma that says *Kālena dhammasākacchā*, timely talk on Dhamma. This talk is timely and appropriate to the time, and they are *Etammangalamuttamanī*, the highest blessing for those who are involved in the conversation. And this is what they talked about during

the time of the Lord Buddha—the *sallekha-dhamma*. They did not talk about politics, or business, or about gain or loss. They were not involved with the confusing affairs of *samsāra*, like the way *bhikkhus* are today. In these *bhikkhus'* hearts and mouths, there is nothing of any substance, but just the affairs of the world that they give vent to. They are not worth listening to. Can this be in accordance or in conformity with the time of the Lord Buddha? So if this is the way, then all that is left is just the name or the label of one who has gone forth. Talking about the maintenance of his *sīla*, one wonders just how much *sīla* has he got? This is because when he talks, he does not restrain or have any reservations. One really wonders whether his *sīla* has gone down the drain. So how can one come up with any *samādhi*, because not a word of *samādhi* has been said, not to mention the practice and development of *samādhi* and *citta-bhāvanā*, mental development? So how can the result come forth? One just gets into trouble and confusion with the things that bear no benefit.

Because we don't tread the way that the Lord Buddha showed us, we don't want to do the work that he wanted us to do. We only do the work that is opposed to Dhamma. We do this constantly, so how can we gain sufficient worth or virtue to make us proud when our practice becomes wayward or tramples on and destroys the Dhamma without us being aware of it? No truly beneficial results will come from this, leaving us to feel proud only of our status as monks. But what is the use of that? What is the use of being proud merely of our moral status? What use is it if we cannot be proud of the results that we can gain from our efforts in meditation? For these results, the fruits of our exertion, would be our own treasured possessions, be it the *samādhi* treasure, the *paññā* treasure or the *vimutti* treasure. These are the treasures that we can be truly proud of: those which arise from our diligent effort.

These all start with *appicchatā*, the practice of wanting little, which counters the tendency to want a lot. And this is the way the Lord Buddha taught us to correct the *kilesas*, because the *kilesas* like to

oppose and go against Dhamma. For instance, these ten *dhammas* that we have mentioned earlier: in one of them the Lord Buddha says ‘*appicchata*’, take a little bit. But the *kilesas* say ‘Take a lot, take a lot’. When you die you can use these possessions as the fuel to cremate yourself—the *kilesas* really like this. There is no need to look for any firewood, because you can pile up your possessions, your wealth, and then set fire to them to burn your body. The *kilesas* like it this way, and this is the way the *kilesas* go against Dhamma. The *kilesas* will always go against Dhamma. They will always go contradictory to Dhamma. They will always oppose Dhamma. Whenever the *citta* begins to like something, then please understand that the *citta* is already on the side of the *kilesas*, and it has already been led astray by them. The *kilesas* will proceed to put it on the chopping block and cut it up into pieces.

It is only when the *citta* has attained the realm of Dhamma and the realm of truth, to the extent where one becomes confident of oneself, that one now understands the truth and Dhamma, good and bad within the *citta*. That becomes a different story. When the *citta* has attained that level, then the *citta* will be only inclined towards Dhamma. It will like to acquire Dhamma and the desire for this Dhamma is called *magga*, the Path. These desires are not *kilesas* like the other worldly or mundane desires. For example, *vivekatā*. The Lord Buddha taught us to be inclined towards seclusion but the *kilesas* like us to mingle and socialize in noisy and maddening crowds. They are the place where the *kilesas* want to go, and this is how they go against Dhamma. *Vivekatā*, or the delight in seclusion, is on the side of Dhamma. The delight in noise and madness is on the side of the *kilesas*. The Lord Buddha taught us *viriyārambhā*, the application of diligent effort. The *kilesas* say that we should apply our effort in the wrong way. If we go in the wrong way, then this is contrary to the *viriyārambhā*. The *kilesas* will always go against Dhamma, all the way to *vimutti*. This is the nature of the *kilesas*. They will always oppose Dhamma. So one must always observe oneself well. No matter how the inclination might arise, one must use *satipaṇṇā* to investigate to see whether it is in accordance with Dhamma or not.

If it is not, then one has to realize that it must be in accordance with the *kilesas*. Then one must immediately resist that inclination and let go of it, even though one might be really attached to it and really want to have it. For this kind of desire or attachment is really the affair of the *kilesas*, but letting go of these attachments and desires is the affair of Dhamma. If we are going to follow the way of the Lord Buddha, then we must let go of them. We must resist our heart. How can we not resist? If we are not resisting, then we cannot say that we are fighting, combating, and struggling. If we keep on following our heart's desires, then we cannot be called practitioners. We cannot be considered as someone who resists the *kilesas*, fights the *kilesas*, subdues and eradicates the *kilesas*, and one who conquers the *kilesas*, for one will always be losing to the *kilesas*. This is not the principle of Dhamma which exhorts us to oppose and to fight. We must always be constantly aware of ourselves. We only hear about the story of the *sāvaka*s. Some of them attained the level of *sotāpanna*, some of them the level of *sakadāgāmi*, some of them the level of *anāgāmi*, and some of them the level of *arahant*, in various places. These were the results that they attained. But what about the story of their exertion? What was it like? The story of their exertion and the story of the results that they acquired were in harmony with each other.

Therefore, we must look both at the cause and the result. Look at the means and the consequences. If we want the fruit or the result, then we must develop the cause or the means for this result to arise. It is like when we look at a certain plant. We observe and investigate to find out what sort of nourishment is good for this plant so that this plant can bear the fruits for us. If we only look for the result without paying any attention to the cause that can make this result appear, then it is useless for us. We must look at the cause. That is, we must find out what kind of nourishment and fertilizer this plant needs, and we must take good care of it, protecting this plant from other things that can come and destroy it.

It is the same way with our hearts. When we want the results to appear within our hearts, then we have to observe the heart to find out what it needs in order to be able to produce such a result. We have to eradicate whatever is antagonistic or harmful to the heart. Insects are very harmful because they constantly bite; *rāga* also bites; and *dosa* also bites; and it is the same with *moha*. Laziness and weakness also bite. Discouragement also bites. Thinking that one doesn't have the ability is another form of bite. Thinking that the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* is now out of reach or out of time—this is also another bite. These are all the bites of these insects, the *kilesa* insects. Discouragement and weakness—they bite. When one tries to meditate, it's as if one is being taken to the gallows. This is another form of bite. They constantly bite us. When we lie down and our head touches the pillow, we don't want to get up. This is also another form of bite.

Please note that these insects are in the heart. They hide inside and permeate the heart. They are constantly whispering and infiltrating the heart. We must get rid of them with the various techniques, so that we can see and experience the supreme Dhamma within our hearts. This will happen due to our diligent effort and our contention with them. In the beginning stages of practice, it is really difficult. Even though it is difficult, one will not retreat, but is willing to face it. One accepts the fact that it is difficult and that it is *dukkha*. But then every form of work is difficult because when one has to work, one must put forth effort. In our practice, we must also exert ourselves. It can be difficult, but we must exert to the utmost so that we can gain results that we can be content with. The *citta* can be trained and developed, or else the Lord Buddha would not have taught us to do it. The *citta* that has no Dhamma is like a demon. In such a *citta* there is no Dhamma or truth, or any principle of reason. The only thing it has is the wish to acquire things according to its desire, and this is entirely the business of the *kilesas*. As a result, one will never be able to find any happiness either for oneself or for others.

People tend to disturb one another due to the power of the *kilesas*. Human beings are social animals. They have to live together. They cannot live alone by themselves. So they always tend to disturb and hurt one another, and this is due to the harmful things inside the heart that have been vented. When one has constantly trained and developed oneself, then this wildness and recklessness inside the heart will steadily diminish due to the power of one's exertion. The *citta* that has never attained calm will now attain calm. This is because we are now taking care of the *citta*. We can have calm and cool-heartedness because of this care and nourishment arising from our exertion. We have to coerce and control the *citta* constantly, so that it doesn't think out beyond the way of Dhamma. We must not allow this *citta* to think about the various things. We must direct it to only think in the way of Dhamma. The *kilesas* will gradually decrease, and the heart will then become calmer and more tranquil. Then we will begin to see the merit and value of the heart. We must then intensify our effort because the benefit that arises from being calm is not the only benefit. There are other benefits that are higher and better than this.

Two Kinds of Knowledge

— August 9th, 1979

No matter how sophisticated and advanced the world's knowledge may be, it can't eliminate the world's suffering and hardship in the same way the knowledge of Dhamma can, because Dhamma always imparts peace and coolness. A world without Dhamma is a world of *dukkha*. Regardless of how much you may have studied, this mundane knowledge will never get rid of the *dukkha* inside your heart because it's not intended for the removal of *dukkha*. Only the knowledge of Dhamma taught by all the Buddhas can do this. If you study and practice the Dhamma, you'll definitely achieve the results of Dhamma. Although worldly knowledge and Dhamma knowledge are both considered knowledge, they are different just like males and females, although both human beings, are different. You can always tell them apart by merely looking at them.

It's the same with worldly knowledge and Dhamma knowledge: they have different features and purposes. You can tell them apart if you study and practice Dhamma. On the other hand, if you haven't studied and practiced Dhamma you won't be able to tell them apart. How could you? You'll only know about the world and will think it's

the greatest place to live, to excel in fame, fortune, honor, influence and power, although your heart is actually empty of them and is always hot and burning. No matter how high and mighty you may proclaim yourself to be, it won't make you truly happy. You mustn't, therefore, think that you'll find true happiness by only learning worldly knowledge. In whichever time and place, and in whatever class or society of people this Dhamma is established, it'll always impart happiness to them, corresponding to the intensity of the Dhamma that has been developed in them. The Dhamma is, therefore, indispensable for the world. Dhamma should always accompany every undertaking if you want to benefit from it, whether it's for yourself, your family, your society, or your country. Without the Dhamma, you'll end up with pain and suffering. The reason why there isn't any true happiness in this world is because there isn't any Dhamma.

Looking inside your heart, you'll see, whenever you think about all the troubling events happening in the world, your heart will be consumed by them. The more you think, the more troubled your heart will become. You can gauge your *dukkha* by your thoughts. When you don't think about troubling events, your *citta* will be calm and peaceful. When your *citta* experiences the *samatha* or tranquil Dhamma, even at the beginning stage, you'll be awestruck. *Samatha* means tranquility that arises from your Dhamma practice and produces true happiness. The *ārammaṇa* or feelings generated by thinking about Dhamma and thinking about the world differ greatly from one another. Thinking about the world produces *dukkha* and suffering, whilst thinking about Dhamma eliminates the *kilesas*, *tañhā*, *āsava* and *dukkha* from your heart. If you're a Dhamma practitioner and truly believe in the law of *kamma* taught by the Lord Buddha, you should closely watch those thoughts that are propelled by the *kilesas*, *tañhā* and *āsava* because they will give rise to *dukkha*. Those thoughts and *dukkha* are inseparable. If you want to think, you should think about Dhamma, refrain from thinking about the world at all times, you should always oppose and eliminate those thoughts. No matter how hard it might be, you've got to do it because it's your job. The

Lord Buddha said this is the way he and his noble disciples or *sāvakas* eliminated the *kilesas*. They all had to endure *dukkha* and hardship before they could destroy all the *kilesas*.

When you go into battle, it's normal for you to run into *dukkha* like boxers fighting in the ring do. Even the winner has to go through a lot of *dukkha*, not just the loser. This kind of winning, however, will never put an end to your conflicts. But the Dhamma's triumph over your *kilesas* will. It's normal for you to run into *dukkha* when you have to oppose and destroy the *kilesas* by developing mindfulness and insight. The Lord Buddha was the first one to experience this *dukkha* when he collapsed from his exertion. It's the same with the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. If these *dukkha* experiences were normal in the past, how can you expect otherwise? How can you become enlightened without going through this *dukkha* that the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas* went through? It's unavoidable! You've got to run into *dukkha* as you follow the footsteps of the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas*. They had to experience *dukkha*, so must you. They were fighters, so must you be. It can then be said that you're following your great teacher, the Lord Buddha. You mustn't be deceived by your thoughts and feelings that are created by the *kilesas*, and mustn't obey them, but must always defy them.

Dhamma is your weapon that'll identify and destroy all the *kilesas*. *Sati* or mindfulness is the Dhamma that will protect and support you. The *kilesas* will appear in various guises when visual objects, sounds, tastes, smells and tactile objects come into contact with your heart, where you'll always notice them and oppose them, if your *sati* is ever-present and you're really determined to fight them. *Sati* is the indispensable Dhamma that will always take care of you. You shouldn't be idle and unmindful. You might think you're relaxing, but actually you're being complacent and waiting for the *kilesas* to do you in. This is not good for you. What's really good for you is when you're killing the *kilesas*, which is your most important mission and duty because this is your goal and the reason you take up the robe.

You've experienced the worldly life before you took up the robe and know that it's mixed with poisons. You can't trust the taste of worldly life to always give you happiness, but you can wholeheartedly trust the taste of Dhamma. You're now putting your trust in and relying on your Dhamma practice to always provide you with happiness. The four requisites of living—food, clothing, shelter, and medicines—have all been abundantly provided by your lay supporters. They willingly offer their supports out of their *saddhā* or faith and respect, so you don't have to worry about them and be distracted from your exertion which is your only task—the task of eliminating all the *kilesas*—using the various means and techniques devised by your own common sense and ability. None of the other tasks are important or vital for a *samaṇa*, one who has gone forth and follows the Lord Buddha.

You shouldn't deceive yourself into doing any other tasks because you think they're attractive or worthwhile. Developing worldly things isn't as important as developing your heart so that it will give you contentment. Although you may be living in a small hut with the roof leaking, you'll find it comfortable and free from worries. When you leave the hut, you won't worry if anything should happen to it. You're not seeking for fame or fortune because that isn't worthwhile even if it's fashionable. It's just a fad, not the real thing. The real thing is the Lord Buddha's teaching. If you faithfully follow his teaching, you'll always find security and fulfillment even if you're living in a shack. *Sati* is indispensable in the battle between the *kilesas* and Dhamma. Most of the time it's the *kilesas* that destroy the Dhamma due to the lack of *sati*. You must, therefore, be very mindful. This is your task. I'm telling you from the bottom of my heart and from my profound appreciation for the Dhamma that I realized from my practice. I've always faithfully followed the Dhamma teaching, like the one that says, *rukhamūla senāsanaṃ*, living in the forest, which is an ideal cultivating ground for someone who aims for freedom from *dukkha*, by continually investigating *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco*, or head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth and skin.

This is *taca pañcaka kammaṭṭhāna*, literally translated as a list of the five body parts with the skin as the fifth part. What it actually means is the skin that wraps around the body and obscures the heart from perceiving the body's true nature. Even though it's very thin, it can completely cover up the truth. The Lord Buddha taught us to investigate the five *kammaṭṭhānas* in both forward and reverse order. When you get to the skin, you must then dissect the skin and look at the flesh and the innards to see what they look like. You've already seen the external body parts; now you want to see the internal parts. If you only look at the external parts; you'll always be deceived. Looking under the skin will give you insight to the true nature of the body. You should repeatedly investigate these body parts, back and forth, like the farmers who rake and plough their fields, back and forth, again and again, until the soil is ready for planting. You shouldn't use the number of times you have investigated to measure your result of the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, but you should use your ability to skillfully and repeatedly investigate until truly seeing and letting go of the body as a measurement of your success. When you've truly seen with *paññā*, the body's true nature, you'll naturally sever your attachment to the body. This is *sanditṭhiko*, seeing the truth by practice. This is the *bhikkhu's* occupation, your occupation. You should always keep this in mind.

Don't waste your time working like people in the world do, such as building temples, monks' living quarters or *kuṭīs*, assembly halls or *sālās*, and then forget to do your Dhamma practice that will keep your heart calm, peaceful and cool. When you don't practice, you'll feel bored and restless, and be driven to do some other kind of work, like building shrines and pagodas that don't promote peace and calm, but disarray and trouble, inside and outside the temple. Inside the temple, it troubles the monks or *bhikkhus* and novices or *sāmañeras*. Outside the temple, it troubles the lay supporters. It'll strain the relationship between the laity and the *bhikkhus* who are *puñña khettaṃ lokassa*, the best people to make merits with. Instead of cooperating, they will oppose each other. The Sangha or the community of monks now

turns into vampires instead of being the best people to make merit with. So how can this lead to peace and tranquility? Think about it! It's because the *bhikkhus* aren't sticking to their occupation which is to develop morality and the *citta* to perfection. You need *satipaññā* to constantly look after your *citta*, and you should never be without it, if you want your *citta* to become worthy of adoration and reverence. It isn't beyond the disciplining ability of *satipaññā*. The Lord Buddha prescribed the forty meditation subjects or themes or *kammaṭṭhānas* for each practitioner to choose from, depending on his or her character and disposition. They are the basis of your mental development and your most important undertaking.

To see the body's true nature, you must use the five *kammaṭṭhānas*, that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth and skin, or the entire thirty-two body parts as your objects of investigation, whichever you prefer. These body parts are with you all the times, so why can't you see them? How was it that the Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas* were able to see them? Their eyes were similar to your eyes, their hearts were similar to your heart, and their *satipaññā* was similar to your *satipaññā*. The reason is that they correctly used their *satipaññā* in their investigation for the truth. By following faithfully the Dhamma teaching, they were able to remove their delusions and became enlightened. Their mission was to eliminate the *kilesas*, *tanhā* and *āsava* which is the same mission for all *bhikkhus* because it's their real mission. You should resolve to complete this mission by tirelessly investigating with your *satipaññā* and shouldn't see other undertakings to be more important because they will lead you away from peace and contentment or the *samaṇa-dhamma* and the Lord Buddha's teaching. You already have adequate living requisites to fill your needs, so you shouldn't be concerned with them, because it will just needlessly disturb you. You should instead concentrate all your efforts on your meditation practice, no matter how hard and difficult it might be, because you're now on the battlefield.

If you're having difficulty fighting the *kilesas*, you should ask yourself why. "Why can't the *citta* calm down? What causes the *citta* to be restless and agitated? What kind of thoughts is the *citta* being obsessed with?" You should then use your thoughts as the object of your investigation to see their true nature. This will then lead you to the *citta* that's being deceived by your thoughts which keep generating ideas and concepts to entangle and bind the *citta* to your thoughts. This is the way of doing the investigation. But, first of all, you should calm your *citta* with *satipaññā*. The *citta* will eventually calm down because it can't resist the power of *satipaññā*.

It's the same way with all types of *kilesas*. They can't oppose the power of *satipaññā*. Dhamma is always a superior opponent. It's the tool for training and disciplining the *citta* and the tool for the eradication of all types of *kilesas*. But when you apply Dhamma in your practice, it's the *kilesas* that are knocking you down. Why? It's because you haven't developed enough Dhamma yet to be able to catch up with the *kilesas*. Therefore, you shouldn't remain idle. You should use your *satipaññā* to devise different methods of investigation to gain insight into the *kilesas'* nature and attain to the various Dhamma levels that are the consequences of your investigation and contemplation on the various Dhamma themes. This can be any part of your body, or other people's bodies that come into contact with you. You must investigate to see them as repulsive or *asubha*. Both your body and other people's bodies can be used to develop the *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. It's these *saṅkhāras* or thoughts that can generate either *magga*, or *samudaya*, the creator of *dukkha*. But normally these *saṅkhāras* are manipulated by the *kilesas* and become the creator for *samudaya*, and this has always been so. There's no question about this. In order to make these *saṅkhāras* the *magga's* weapon and deliver you to freedom, you have to train these *saṅkhāras* to work for Dhamma.

If the *citta* doesn't calm down, how can you, a *bhikkhu*, find any happiness? If your *citta* is being burned with the *kilesas'* fire of lust, hatred and delusion, what then is this world, this body and this ex-

istence is good for? If you're always depressed and despairing, how can you make your life meaningful and worthwhile? You have to rely on the meaningful and worthy Dhamma to eliminate the worthless *kilesas*, which are the main culprits that make your life worthless. When the *kilesas* are destroyed, calm will appear.

In the beginning stages of practice, calm is very essential. If the *citta* isn't calm, you'll never be happy because you'll be smoldering with the fire of lust, hatred and delusion. You are not noble because you put on the yellow robe. What's noble about this yellow robe? There are plenty of them in the shops. It's only a symbol of your noble life and lofty goal. What's a *bhikkhu's* goal? It's the removal of the *kilesas*, and not the accumulation of the *kilesas*. It's not his goal to remain idle in the midst of the fire of lust, hatred and delusion. His initial goal is to be always calm and cool. Then he must investigate the body to see that it's made up of the four elements, it's *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, it's repulsive or *asubha* and it's filthy or *paṭikkūla*. This body is full of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You must concentrate your *satipaṇṇā* to investigate the body to see clearly its true nature.

You shouldn't presume that you'll always be living and studying with your teacher because you're living in the world of impermanence or *aniccam*. So whilst you're still living and studying with him, you should concentrate all your efforts in getting rid of all the *kilesas*. When you have any questions, you can ask your teacher. I'm always ready to answer your questions and to advise you on your meditation practice. Besides instructing you, I'm also waiting to hear about the results of your practice that you've got to see and experience yourself. When you do, it's unavoidable that there'll be questions, especially when you're developing *paṇṇā*. Some of these questions or problems you'll be able to solve yourself, but with some others you'll need your teacher's assistance, as you steadily advance in your practice. For this reason, the Lord Buddha called his students *sāvaka*, which means "one who listens." You've got to listen to his teaching in order to know how to practice. Only the Lord Buddha is a *sabbaṇṇū*,

a self-enlightened one. The *sāvakas* have to listen first before they can become enlightened. You're a *sāvaka*, one who listens, so you must listen to his teaching and have it deeply embedded within your heart. You mustn't just merely listen, for this is like splashing water on a dog. No matter how much water you might splash on it, it'll shake it all off. It's the same with the Dhamma teaching that is being splashed into your heart, you can shake it all off with the *kilesas'* power. If you listen unmindfully, it'll be impossible for you to retain any Dhamma in your heart and acquire the *satipaṇṇā* to free yourself. This is not the way for a serious practitioner who aims for freedom from *dukkha* to listen. If you do, you'll be like pork on the chopping board.

I have great concern for you, and that's why I have to constantly give you these instructions. I don't see anything in this monastery as valuable as my students who are studying and living with me. I think of the benefits that they'll acquire after they've developed themselves to perfection, and then help propagating the Lord Buddha's teaching, which will happen naturally and inevitably. But now you should only be concerned with developing and training yourself to establish a foundation in Dhamma and to have complete confidence in yourself. The benefit for others will follow, just as in the way of the Lord Buddha. He first concentrated all of his efforts in developing himself and paid no attention to anything else. After he had become enlightened and completely freed from *dukkha*, he then took up the duty of a teacher, teaching Dhamma with love and compassion until he finally passed away. By his example, the Dhamma teaching has been preserved and passed on right down to the present. The benefits for yourself and others are, therefore, inseparable. All the noble disciples or *sāvakas* have all followed the example of the Lord Buddha to their utmost ability. They benefited others as much as they could. If you aren't enlightened yet, how could you teach others to become enlightened? It's not possible. If you blindly teach, how can your students see the truth? Your students won't benefit from your teaching. If you only know the theoretical Dhamma and not the practical Dhamma,

your teaching won't enlighten your students but will only provide them with speculations that will lead them away from the right path.

This is in great contrast to an enlightened practitioner who can teach with complete confidence, because he teaches what he has experienced and realized within his heart. So how can he blindly teach, when the truth is clearly manifested within himself? His students will be able to listen with complete confidence. That's how the Dhamma was propagated during the Lord Buddha's time. Therefore, the transmission of the practical Dhamma is different from the theoretical Dhamma that can only describe the *kilesas* inside the heart, but can't destroy them. This is useless! You've got to see the truth, because it's distinctly different from the theory.

Descriptions of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, and *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, are very different from the actual experience. The description can't terminate the *kilesas*, but the actual experience can. When you've clearly seen the *kilesas*' true nature, they will all disappear. Be sincere and earnest. The Lord Buddha's Dhamma can be clearly realized within your heart. Don't relent in your exertion, but intensify it. If there's *dukkha*, you must endure it. Every living being has to experience *dukkha*. Don't be deterred or weakened by the *dukkha* that arises from fighting the *kilesas*, because it won't kill you, but will make you victorious. This *dukkha* will help you eliminate the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas* and remove all the *dukkha* from your heart. So how can this *dukkha* be unbearable, discouraging you until it defeats you? If you can't face the *dukkha* arising from your practice, how will you face the *dukkha* created by the *kilesas*? As a practitioner, you have to think rationally. You can't make food out of *satipaṇṇā* because it's only good for eliminating the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*.

Listening to a *desanā* or Dhamma talk given by an enlightened teacher is considered by those who practice mental development to be the first priority. If you're developing calm, your *citta* will calm down very easily whilst listening to a *desanā* even if you never had any calm before. If you're continually mindful of the sound of Dhamma

flowing into your *citta*, the *citta* doesn't think about other things. Normally, it's the *citta's* habit to think aimlessly. Even when you're meditating, you can still think aimlessly because your thoughts are more powerful than your *sati*, which, in the beginning stages of development, won't be able to stop your thoughts.

When you listen to a *desanā*, you should focus your attention at the sound of Dhamma flowing into your *citta*. This will prevent you from thinking aimlessly and consequently your *citta* will calm down. You'll see that it's a lot easier to develop calm by listening to a Dhamma talk than meditating by yourself. If you've already established a calm foundation, you'll swiftly and easily enter into calm. Sometimes, when you've entered into calm, you'll let go of the sound of Dhamma and your *citta* will remain still without the need of a controller like *sati*. This can also happen.

If you're developing *paññā*, when you listen to a discourse, the *citta* won't remain still, but will actively follow the discourse because it's *paññā's* nature to be always investigating even when you're alone. When you listen to your teacher's *desanā*, *paññā* will follow it closely as if your teacher is clearing the path ahead of you. When he comes to the topic of your investigation, you'll attentively listen to the explanation that he will give you without any hesitation because he has already understood it. After you've heard his explanation you'll also understand it. That's why I truly believe that it's possible to become enlightened whilst listening to the Lord Buddha giving a discourse. How can I not believe this when I have experienced it myself? Who can teach better than the Lord Buddha, who is considered to be the greatest teacher? Next to him were his noble disciples or *sāvakas*, who were also enlightened. Everything they taught was all true and came from their practical experiences. If you listen to a Dhamma talk given by an enlightened person, you can become enlightened. If it's given by an unenlightened person, it'll be filled entirely with speculation and you won't gain any benefit. The discourse or *desanā* given by

a theorist is different from that of a practitioner. A theorist doesn't know the real Dhamma. What Dhamma he knows is all fake.

The *citta* is where you'll have to eliminate your troubles. You shouldn't look elsewhere because the main culprit is the *citta* that's constantly creating troubles for you by ceaselessly thinking about the past and the future, about visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and tactile objects, about good and bad, right and wrong. No matter how long ago things might have happened, it'll keep thinking about them and become happy, sad or disturbed. You're deceived by the *kilesas'* trickery, by their manipulation of the five *khandhas*, their longtime servants. You've got to make the *khandhas* the Dhamma's servants by eliminating all the *kilesas* from your heart. After you've achieved this, the five *khandhas* will become the Dhamma's exclusive servants. But they will remain active because it's their nature.

This is especially so with *saṅkhāra* and *saññā*. *Saññā* is much more subtle than *saṅkhāra* because it permeates quietly, like ink into blotting paper. *Saṅkhāra* has to stir before it can think. *Saññā* just quietly spreads out to form a mental picture for *saṅkhāra* to conceptualize with. It's natural for *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* to remain active even without the *kilesas* to manipulate them except when the *citta* rests in *samādhi*. However, whatever they do will have no effect because there's nobody to be affected by them. But if they're manipulated by the *kilesas*, they'll become a problem. If they're not, they will keep on creating mental images and thoughts until the dissolution of the body where they'll come to a complete cessation.

These five *khandhas* will continue to function after they're free from the *kilesas*, like a lizard's tail which has been cut off that still goes on wriggling as if it's still alive, when in fact there's no life in it. These five *khandhas* will continue on because the *citta* still possesses them, although the *citta* isn't attached to or deluded by them. When you hear a sound, you'll be aware of it because the ears and the sense awareness or *viññāṇa* still function. As soon as you hear the sound,

it'll disappear if you don't grab it and become attached to it. It'll appear and disappear.

These *khandhas* will only become still and quiet when the *citta* rests in *samādhi*. When they temporarily stop to function, all that remains is just the knowingness that seems to pervade the whole universe, like a sound that spreads in all directions. This is due to its greatness and grandeur. Nothing can penetrate it or influence it. It can't be created through your imagination. It's so subtle that it can't really be compared with anything. Even though you might know what it's like, you just won't be able to describe it. It's as if the world and the universe have all disappeared. All that remains is this knowingness, striking and imposing. You can't pinpoint where this knowingness is, and neither do you care to. What for? When you know you can't locate this knowingness, you just accept that fact.

This knowingness has no other characteristics except this undeniable knowing, which is its true nature. It has no desires, no cravings. To it, nothing is too much or too little. Everything is just right. This knowingness is so vast; it seems to be embracing the whole universe. It's also so empty; it seems devoid of the whole universe, because it doesn't have anything to do with it. After you've emerged from this *samādhi*, all the mental phenomena or *nāma khandhas* like feelings, memory, thoughts and consciousness will reappear. They'll appear and immediately disappear, and won't become a long chain, because there are no *kilesas* to connect them. There are no *samudayas* to create *dukkha* for the *citta*. You can use these mental phenomena anyway you like while they're still active.

You've got to see this for yourself. What I'm telling you may sound incredible to you. When you've seen what I've seen, you'll see what I mean. This is what the genuine truth is like. The *citta* has now become constant or unchanged. You can't say "How come the *citta* is like this today? How come the *citta* was like that yesterday?" This won't happen. You'll clearly see that it's the *kilesas* that cause the *citta*

to change, to become this and that. These changes, whether they're coarse or subtle, are the *kilesas*' conjuring tricks.

After you've completely eliminated them, there's nothing left to deceive you. The *citta* remains the same day in and day out. As far as the years, months, and days are concerned, they're just conventional reality or relative truths that have no impact on the *citta*. The *citta* sees them as merely a passage of time and events, from day to night, from sunrise to sunset. What's there to be deluded about? The earth that you walk on is just the earth element. In your stomach, there're plenty of the water element. Your body keeps breathing the air element in and out. The fire element keeps your body warm. They're just elements. Why be deluded with the concept of I and mine, human beings and animals? Why create these concepts to contradict the Dhamma? To defy the Dhamma is like walking on thorns. You must see in accordance with the Dhamma. If they are just elements, you should see them as just elements. If you see according to the truth that the Lord Buddha taught, all your problems will be solved.

Be really earnest and sincere. You must destroy all the *kilesas* because they are harmful to the *citta*. Your thoughts and imagination are also harmful because they are instigated by the *kilesas*. It's the same with your presumptions and suppositions. But after you've completely eliminated the *kilesas*, you can think anyway you want to. It won't do any harm because you can control your thinking; you can prompt it or restrain it. These *khandhas* become like tools that you put in the proper place after you have finished using them. When you want to go to sleep, you just shut them off. When you want to enter into *samādhi*, you just restrain all your thoughts and feelings and enter into the state of knowingness where you can rest in peace and bliss. And that's all there's to it. When the time comes for their dissolution, you're ready for it because you've thoroughly investigated them. You won't get excited because you know that death is just the disintegration of the four elements. You won't feel like wanting to die or wanting to live. Both the aversion to death and the attraction to life

are one and the same thing. Why go on living when it's time to pass away? Why try to resist it?

This reminds me of the Lord Buddha, our wise and great teacher, during the time when the Venerable Sāriputta came to bid him farewell as Venerable Sāriputta was about to pass away. Had the Lord Buddha requested the Venerable Sāriputta not to pass away, but to live a little bit longer to help him teach the Dhamma, then this would be encouraging him to remain longer in the *vaṭṭa-cakka* or cycle of birth, death and rebirth. If the Lord Buddha didn't want him to pass away when death was imminent, it would be resisting death. Had he said go ahead, then it would be encouraging death. The Lord Buddha advised that when the time is right for Sāriputta to die, let it happen. This was the most appropriate advice.

In saying, "when the time is right", he meant Sāriputta should let death happen naturally following the law of nature that Sāriputta had already investigated. In this way he wouldn't be resisting the truth. He could have said go ahead, pass away, but when it's not yet the time, why pass away? That's why he said when the time is right for you to go, go. When it's not yet the time, stay. But before you leave, you should give a Dhamma discourse. The Lord Buddha said this to the Venerable Sāriputta, and the Venerable Sāriputta understood that the Lord Buddha had given him the permission to display his teaching prowess and supernatural powers. After he finished, he then took his leave. The Lord Buddha then gave permission to about five hundred *bhikkhus* and *sāmaṇeras*, monks and novices to accompany the Venerable Sāriputta to his birthplace for his passing away. The point here is that the Lord Buddha didn't request the Venerable Sāriputta to live longer, because it would promote the *vaṭṭa-cakka* existence and would defy the law of nature. But if the Lord Buddha had said go ahead, it would be another extreme, and would be contradictory to the truth. That's why the Lord Buddha told him he should let the *khandhas* break up naturally.

It was the same way with the Venerable Mogallāna when he came to bid farewell to the Lord Buddha, which was seven days after the Venerable Sāriputta, if my memory doesn't fail me. The Lord Buddha gave the Venerable Mogallāna the same advice and the permission for him to demonstrate his teaching prowess and supernatural powers. First, he gave a Dhamma talk; then he flew up to the sky and back down to earth to give another Dhamma talk and repeated this feat several times. The Lord Buddha also gave the *bhikkhus* and *sāmañeras* permission to accompany the Venerable Mogallāna as he left for his passing away.

During the Lord Buddha's time, *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* were plentiful amongst the practitioners. There were many who were imbued with the *magga* and *phala*, the path and fruit. But when it comes down to our time there are only people possessed with fake Dhamma. There are only the names of the *kilesas* and of Dhamma, but the real Dhamma, be it *samādhi* or *paññā* or *vimutti*, is not there. Who's going to bring back to life the real Dhamma of the Lord Buddha? Who's going to apply the *majjhimā*, the middle way of practice that is suitable for achieving the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, and eliminating all the *kilesas* which oppose the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*? It must be you, the practitioner. You should only be concerned for and look after yourself. Always remind yourself to practice. Don't remain idle if you don't want to remain ignorant. You should devise various methods and techniques of *paññā* to fight the *kilesas* and gain insight. First, you have to nurture your *paññā* until it can investigate on its own without being prompted and will relentlessly investigate to the point where you'll have to restrain it.

Concerning *uddhacca*, one of the higher *samyojana* or fetters as described in the texts, I wonder what was in the mind of the person who recorded this. This is not trying to find fault with him but the text reveals his state of mind. That is, was he free of the *kilesas* or was he still possessed with the *kilesas*, for describing *uddhacca* as a mundane state of restlessness and agitation as classified in the five mental hin-

drances that can occur in any mundane or worldly person? Because this *uddhacca* is an obsession with the investigation where *paññā* has gone to an extreme. That's why it's categorised as one of the higher fetters or *saṃyojana* that also includes *māna* (conceit) and *avijjā*, that imposing and resplendent state of knowing inside the heart. This *citta* is not really in a mundane state of agitation and restlessness but it's restless and agitated from being obsessed with the investigation.

This is at the level of *arahatta-magga*, the path to *arahantship*. This is when the *arahatta-magga* is in progress. As soon as this *arahatta-magga* becomes fully mature, then the *arahatta-phala* will appear immediately, the instant when the *citta* completely cuts off birth and existence. Everything is totally shattered the instant the path merges with the fruit or the *arahatta-magga* merges with the *arahatta-phala*. But at this stage, it cannot be considered the complete or perfect Dhamma or the complete work of mental development. Like when you're stepping up from the stairway to the floor of the building, one of your feet is on the stairway and the other is on the floor of the building. This is the instant when the path merges with the fruit. As soon as your other foot is lifted off the stairway and placed on the floor of the building, at that instant you'll have attained the complete or the perfect Dhamma which is *Nibbāna*. When you're lifting your other foot, you're still working. But as soon as you placed your other foot on the floor of the building, you have completed your work or achieved the total cessation of *dukkha* and realized the perfect Dhamma. You have achieved the ultimate result.

When you're still lifting your other foot, this is the *magga* approaching the *phala*. But when both feet touch the floor, it's described by some commentators as the *arahatta-phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*. In fact, this is also *Nibbāna* because the Lord Buddha also mentioned this. Had he not done so, then the *sāvaka*s would have questioned why he didn't mention that *Nibbāna* immediately follows *arahatta-phala*. So with the wisdom of a great Teacher, the Lord Buddha elucidated the four paths, four fruits, and one *Nibbāna*. The *magga* and the *phala*, the

path and the fruit, are pairs like the *arahatta-magga* and the *arahatta-phala*. Passing beyond this pair, you can say it's the *arahatta-phala*, the fruit of *arahantship*. You can also say it's *Nibbāna*. There is no contradiction here, especially with the one who has attained to this state. Anyone can say anything about it, but he doesn't see any contradiction because he has already realized the ultimate truth. The *bhikkhus* during the Lord Buddha's time were possessed with the *magga* and *phala*. So how can you be possessed with weakness and laziness?

A Lifetime Endeavour

— August 15th, 1979

In one of the monastic rules of conduct, monks are forbidden from calling out loudly when they want to get other monks' attention. They should instead signal with their hands because the Lord Buddha wanted them to have a quiet environment to meditate. During Lord Buddha's time, the monks took up meditation as their lifetime endeavor. But nowadays, most of the monks and the laity don't. The Lord Buddha and the noble disciples or *sāvaka*s taught only the practice of walking and sitting meditation, the places that were suitable for the meditation practices and the methods used to eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. The main topics of conversation that the monks had during the Lord Buddha's time were the *sallekha-dhamma*, which means cleansing or purifying. It's the cleansing of the *kilesas* from their conduct, speech and thought. They should only be talking about cleansing and eliminating the *kilesas* because they took up the robe for this purpose and not to accumulate the *kilesas*.

Right now you only have the appearance of one who has gone forth. Originally, going forth was for the purpose of destroying all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. If you believe in this ideal, but are not

doing any practice, you'll instead accumulate more *kilesas* and defy the *Dhamma-vinaya*. As a practitioner, you must strictly adhere to the Dhamma teaching that has been recorded in the scriptures and use it as your guide. The purpose of recording and preserving the Lord Buddha's teaching is to serve as a guiding light for those who are interested in the practice of mental development. Had it not been recorded, you wouldn't know how the Lord Buddha and the noble disciples practiced and became enlightened. Nowadays, you only study the scriptures and do not do any practice. All that you have learned are the descriptions of the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. If your goal in studying the scriptures and practicing mental development is to become a famous guru, you'll unknowingly accumulate more *kilesas* and reject the goal set for you by the Lord Buddha. You should seriously think about this.

You shouldn't rely solely on your teacher's instruction because it's not enough to make you wise. How do you become wise? You have to do a lot of investigation, analysis and reflection and be always mindful of the sense objects that come into contact with your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and heart. If you don't use your *sati* and *paññā*, you'll never gain any wisdom. The Lord Buddha and the *sāvakas* gained wisdom through their *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*. They didn't become wise by being idle and hopeless. When doing walking meditation, they didn't let their mind think aimlessly like the way you're doing, which is no different from people who don't practice walking meditation. *Sati* and *paññā* connect to form a formidable weapon to free your heart from the *kilesas'* oppression. *Saddhā* is the belief in the *magga* and *phala*, and the belief that having faithfully followed the Lord Buddha's teaching, you'll become enlightened. You should always practice with diligent effort or *virīya* to develop your *sati* or mindfulness and investigate with *paññā*. If you always maintain your diligent effort, you'll never get tired of fighting the *kilesas* or be discouraged from developing your *sati* and *paññā*.

The *citta* is the real thing. The body is merely a phenomenon. When you practice meditation whilst walking back and forth without any mindfulness, you're like people who go for a stroll, not like someone who practices meditation. But you're worse than them if you practice walking meditation without any mindfulness. You mustn't walk like that. The Lord Buddha's teaching, which has been recorded in the scriptures, can be very useful for your practice if you reflect on it with your *sati* and *paññā*. However, usually you don't reflect on it but merely chant it like a parrot chirping: 'Precious stone, precious stone...' When you give a parrot a precious stone, it doesn't know what to do with it because it only knows about fruits such as bananas. You're like a parrot because you don't know the perils inherent in the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* that you're passionately obsessed with and never seem to have enough of. You also don't know the worth of Dhamma which is like a precious stone. That's why you never want to have anything to do with the Dhamma, like applying your diligent effort.

When you do walking meditation, your knees become weak and when you do sitting meditation it seems as if your bones and your body are bursting apart. When you develop *sati* and investigate with *paññā* to remove the harmful *kilesas*, you become weak and discouraged and let the *kilesas* trample all over you and knock you out. All you can think is "This is hopeless. I have been striving so hard but I can never enter into calm." So while you're doing walking or sitting meditation, your practice just turns in the *kilesas*' favor because it's being driven by the *kilesas*, not by the Dhamma. So how can you ever become enlightened? This is the way you should reflect if you want to gauge your success or failure. If you think with *paññā*, you'll know how far you've progressed in your practice. You should think "Today I have walked and sat in meditation. How were my *citta* and *satipaññā*? Did I merely walk like people going for a stroll or sit casually? When people sit casually, it's not as bad as when I sit hopelessly and unmindfully. When I meditate, I should be striving for freedom from *dukkha* and should always remind myself of this goal." You

mustn't be complacent because there's no reason in this world for you to be so.

The Lord Buddha had always taught you to refrain from acquiring worldly possessions and pleasures because they are like fire. He said that they are all *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, and are all unreliable, so you mustn't be attached to them. If you cling to them, it'll be like clinging to fire. The correct way to deal with them is to always reflect on their *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* nature. If you're attached to them you'll always be afflicted with *dukkha*. The intensity of *dukkha* varies with the intensity of your attachment. There is no other endeavor for you but the practice of sitting and walking meditation. You should always watch your heart with *satipaññā* if you want to catch the *kilesas'* tricks and deceptions because *satipaññā* is an indispensable tool for catching them. With *satipaññā* you'll always detect the *kilesas* in whatever form they might appear in the heart, be it *rāga* or *dosa*, lust or anger, because the heart is the one who knows and *satipaññā* is the one who analyzes. You have to focus your attention at the heart in order to see the cause and the effect of *dukkha*. But you mustn't merely wish them to disappear, for this is *taṇhā* or craving. If you want *dukkha* to vanish, you'll have to find and remove the cause of *dukkha*. Otherwise, *dukkha* will not disappear, but will intensify to the point where you won't be able to endure it. For this reason, it's absolutely vital for you to watch your heart.

I've tried my best to provide you with the opportunity to practice. I'm very protective of you and really care for you. I truly cherish the reclusive life and the meditation practice which I've devoted my entire life to. The results are really satisfying because it released me from *dukkha* after I eliminated all of the *kilesas* from my heart with my *satipaññā*, something not beyond your own ability. I'd really like to see you realise all levels of Dhamma attainments, beginning with *samādhi*. What is *samādhi* really like? What kind of calm and coolness? If *satipaññā* is constantly focused at the *citta* and observing it, then the *citta* won't have time to produce any harmful thoughts to hurt you

and will eventually enter into calm. When the *citta* becomes reckless and stubborn, then you must use the various techniques of *satipaññā* to restrain it because *satipaññā* is superior to the *kilesas*. This is *paññā* develops *samādhi*. When the *kilesas* are extremely wild, you must put all of your effort into taming the *citta*. It's a life and death situation. You must subdue the *kilesas* with your *satipaññā* until the *citta* withdraws inside and calms down.

I can confidently relate to you the experience realized from my meditation practice. When the *citta* became very reckless with lust or *rāga*, I had to subdue it with my *satipaññā* until I was in tears before I could see its harmfulness. When I sat for a long time until the pain became very excruciating, I had to use *satipaññā* to investigate the body. If I was using a mantra or being mindful of my breathing I had to stop doing it when the *dukkha-vedanā* attacked with its full force. I had to continually investigate *dukkha-vedanā* with my *satipaññā* like two boxers punching each other. You can't afford to be off-guard because when you are, you'll be vulnerable. It's the same way with your investigation. You must probe and analyze until you find and eliminate the cause of *dukkha*. After you've achieved this, how can the *citta's* spectacular nature not appear? There is nothing in this world that could be more spectacular than a developed *citta*. On the other hand, there is nothing in this world that could be worse than an undeveloped *citta*. The *citta* is very important because it's the indispensable container for all the different levels of Dhamma, especially the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. You must, therefore, strive to develop the *citta*.

When you fast, you should really concentrate on your meditation practice. Your exertion should be more strenuous than it would normally be. Fasting or reducing your food intake is a means of developing your mindfulness, or *sati*. If fasting suits you, it'll make your practice easier and more fruitful than when you eat normally. If it doesn't suit you, it won't help your practice, because you'll be thinking about food all the time rather than about your practice. When you fast your

body will become light, your *citta* nimble and alert, your mindfulness ever-present, and you will experience no sleepiness. You'll see that your sleepiness comes from eating a lot of food. After fasting for two or three days, there'll be no drowsiness left. You'll sit erect like a post, and your *citta* will enter into calm very easily. There is nothing to bother your *citta*. When you develop *paññā*, it will flow very easily, spinning round and round. Regardless of the Dhamma level you're in, the methods of practice like fasting will always promote your progress, if they suit your temperament. If they don't, they will become a hindrance.

You shouldn't speculate about things that you haven't yet experienced in your heart, like imagining what *khaṇṇika samādhi* is like, what *upacāra samādhi* is like, what *appanā samādhi* is like, or what the *citta's* convergence into complete concentration is like. This is just imagination that will lead you away from the heart who is the one to experience and develop them, be it any kind of *samādhi*. The point is never to speculate what *khaṇṇika samādhi*, *upacāra samādhi* or *appanā samādhi* are like, other than experiencing the truth of these *samādhis* yourself because this is the correct way to do it. It's like describing what a particular dish of food is like. Whether it's sweet or not really doesn't matter. Even a child who hasn't had any schooling about culinary matters will know if the food is delicious or not when he eats it. It's the same with *samādhi*. You have to experience it by developing it yourself. It doesn't depend on your speculation; that is useless and wastes your time. Be it any kind of *samādhi*, you'll get to know it yourself. You'll know what kind of *samādhi* suits you when you've developed it with your mindfulness and strenuous effort. After you've entered into calm, you'll know what it's like and how to achieve it.

Normally the *citta* likes to think a lot because it's always restless and agitated like a monkey. But when you've developed *sati* to control your *citta*, like when you've continually concentrated on your mantra or any other meditation object, then the *citta* won't have the chance to think aimlessly and will calm down. Whatever kind of calm it may be,

you'll know it, as well as the happiness, ease and comfort that accompany it, be it *khaṇika*, *upacāra* or *appanā*. The important point is never to speculate about them, because it's a waste of time and a hindrance to your meditation practice, especially when you're investigating for the truth. What you've studied from the scriptures or heard from your teacher, are all speculation. If you apply it in your investigation, you'll ruin it and never become enlightened. The *citta* will unknowingly think that it's the truth. Therefore, you mustn't let your speculation interfere with your investigation. If you want to become enlightened, you must always attentively watch your *citta*. You're practicing *citta-bhāvanā* or mental development. You're not practicing for the development of mental delusion. If you constantly study the *citta*, you'll clearly see that the *citta* is the knowingness or "the one who knows."

The Lord Buddha had to give about 84,000 different discourses to suit the needs of thousands of his devotees, who are like patients afflicted with different kinds of diseases. Is it practical for a doctor to use only one kind of medicine to treat all of his patients? Of course not. He must have many kinds of medicines to treat his patients. It's the same with the Lord Buddha, who couldn't give just one discourse to all of his devotees. The important point is never to speculate about the *citta*, but to know it from your practice. In order to be firm and stable, you have to be firm in your development of *samādhi* and mindfulness. Your diligent effort is crucial for achieving your *samādhi*, or mental stability, which is vital for the investigation for insight or *vipassanā*. With a calm *citta*, your investigation with *paññā* will be easy because the *citta* won't be distracted with cravings. *Samādhi* is the *citta's* nourishment that will keep it calm, cool and contented. When you investigate, your *satipaññā* will perform at full capacity and you'll become enlightened. You can take my words for it because I've already experienced it myself.

There're many levels of *paññā*, but you shouldn't speculate about them. *Paññā* will become skilful, quick, alert, sharp and penetrating if it's being continually developed. You must develop *paññā* to eradicate

the *kilesas* if you want to achieve the goal of your going forth. You mustn't be unmindful when you do sitting or walking meditation. If you do, you'll unknowingly prostrate yourself to the *kilesas*. All of your thoughts will be manipulated by the *kilesas*. Instead of eliminating the *kilesas*, you'll accumulate more of them. So you must never surrender because you're a fighter. You have to be serious and earnest in your practice. There's nothing more important than the activities of the *citta*. It's here where you'll have to focus your observation.

The two mental components that are constantly active are *saṅkhāra* or mental concoctions, and *saññā* or memory. *Saññā* is much more subtle than *saṅkhāra* because it doesn't have to concoct; it just recollects. It's similar to water that permeates through the ground. *Saññā* will subtly recall information and mental images. Both *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* are *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anattā*. If you don't know their true nature and what they are up to, they'll be used by the *kilesas* to deceive you.

You have to be resolute and earnest with your practice. I would really love to see you experience *samādhi* and *paññā* because they are what you've devoted your effort for. The experiences that you've heard from your teachers and fellow practitioners are not your own yet. They are like merchandise in the market that you haven't yet bought because you haven't got any money. All that you can do is look at them. It's the same with the Lord Buddha's experiences like *samādhi*, *paññā*, *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* that you can only admire. Although you might have studied the scriptures a lot, and you're very proud of it, just what have you achieved? All that you've accomplished was to commit the scriptural knowledge into your memory without a single *kilesa* being eliminated from your heart. If you don't practice, you'll never experience *samādhi*, *paññā*, *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* which you've memorized. Please understand this and get into your practice. If you develop *paññā*, you'll get *paññā*.

You mustn't let other tasks distract you from your practice because 99% of them are *kilesas*. When you're not serious and earnest with

your practice, then it'll be 99% *kilesas*. If the *kilesas* have 99 weapons, and Dhamma has only one weapon, you won't be able to fight them. So you must develop lots of Dhamma weapons by practicing seriously and earnestly. When you investigate the body, you shouldn't investigate perfunctorily, but investigate for true knowledge and insight. How many times you've investigated doesn't matter. You have to compel the *citta* to keep on investigating and not allow it to do anything else until you've achieved your goal. This is the way to make the *kilesas* surrender. When you fight them by putting your life at stake in your investigation for the truth, the *kilesas* will have to give up because your *satipaññā* is more powerful than the *kilesas*. You'll see this very clearly. How can the *kilesas* be stronger than the *satipaññā* taught by the Lord Buddha?

When the *kilesas* are forceful, your *satipaññā* or the *magga*, which is the suitable weapon for defeating the *kilesas*, must also be equally forceful. When the *kilesas* are less forceful, then *magga* will also be equally less forceful. This happens in the early stages of practice, when the *citta* is restless and agitated. It's like taming a buffalo which will eventually have to surrender to the tamer. It's the same with the *kilesas*, which will eventually have to yield to your *satipaññā* and diligent effort. It will become weaker, whilst *satipaññā* becomes stronger. The *citta* can then establish peace and coolness as its support. There won't be any restlessness and agitation that are like smoldering fire left inside the heart, like the fire that burns the rice husks. You have to extinguish this fire with your diligent effort. When the *citta* has attained to calm, it will have coolness as its support. This happened to me. The important thing is not to be idle. You must keep on practicing. When you sit meditating for calm and *samādhi* or when you investigate with *paññā*, you have to do it earnestly.

If you're mindful in your investigation, you'll gradually discover the ways and techniques of removing your delusion and achieving insight. Investigating with mindfulness is crucial for realizing knowledge and insight. Whatever you do, you should always inves-

tigate and analyze. This is the way of developing *paññā*. In the beginning stages of developing *samādhi*, it's very hard. But you mustn't give up. If you do, you won't succeed. If you persist, you'll eventually achieve calm. When you investigate with *paññā*, you should first investigate the body, your body and other people's body, to see that they are the living dead. Do you want to live with these living dead? Our bodies are the living dead. Are they beautiful? Are they real? Of course they're not! When you investigate on *asubha* (loathsomeness) and *paṭikkūla* (filthiness), you'll find that these bodies are loathsome and filthy. When you investigate on death, *aniccam*, and suffering, *dukkham*, you'll see that these bodies will age, get sick and die. This world is the world of the dead. You're just waiting for your death, like animals waiting in line to be slaughtered.

Once you're born, you're targeted by death. Death has already laid claim on you, whether you're a man or a woman, young or old. Some will die today, some tomorrow and so on. You have to investigate until you see this truth if you want to develop *paññā* to impact your heart. You've already been branded by death, but you don't know this, because you're too preoccupied with your pursuit of happiness. You're like the cows and buffaloes that have been branded for slaughter. *Aniccam*, or impermanence, is constantly putting its brand on you. The sound that arises from this branding can be heard across the universe. That's how loud this branding is if it can be compared to a sound. If you listen, it will break your ears and burst your brain because the effect of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* can shake the whole world. Every part of your body is continually branded with the mark of *dukkham*, *aniccam* and *anattā*, even when you're sleeping. They never stop. They do it when you think: 'Oh, this food is delicious!' Do you know this? You have to investigate until you're truly impressed by this truth.

Aniccam is impermanence. It's the truth or the law of the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. You must investigate until you can see this clearly. You must take control of your heart because

it's your only real possession. Don't pickle it with the brine of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You must free it from your delusion that makes you cling and crave for the nonessentials that are immersed in the mire of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. What good can you find from things immersed in the mire? Even a solid bar of gold, once immersed in the mire will not look good. The heart is much more precious than a bar of gold. When it's immersed in the mire of greed, hatred and delusion, how can it become precious? You should, therefore, free your heart from the mire of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* that constantly oppresses your heart. When you've seen the truth of *anattā*, you'll see that there're no people, animals, I or they to cling to.

You should earnestly investigate to see the truth clearly inside your heart and should not oppose the Dhamma teaching because it is the truth. The *kilesas* and Dhamma will always oppose one another. The *kilesas* will make your views and understanding differ from the Dhamma teaching and will destroy the Dhamma teaching without you being aware of it. When you have clearly seen the truth, your *citta* will defeat the *kilesas*. It will be firm and resolute like a warrior. Your exertion will be very intense; your *satipaññā* will probe relentlessly until you see all the truth. When *paññā* starts to investigate, it will first probe the entire world to see without any doubt that everything is all made up of the four physical elements of earth, water, wind and fire. When you have seen this truth you'll let go of them. After that the scope of your investigation will become narrower because the *kilesas* and your delusions are fewer.

Satipaññā will now focus on the five *khandhas*, separating and identifying them. Its goal is to see the *rūpa-khandha* or body as merely a body, the *vedanā-khandha* or feelings as merely the three kinds of feelings of *sukha* (pleasant), *dukkha* (unpleasant) and neutral, *saññā* as merely *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* as merely *saṅkhāra*, and *viññāṇa* as merely *viññāṇa*. The four mental aggregates or *nāma-khandha* have a similar nature. When you investigate one of them and see its true nature, you'll also see the true nature of the other three. Once you've clearly

seen their true nature, how can you not let go of them? You'll let go of them because the reason you've been clinging to them is simply because you didn't know their true nature. The goal of your meditation practice is enlightenment, insight into your true nature, and insight into the nature of your delusion that causes you to cling to *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*.

When you have clearly seen the truth of the five *khandhas*, *satipaṇṇā* will then probe inside the *citta*, because there is nothing outside to investigate anymore. The scope of the investigation and the *kilesas* will converge into the *citta* where the *kilesas* will be completely eliminated. When they are completely removed, what is left? Gone is *aniccam*, gone is *dukkham* and gone is *anattā*. Everything is let go of and left as it is. These three characteristics inherent in all conditioned phenomena—*aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*—are the path to *Nibbāna*. When you've arrived at *Nibbāna*, these three characteristics will lose their usefulness, like when you travel on the road and arrive at your destination, the road that led you to your destination will become superfluous. It's the same with the *citta* when it travels on the path of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* until arriving at its destination; after which those three factors will serve no useful purpose. Your investigation that was spinning like a Dhamma Wheel will stop, because all the *kilesas* have been destroyed.

This was the endeavor of the Dhamma practitioners during the Lord Buddha's time. They attained *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* in the forest and on the mountains because they practiced for the elimination of the *kilesas*. They knew that wealth and status were lures that would lead them to insanity and knew that the *kilesas* were the ones that enticed them with wealth and status. What can be more precious than the Dhamma? You should fight the *kilesas* until you become enlightened. You'll then let go of everything. Wealth and status are kids' stuff, like children's toys. After you've become enlightened, you'll relinquish everything because they are all *sammatti* or supposition. Enlightenment is the most satisfying result. It's the fruits of

your uphill struggle from start to finish, and the fruits of training, disciplining, developing, protecting and nourishing yourself with the Dhamma that you should value more than anything else.

You must consider the practice of mental development to be your most important endeavor and must not do other work or activities just to alleviate your annoyance as this will only serve to increase your frustration. When the *citta* has achieved the ultimate goal, it'll be blissful and all problems will come to an end. The practice of mental development will also come to an end. It's not like the worldly undertakings that have no end. You'll do them until you die and carry with you to your next life all of your worries, confusions and miseries. You'll never find any lasting happiness, ease and comfort. But if you've accomplished the practice of mental development, you'll lose all your worries. This is *anālayo*, totally free of worries, because you've left all things as they are, even your body; whatever should happen to it, you'll let it happen. You've already learned the nature of your body and know that it's *aniccāṃ, dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*, just like *vedanā*, *citta* and Dhamma.

The Lord Buddha said that you must let go of all Dhammas at the final stage of practice. When you haven't yet arrived at your destination, don't let go of the path yet. But after you've arrived at your destination, you must let go of the path. You must not cling to it. "All Dhammas" refers here to all the *sammati-dhammas* or relative truths. When you've reached the final stage of practice, you'll let go of the path. At this stage, the *citta* will become very subtle and it'll be totally immersed in the investigation. But when it realizes that all Dhammas are *anattā*, the *citta* will completely let go of them. After you've passed beyond *aniccāṃ, dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*, what is this state? This isn't *sammati*, and you won't describe it because you know it's indescribable. This is the ultimate truth. You can't describe it but you know what it is. You know this is the Great Sage although it doesn't say it is so.

Genuine Progress

August 21st, 1979 —

Without Dhamma, there can be no genuine progress in the world or in Buddhism. When there is Dhamma, there will be peace and happiness, because Dhamma is selflessness. With Dhamma, you'll see that all human beings are the same, and you'll have loving-kindness, compassion and unselfish concern for the welfare of others. Without Dhamma, you'll put yourself above others. Although you're bad, you'll be deluded into thinking that you're good. That's why Dhamma is indispensable. When a person, a society or a country has Dhamma, there'll be peace. When there is no Dhamma, there'll be strife. When your heart is ruled by the *kilesas*, it will be engulfed by fire. The Lord Buddha and all the sages of the present and the past never praised the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsavā*—greed, hatred and delusion—because they agitate and torment the heart. Who can be wiser than a Buddha? All Buddhas propagate the same teaching. They praise the things that are worthy of praise and censure the things that are worthy of censure. They teach you to let go of the things that you should let go of and to develop the things that you should develop for

the sake of establishing peace and happiness within your heart and living a peaceful existence.

If you can let go of some of these things, you'll be more peaceful and have fewer *kilesas*. If you can totally let go of everything, you'll be completely free from the *kilesas* and become a noble and superior being. What can afflict the heart if not the *kilesas* that have *avijjā* as their root? Any behavior directed by the *kilesas* can only produce trouble and affliction. The *kilesas* are troublesome, whilst Dhamma is cool, peaceful and pleasing to the eyes and ears.

Dhamma is, therefore, absolutely vital for your well-being. You can always trust Dhamma because it's the truth that has existed since time immemorial and can't be wiped out. There are fewer wise people than there are foolish people born into this world. That is why Dhamma can only appear once in a long, long time. The appearance of the Dhamma, of Buddhism and of the Lord Buddha are the results that follow the enlightenment of a super human being who calls himself Buddha, who through his own efforts and wisdom discovers the Dhamma, the basic principles of the cosmos, which he then presents to the world. After his death, his teaching gradually fades away, due to the powerful influence of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* that encompass the hearts of sentient beings. Eventually they totally forget the Dhamma and let the *kilesas* do anything they please to deny them real happiness and only bring them sorrow and pain. Such is the way of the world. Now let's talk about you.

When you're peaceful, calm and discerning, regardless of where you are, you'll always be cool, because you're protected by the Dhamma. When you're sidetracked from your meditation practice, like being involved with building a new cottage, you can become restless and agitated. The Lord Buddha prohibits monks from engaging in any activity that will undermine their meditation practice. For a beginning practitioner who hasn't established any *samādhi* yet, he should avoid a monastery that is under construction or renovation. Don't be inclined to build this and build that. Don't live in a place

where people mingle and socialize. You should always seek seclusion and consider your meditation practice as your main undertaking, your lifetime endeavor. You should always practice. This is what the Lord Buddha teaches the monks. For this reason, many monks during the Lord Buddha's time could realize the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. After they heard the Lord Buddha's teaching, they seriously believed it, took up the practice and became enlightened.

It is the heart that earnestly believes and practices that becomes happy. It is also the heart that doesn't believe and doesn't practice that becomes miserable. As a practitioner, you should concentrate all your efforts into your meditation practice. You must not be weak or lazy because you're in the battlefield. Who and where are your enemies? They are the *kilesas* inside your heart. You have to fully develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to oppose and eliminate them. The Lord Buddha said: "*Attā have cittaṃ seyyo*"—it's noble to conquer yourself. To conquer yourself, you have to vanquish the *kilesas*. Where do you achieve victory, if not inside your heart? This is where your enemies are found. This is where you'll lose or win. But you'll not lose because you'll concentrate all of your efforts into the fight. It doesn't matter if you should die fighting. You'll fight until you win. The place to learn about the cycle of birth, death and rebirth is inside your heart. This is where you'll find out whether your heart will be reborn again or not.

The numbers of births that you've taken up are beyond counting. It is *avijjā* and *kamma* that cause your *citta* to take up birth. You can't choose your birth because it was selected by your *kamma* that was driven by *avijjā*. Neither can you choose to be happy or sad because they are the consequences of your good and bad *kamma*. If you can't control your *kamma*, you can't choose your birth. What is the difference between being imprisoned by the law of *kamma* and the law of your country? There really is no difference. You have to use this comparison to see the truth of the costs and benefits of your *kamma* in order to spur you on to meditate. Birth and death are in your *citta* where you'll have to probe, meditate and become enlightened. Your

citta is the creator of your ceaseless cycles of birth and death although you might not know it. But the testimony that attests to this fact is found right in your *citta*, which you'll eventually realize through your Dhamma practice. The more you meditate and probe, the more subtle your *citta* will become, and the more you will see clearly the perpetrator of your birth.

After the Lord Buddha became enlightened, he was able to see and reveal to others the truth of *samsāra*, the cycles of birth, death and rebirths that all sentient beings have to go through. For this reason, his Dhamma teaching is known as the *svākkhāto bhagavatā Dhammo*—the well-taught Dhamma, because not a single word of his teaching ever deviates from the truth. You're the one who takes up birth, disease, ageing and death. Why don't you know this? Because there are blinding influences within your heart that totally block and obscure this truth. You have to reveal them through your meditation practice. You have to catch the chief culprit in your *citta* that leads you to be born and to die again and again. This is *paṭicca sammuppāda* or dependent origination—*avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā, saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇam*, etc. *Avijjā* is the principal driving force that propels you to take up birth in the various realms of existence and to experience the fruits of your *kamma*. The Lord Buddha said that it is the *kilesas* that drive you to do good and bad *kamma*. After you have committed these *kamma*, the fruits of these *kamma* will then follow you.

When I say *kilesas*, I mean *avijjā*, the master of all the *kilesas*, who drives all sentient beings to do *kamma* and to experience the fruits of their *kamma* by going through the cycles of birth, death and rebirth called *vaṭṭa-cakka*. This is similar to an ant that runs around the edge of a basket—it just keeps running round and round, similar to your running round and round the edge of the *vaṭṭa-cakka*. You'll never know this if you don't practice mental development. Even if you study the entire *Tipiṭaka*, the Buddhist Canon, you'll still be in the dark. The Lord Buddha and his noble disciples became enlightened by practicing mental development, not by studying and memoriz-

ing the Buddhist Canon. The truth and what you commit to memory are two different worlds. Your memories will always fool you. For instance, if you talk about England, if you have never been there before, you can only imagine what it's like. But after you've been there, your imagination will be replaced by what you actually see. This is what is meant by seeing the truth. When you see the truth, your imagination will disappear because your imagination is fake. What you have studied is also fake. When you come across the truth in your practice, the fake will disappear. This is the way of learning about the *citta*.

There are no limits to the *citta's* involvements. The oceans and rivers have shores and banks. But the *citta* is all over the universe and *saṃsāra*. Therefore, you have to reign in your *citta* with *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, in order to see the *citta's* true nature. You have to diligently eliminate from your heart all the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* that thrust you to be born and die. Then your *citta* will be more obvious, the knowingness will be more distinct, and you will clearly see the cause of your wandering around the cycles of birth, death and rebirth. You will see how much of this cause still remains in your *citta*. Though it might not propel you to take up birth in the lower realms of existence, you know you will still have to take up birth. You will know this as this cause becomes more subtle and as you advance in your practice. Eventually you will completely eliminate this cause from your *citta*, which will then be detached from everything including the five *khandhas* of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which the *citta* has been responsible for. They will no longer affect the *citta*. The *citta* will just be the *citta*, “the one who knows” will just be “the one who knows”, and the *khandhas* will just be the *khandhas*. The *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* will just be *sammati* or conventional reality.

When you've investigated with *paññā*, you'll sever everything from your *citta*. You'll cut off *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra*, *viññāṇa* and all physical and mental objects. You'll sever the body, which is merely the element aggregate, a composition of the four elements of

earth, water, air and fire that you see as human, animal, man and woman, and are totally immersed in this delusion and confusion. A very thin membrane of skin can totally blind and obscure your eyes. *Paññā* must penetrate this skin so that you can see the true nature of the body: that it is *paṭikkūla* or filthy, and merely a composition of the four elements. How can you have attachment, affection and aversion for the elements? When you see this clearly, you'll let go of the body. Concerning *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, they are merely conditions that arise out of the *citta*, but they are not the *citta*. With *paññā*, you'll be able to restrain them and detach them from your *citta*. This is the way to cut off birth and existence.

When you have totally severed the five *khandhas* and destroyed *avijjā* from your *citta*, the cause of birth will be completely eliminated. Your *citta* will be like cooked rice that will not grow anymore. It's only good for eating. Your *citta* will now be only suited for experiencing the bliss of freedom or the *vimutti-sukha*, and the state of purity. It's no longer suited for taking up any more birth. You'll know this within your heart. In the *Ādittaparyāya Sutta* or the Fire Discourse, the *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta* or the Not-Self Discourse, and the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* or the First Discourse, the Lord Buddha proclaims thus: "From this moment onward, there is no more birth for me, for this is my last birth." He also proclaims in the Not-Self Discourse: *vusitaṃ brahma cariyaṃ*, the work of totally eradicating the *kilesas* has now come to an end. This is a most noble quest that requires your total effort, your *satipaññā* and your life. This endeavor has now come to end. You've now destroyed all of the *kilesas*. *Kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ*, the task of letting go of all things and the task of mental development have been accomplished. *Nāparaṃ itthattāyāti*, there is no further work to do. *Pajānāti*, you have now become enlightened. *Vimuttassamiṃ vimuttam iti ñaṇaṃ hoti*, as soon as you've achieved freedom, the realization that you've achieved freedom will also appear simultaneously.

This is the *bhikkhu's* endeavor. This is how the practitioners during the Lord Buddha's time accomplished their task. Their mission was

to develop their *citta* and investigate the *kammaṭṭhāna*, starting with the first five parts of the body: *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā*, *taco* and then to all the other parts. These are the objects that you'll have to investigate. How do you do it? First, you should develop *samādhi* or calm with a mantra like *Buddho* or any other object of concentration. Then you should investigate the thirty-two body parts to see their true nature. Are they clean or filthy? You have to keep on probing, especially the skin that wraps around the bones. You can't see the bones. All you can see is the skin with which you are obsessed and which deludes you. You have to look through this skin to see its content. This is how you should investigate after you've established calm with a mantra, which is like chopping up a piece of meat when you repeat *Buddho*, *Buddho*, *Buddho*, or *kesā*, *kesā*, *kesā*, or *nakhā*, *nakhā*, *nakhā*, or *dantā*, *dantā*, *dantā* or *taco*, *taco*, *taco*. This is the way to concentrate the *citta's* strength. When the *citta* is distracted, it has no strength.

It's like grass, when tied together into a bunch, is more difficult to break apart. If you want to cut it, you'll have to chop it several times. On the other hand, you can easily break apart a single blade of grass. It's the same with the *citta*. When it is scattered, it doesn't have any strength. It has to be concentrated with a mantra. When the *citta* has acquired strength, it will be calm and cool and ready for you to investigate with *paññā* for true knowledge and insight. Starting from *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco*, you'll proceed to the rest of the thirty-two body parts. You'll go over these parts thoroughly until you see the body's true nature, both of yourself and others. You'll see that they are all the same. This is the *bhikkhu's* task. This is the way the Lord Buddha taught you to develop *paññā*.

When you investigate *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, your *satipaññā* has to be sharper in order to see their true nature and let go of them. You'll also have to investigate the *kilesas* that have gathered inside the *citta* and let go of them. After you've let go of all of them, there'll be nothing else to let go, because all the *kilesas* have been destroyed. There is nothing else for you to do. All the *kilesas* will by

then have been totally eliminated. First, you've to destroy the *kilesas* that cling to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. Then you must destroy the *kilesas* that are attached to your body, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. Finally, you'll have to eliminate the *kilesa* that is embedded in the *citta*, which is the main culprit. After you've achieved this, then it is *vusitaṃ brahma cariyam*, the end of your endeavor. This is the *bhikkhu's* endeavor. Please listen and take it seriously.

Don't be sidetracked and led astray to do other tasks because you won't get rid of the *kilesas* that way. The only way to do it is the practice of mental development, the way that I have described to you here. There is no other task that is more noble than the practice of mental development. Though it is the most difficult task, it yields the loftiest benefits. Please set up your determination to concentrate on your investigation. Don't relent wherever you are. As far as staying with your teacher is concerned, this is not certain, because you live in the world of *aniccam* or impermanence. There is no certainty in the world of *aniccam*, because sooner or later there will definitely be separation from one another. What you have learned from your teacher and deeply embedded in your heart, you must not lose or deviate from. Wherever you go, you must strictly adhere to the *Dhamma-vinaya*, the teaching and the discipline. You have to be earnest and serious, not apathetic and indecisive or lacking in principles. No matter how difficult your task might be, you must shoulder it.

You have to muster your faith in the enlightenment of the Lord Buddha, and in your ability to become enlightened and free from *dukkha* by your diligent effort, in order for you to become strong and powerful, persistent and forbearing. Then your *samādhi* and *paññā* will steadily grow, because they can't be otherwise. Don't ever dismiss from your mind this undertaking if you want to see for yourself the attainment to *arahantship*, something that you've heard happen to the practitioners during the Lord Buddha's time. No matter how much you might remember these stories, they can't do anything to the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* are not affected by what you can remember, but

they are by your practice. For example, the study of *kesā*, *lomā*, *nakhā*, *dantā* and *taco* that your *upajjhāya* (preceptor) taught you at your ordination is *pariyatti*, the theoretical understanding of Dhamma obtained through reading, study and learning only, but they must now be investigated in your practice to have any result.

After you've thoroughly investigated them, you'll gain insight into their true nature. This is *paṭivedha*, the direct, firsthand realization of the Dhamma. It can't be otherwise. Nothing can prevent the *citta* that has strictly adhered to the Dhamma teaching from realizing *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. The only things that obstruct *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* are *dukkha* and *samudaya*. Neither time nor place can obstruct them. Only the *kilesas*, *dukkha* and *samudaya* can. For this reason, you have to develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* to remove the *kilesas* that obstruct the Path. Then your attainment to *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* will not be anywhere else but right within your *citta*. It is your *citta* that will become enlightened, let go of everything, vanquish the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* and become supreme, exalted and transcending the world. All you have to do is accomplish your mission.

Mental Development

— August 28th, 1979

The Buddhist religion was founded by the Lord Buddha, who was renowned for his extraordinary energy, forbearance, attainment, wisdom, moral excellence and teaching prowess. His Dhamma teachings are perfect, truthful, worthy of respect and practice, in every respect without exception, because they are all essential for the development of moral excellence and are crucial for the gradual and total elimination of all the harms and poisons created by the *kilesas*. It is like clean water washing away filth. Your *citta* has been dirty since time immemorial but you don't know what makes your *citta* dirty and how long it has been dirty. The filth that makes your *citta* dirty is thoroughly blended with your *citta* like an arrowhead that is completely embedded in the flesh. These impurities and the *citta* become one and the same thing and it's not possible for you to differentiate them through ordinary reflection. The only way to find out is through the practice of *citta-bhāvanā* or mental development.

The Lord Buddha became enlightened and purified his *citta* with Dhamma practice and became the world's object of respect and admiration. It was the same way with the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. When

the Lord Buddha expounded his Dhamma teaching to the first group of *sāvakas*, the five ascetics, he taught them how to remove all the filth that was embedded in their *citta*. The *sāvakas* listened for true knowledge and insight. They listened with mindfulness and contemplation as they were all advanced practitioners. They were *ugghaṭitaññu*, capable of becoming enlightened very quickly, because they had all developed *satipaññā* to contemplate on the Dhamma teaching and they had already established a very high degree of *samādhi* or calm within their *cittas* to the point that made them think that they had already attained *Nibbāna*. This is because this state of calm and coolness is totally devoid of the world.

But these five ascetics couldn't see the subtle *kilesas* that were still embedded within their *cittas*. When the Lord Buddha taught them the Four Noble Truths, they could then see the true nature of all the *sabhāva-dhammas* or phenomena both inside and outside the *citta*. When the Venerable Aññā Koṇḍañña had achieved the first level of enlightenment, he uttered the following: *Yarū kiñci samudaya dhammaṃ sabbantaṃ nirodha dhammaṃ*—"Whatever comes into being, must cease to exist." The Venerable Aññā Koṇḍañña was profoundly moved by this insight. The Lord Buddha responded by saying: *Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño!*—"You are enlightened!" *Aññā Koṇḍañño 'tveva nāmaṃ ahoṣīti*—"From now on I shall call you Aññā Koṇḍañña." Listening to the Dhamma teaching is a prerequisite to practice and enlightenment which is why the Lord Buddha had to teach the Dhamma to the five ascetics.

When the Lord Buddha practiced he did it with his utmost ability, to the point where he passed unconscious before he could become enlightened. When he taught the Dhamma to the five ascetics, he told them how he himself had practiced because Dhamma practice was indispensable for their own enlightenment and this became the hallmark of his teaching. He didn't become enlightened by only studying the scriptures like today's Buddhists who think they can become enlightened by studying alone. While listening to the Lord Buddha's

discourse the five ascetics also pondered on what he was elucidating and became enlightened right there and then. This is the way of studying, practicing and becoming enlightened at the same time.

Earlier on, I was talking about the *citta* being contaminated with all sorts of filth and impurities because it hasn't been purified yet. It's so polluted that it's not possible to make out what the *citta* really is. For this reason you have to practice, because by practicing you'll wash away all the impurities from your *citta*. Starting from the practice of *sīla* or morality, you'll gradually move up to *samādhi*, which is essential for getting inside the *citta* before you can develop *paññā*. *Samādhi* will gather all the *kilesas* in one place to temporarily stop them from contacting the visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations and consequently stop them from bothering the *citta*, which will then become calm and cool. *Paññā* will then purify the *citta* by investigating the various phenomena that the *citta* becomes entangled with.

What visual object is the *citta* obsessed with? Is it the image of a man, a woman or another visual object? *Paññā* will have to investigate the image the *citta* is attached to. Why must the *citta* be obsessed with a beautiful body that causes it to become restless and agitated? Because this body has an alluring power and the *citta's* perception is delusional. *Paññā* has to investigate and analyze this body. Why must the *citta* cling to it? Before, when the *citta* hadn't seen this body, it didn't have any affection for it. But after having seen it, the *citta* becomes agitated and restless. This body now sticks with the *citta* all the time. What is the reason for this? Such is the way of investigation. In order to free the *citta* from this obsession, you have to disassemble this body, starting from the hair of the head, to the skin, the flesh, the sinews, the bones and all the internal organs.

You have to investigate thoroughly with *paññā*, repeatedly, many, many times, over and over again. Then you must see its demise, becoming a bloated corpse. Even when it's still alive, this body is full of filth. As far as beauty is concerned, this is the fabrication of the

kilesas, the master of deception that deceives the *citta* to see ugliness as beauty and become obsessed with it. This is how the deception works. Therefore, *paññā* has to correct this illusion. What is the cause of this deception, this perception of beauty? You must probe and examine in order to see the truth. Beauty isn't the truth, neither is loveliness or attractiveness. You shouldn't be obsessed with them. They are not the truth. They are the *kilesa*'s deceptions. The Dhamma is the truth that can be used to correct this illusion right there and then. You'll see that these bodies aren't really pretty or good-looking. It's just a very thin sheet of skin that wraps up this body that we call man and woman. It's not even as thick as a sheet of paper and yet the *kilesa* deceives you to see it as good-looking. The deeper you investigate, the more filth you'll see. This is the truth. Where is the beauty that the *kilesas* creates? There is no such thing! The *kilesas* just fools you. You have to see it this way because this is *paññā*.

You have trusted the *kilesas* and suffered for too long already. There are many kinds of *kilesas*. There are those that fool you to see things as beautiful and have affection for them. There are those that mislead you to have incorrect perceptions that arouse your sexual desire which burn your heart. The *kilesas* are fiery and deceptive. It is, therefore, necessary to eliminate them with Dhamma, which is the truth. Concerning beauty—where is beauty? Take a good look. You must look at the truth which is the Dhamma. Your perceptions must not go against the truth if you don't want to be led by the *kilesas*, which oppose the Dhamma and yourself. You have to thoroughly and repeatedly investigate your body with *satipaññā*, starting from the skin and going inwards. You'll see filth and impurity inside your body. You won't find any beauty or find a man or a woman in this body to love, because there is no such thing. It's only an illusion to deceive you. It's not the truth.

This is what the body looks like when you're alive. Now let's see what it looks like when it gets old and dies. Even the body of a young man or woman, when it dies, it's full of filth and stinks. There's no

worse filth than that of a dead body that becomes bloated and decomposes. This is the ultimate stage of *paṭikkūla* or filthiness and the ultimate Dhamma that will absolutely eliminate the perception of beauty. You have to investigate to see this filthiness with *paññā*, which is the Dhamma weapon that will totally destroy all of your wrong perceptions, which are the *kilesas'* creation. You have to clearly see this truth. How then will the *citta* not withdraw itself from this incorrect perception? It can't do otherwise. This is the technique of *paññā*.

Concerning sound, this is just the sound of wind coming from the mouth, both the good and the bad sounds that you hear, like when you're criticized or praised. If you don't interpret them, they'll be just the sounds of wind that flow in and out of your ears. When you hear good music, it is good only because your *kilesas* interpret it to be so and you enjoy it. This is an illusion created by the *kilesas* when in fact it is just the sounds of wind, like the sounds of wind blustering the leaves. They come and go. When you investigate the nature of visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations, you only have to investigate just one of them, choose the one that you like. When you see its nature, you'll see the nature of all the others as well. You also have to investigate the nature of your own body so that you can compare it with other bodies. You'll find that they are all the same. They are full of *paṭikkūla* or filth and are just body parts. The body is not I or mine, not worth clinging to. If you cling to the body because you think it's your body, then you'll be nurturing the *kilesas* to become stronger and hurt you more. This is the way to contemplate with *paññā*. What has been briefly discussed here is the way of developing *paññā* and the way of purifying the *citta*.

Whatever object the *citta* becomes entangled with, you must sever it by investigating its true nature. You have to ignore the *kilesas'* commands. Following the *kilesas'* orders is deceiving yourself. Opposing the *kilesas'* biddings blow for blow is Dhamma. Investigating relentlessly and consistently an object's true nature is *paññā*. By alternately investigating and resting in *samādhi*, you'll make the *citta* calm, firm,

peaceful, cool, courageous, sublime and magnificent. You must relentlessly investigate, because it's absolutely vital for achieving freedom from *dukkha*. You must not speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. The practitioners during the Lord Buddha's time realized their *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* in the mountains and forests. How did they practice? They practiced the same way that I have just told you, by strictly following the Dhamma teaching without the slightest deviation, because the Dhamma teaching hasn't deviated from the truth which would make it impossible for you to eradicate the *kilesas* with it.

This Dhamma teaching is suitable for the elimination of all the *kilesas* and the purification of the *citta*, because it is the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way of practice, which is suitable at all times—past, present and future. Apart from this Dhamma teaching, nothing else can do the job. There isn't a single *kilesa* which is superior to this Dhamma teaching. During the Lord Buddha's time, every practitioner used the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā* as the means of destroying the *kilesas*, all of them, from the Lord Buddha down to all the *sāvakas* or noble disciples. The *kilesas* were the same kind: greed, hatred and delusion. You have them in your *citta* and you must apply the Dhamma in your investigation. You have to depend on the Dhamma weapon, *satipaṇṇā*, to fight your opponent like in the Lord Buddha's time. The *kilesas* will definitely disappear from your *citta* just like they did in the past.

It's definitely not the time and place that will eliminate the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* will only disappear from one place, which is the *citta*, at the time when *satipaṇṇā* has been developed to maturity. It's in the *citta* that the *kilesas* will be eliminated. You have to earnestly put in your effort. You, who have taken up the robe, have to be tough, forbearing and persevering like the Lord Buddha, your teacher and the founder of Buddhism. The Lord Buddha was well accomplished. To whom did the Lord Buddha pass on his accomplishment and diligent effort? He passed it on to you. Diligent effort is *virīya*. *Chanda* is delight. What do you take delight in? If you take delight in the *magga*,

phala and *Nibbāna*, then you must take delight in your diligent effort. *Chanda* is to take delight in the task that will free you from *dukkha*, which is your goal. *Viriya* is the application of your energy into the practice. As the Lord Buddha's follower, you have to develop the four *iddhipāda* or factors of accomplishment: *chanda* or delight, *virīya* or diligent effort, *citta* or concentration and *vīmaṃsā* or reflection. You need these four factors of accomplishment to become enlightened. If you, a Buddhist monk, can't develop diligent effort, then who in the world can?

Buddhism is your most vital part. It's your duty as a Buddhist monk to develop Dhamma in your *citta* with the aid of your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*. How can you not do this? Is this really possible? You have to be earnest and serious in your struggle with the *kilesas*. You have to really fight them. You mustn't be frivolous because that wasn't the way the Lord Buddha and the noble disciples fought to free themselves from *dukkha*. You mustn't be weak, lazy, careless or cut corners. You have to be genuine, earnest and mindful with whatever task you do. Then when you meditate, your *citta* will be also genuine, earnest and mindful because you have trained yourself this way. This is the way to do it if you want to acquire the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, because they are in your *citta* that is now surrounded by the *kilesas*. When you have totally eliminated the *kilesas* from your *citta*, you won't have to ask where *Nibbāna* is because *Nibbāna* is just a name.

The term "*kilesas*" refers to the defilements in the *citta*. *Paññā* is wisdom or ingenuity, the indispensable instrument for the elimination of the *kilesas* which are extremely cunning. But they can't be smarter than *satipaññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* which are the most vital Dhamma faculties. You have to be mindful, firm and resolute with your practice, by always concentrating your *citta* on the present, the here and now. Don't speculate about the past, the future, where to get rid of the *kilesas*, or where to attain the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, which can't be found anywhere else but in the *citta*. The *kilesas* themselves never

speculate. That's why they manage to dominate the hearts of all sentient beings. When you practice to eliminate the *kilesas*, why do you have to look for the time and place? This will only amuse the *kilesas*. You have to probe right here. Let's do it even if it's hard and painful. If you're not dead or when you exert yourself, you'll have to experience some pain, whether doing a mundane or spiritual task. Every task demands effort. You know this very well because you've worked before. You must not obstruct your practice by thinking that it's too difficult. You should think that to be free from *dukkha* is the most satisfying outcome. This is the practitioner's crucial way of thinking. You must be firm and resolute.

If you haven't developed *samādhi* yet, you must develop it now. When the *citta* goes outside, *satipaññā* must pull it back inside. The *citta* can be controlled. If *satipaññā* can't control the *citta*, nothing in this world can. *Satipaññā* is stronger than the *kilesas* and the *citta*. The *citta* simply knows. It doesn't know good or bad, coarse or subtle, superficial or profound. It doesn't think. It just knows. It's like an insane person who does whatever he likes or whatever the *kilesas* tell him to do, because he doesn't have any *satipaññā* to look after himself and be responsible for his actions. All that he has is just the knowingness that is surrounded and controlled by the *kilesas* that make him behave in such a pathetic manner. An insane person doesn't have any *sati* or mindfulness and *paññā* or wisdom. But you are not without any *satipaññā*. You have *satipaññā* just like other ordinary people. You are normal. But you want to develop your *satipaññā* beyond the ordinary level for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas*. You want to develop it up to the level of *mahā-satipaññā* or supreme-*satipaññā* that will perform automatically, quickly, efficiently, skillfully and smoothly. This is the result that will follow if you keep on practicing.

In the beginning stages of practice, it'll be an uphill struggle. Eventually, your *satipaññā* will become skilful, a result of your persistent practice. This *satipaññā* will eliminate every kind of *kilesa* that is found within the *citta*. Neither the time nor the place can pre-

vent the Dhamma practitioner from attaining freedom from *dukkha*. *Sandiṭṭhiko* or enlightenment here and now is not reserved only for the Lord Buddha. It is for everyone who practices the Dhamma correctly. This is true in the past, in the present and in the future, because the Dhamma teaching that I have instructed you are for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas*, and for achieving the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. The Dhamma is never outdated. It is the *kilesas* that are outdated because they obstruct all sentient beings from gaining true happiness. As soon as the Dhamma enters the *citta*, it will immediately make the *citta* calm and cool because it is not outdated! With the Dhamma, you will never be outdated, especially the Dhamma of *satipaṇṇā* that is ever present and capable of destroying all the *kilesas*.

Please understand that every aspect of the Dhamma teaching is designed for the removal of the *kilesas*. So you must not take your practice lightly because this is not the way to practice. It will slow your progress or destroy you due to your wrong understanding of the Dhamma. You should earnestly practice. Don't be distracted by or have any interest for anything in this world because they are all *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You have experienced them through your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind long enough to know that they are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, and so shouldn't have any interest in or curiosity for them left in your mind. You haven't experienced any Dhamma yet. So you should now develop an interest for the Dhamma practice and experience its results. You'll then see which is better, the Dhamma or the world.

If you don't know an object's true nature, how can you let go of it? You have to know first before you can let go. If you know a little, you'll let go a little. When you have experienced the results from your practice, you'll see that they are a lot more valuable than the things that you're attached to. When you have experienced the ultimate result, you'll let go of everything. Nothing in the three realms of existence is as valuable as a purified *citta* that's absolutely freed from *dukkha*. When you've discovered the Dhamma to be a lot more

superior to the things that you're attached to, you'll gradually let go of them. When you've reached the ultimate Dhamma, you'll let go of everything. You'll also let go of the *citta*. How do you get there? By persistent practice. When you take up the robe, you have a goal. You should practice to achieve that goal. You mustn't be weak in willpower, courage or vitality. *Sati* is absolutely indispensable. You mustn't forget this. I have always told you this. You need *paññā* occasionally, but you need *sati* all the time. The only exception is when you fall asleep. If you can develop your *sati* to be ever-present, your practice will rapidly advance.

The Dhamma Teaching

— September 5th, 1979

The Dhamma teaching is the most perfect, flawless and ideal teaching, unequalled by any other teaching in both the means and the end results. This is because the teacher is the Lord Buddha who is the supreme embodiment of excellence that all sentient beings can take up as their role model and follow with their utmost ability. His diligence, endurance, resourcefulness and the ability to discipline himself and his noble disciples rank above all other human beings. In striving, he kept on exerting himself until he accomplished his task. In enduring, he sometimes fell unconscious. But he never relented in his endeavoring but excelled in every task until he became enlightened. His enlightenment made it possible for others to become enlightened as well. All they have to do is follow his Dhamma teaching which is suitable for the four distinct groups of his followers: *bhikkhus* or monks, *bhikkhunīs* or nuns, *sāmaṇeras* or novices, *upāsakas* or laymen and *upāsikās* or laywomen.

The term *sāsadā* means supreme teacher, who is wise in the way of teaching. He knows what kind of Dhamma is suitable for what type of person. He doesn't teach anything which is beyond the abil-

ity of his students to practice and achieve. Teaching monks differs from teaching lay people and the general public. However, he taught the lay people who practiced like the monks the same way he taught the monks, with Dhamma geared specifically to suit each individual practitioner's ability and attainment. He would explain until his students were fully satisfied and had their doubts cleared away. Apart from teaching human beings, he also taught the *devatās* or spiritual beings. Have you seen any *devatā*? Or is it a matter of choosing what you want to believe based on your opinion which is contaminated with the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*?

There are internal and external phenomena, coarse and subtle. The phenomena that the Lord Buddha taught ranged from coarse to very subtle. There are coarse phenomena such as visual objects, and there are very subtle phenomena like the spiritual beings that we have heard and read about from the scriptures. The three divisions of the Pāli Canon, the *Suttas* or discourses, the *Vinaya* or the monastic discipline, and the *Abhidhamma* or higher Dhamma, are all true. There isn't a single chapter or verse in the Pāli Canon that is not true. Thus, it can't be said that some of the teachings of the supreme teacher are true and some are false. This is because the Lord Buddha teaches only the truth. If you're going to trust someone, you can completely trust the Lord Buddha.

When the Lord Buddha taught the *devatās*, he also instructed them in the Dhamma suitable to their abilities and attainments, just like the way he taught human beings because Dhamma is universal. Whether it's a *brahma*—an inhabitant of the non-sensual heavens of form or formlessness, a *devatā*, or a human being, they are just the *citta* with varying degrees of subtlety or coarseness. It's the *citta* that takes up these various forms of existence. Some life forms are less morally developed than others, such as animals. The Lord Buddha, therefore, couldn't teach the animals because they couldn't distinguish right from wrong, good from evil, heaven from hell, or the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. Although they are committing these deeds daily, they

don't know the morals of their actions. But with human beings, they can distinguish and learn the various aspects of Dhamma from the Pāli Canon. Although not everyone is capable of doing this, there are some who can study and practice the Dhamma from the three divisions of the Pāli Canon which contain the complete and faithful collection of the Lord Buddha's teaching. Everything in the *Suttas*, the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidhamma* is true.

It's the *citta* that will study, practice and experience the Dhamma. Whilst some *cittas* can perceive various paranormal phenomena due to their ability of extrasensory perception, some *cittas* can only perceive phenomena through the senses. For this reason, the Lord Buddha has to select the appropriate Dhamma to teach each *citta* based on its ability and attainment. The Dhamma teaching is, therefore, an ideal teaching for the world to follow in every aspect, such as the application of diligent effort, endurance, perseverance, austerity, thrift, mindfulness, resolve, discipline, and wisdom for mental development and mental stability. It is suitable for both the monks and the laity because Dhamma is a universal teaching that benefits everyone.

As a monk you should diligently practice for the elimination of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*, with the support of your endurance and perseverance. You should concentrate your *satipaṇṇā* to search for the *kilesas* which are deeply embedded within your *citta*, so that they can be totally eliminated. This task can be accomplished with persistent *satipaṇṇā* and diligent effort which a layman also can apply in his daily activity. It will make him calm, peaceful, and stable, not drifting or making a mess. There is no other teaching as perfect and ideal as the Lord Buddha's teaching that will benefit the monks and the laity—especially the Dhamma practitioners who follow it faithfully. What did the Lord Buddha teach? What is a monk's duty? What is the purpose of going forth? These are the primary questions that you should ask.

During Lord Buddha's time, people went forth for the purpose of eliminating the *kilesas* which are harmful to the *citta* and cause it to

take up birth in the various realms of existence. It's in the *citta* where you'll find good and evil, right and wrong, happiness and suffering. That's why the Lord Buddha taught you to dig deeply into your *citta* which is the most important object. When the body dies, it decomposes, but the *citta* doesn't decompose. The *citta* doesn't die but you don't and won't know this unless you practice. That is why the Lord Buddha exhorted you to practice. What is the purpose of taking up the robe? It's for eliminating the *kilesas* with the Dhamma practice. What is the duty of a monk? During Lord Buddha's time, a monk's duty was to practice walking and sitting meditation.

If you're resolute in destroying the *kilesas* due to your perception of the harm of the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, you have to develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā*, and *virīya* to full potential. They must be developed concurrently. If the *citta* is constantly nourished, how can it not develop? It will definitely grow and excel. The *cittas* of the Lord Buddha and his noble disciples were also immersed in the *kilesas* for a long time like your *citta*. Their *kilesas* and your *kilesas* are the same *kilesas*. How did they manage to get rid of their *kilesas* and achieve freedom from *dukkha* and become the world's refuge? The term "*Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*"—I take refuge in the Buddha—doesn't refer to just the Buddha of our era. It refers to all the Buddhas who became enlightened and taught Dhamma to the world.

The term "*Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*"—I take refuge in the Dhamma—refers to the absolute truth discovered by all the Buddhas. Dhamma is the natural principle that has always existed since time immemorial. The term "*Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*" I take Refuge in the Saṅgha—refers not only to the noble disciples of our era, but to all the noble disciples of all eras who have risen from the cesspool of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*. How did they manage to cleanse themselves to become noble ones and refuges for all sentient beings? It was due to their diligent effort.

There are four essential mental faculties that the Lord Buddha exhorted you to develop. The first is *chanda*, which is delight or taking

pleasure in your duty of eliminating the *kilesas*. *Viriya* is persistence or diligence. Whether it is a physical or mental task, there must always be diligent effort and perseverance. *Citta* is attentiveness, being observant of your task. If you pay close attention to your task, it will flow smoothly and flawlessly. *Vimamsā* is extremely important because it is *paññā*. You must be thorough and circumspect with your task, physical or mental, and especially with the practice of mental development. You have to develop *paññā* to its fullest potential by always contemplating the three characteristics of all phenomena, which are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You must see them in this light in order to release your attachments or *upādāna*, which are deeply embedded within your *citta* and liberate your *citta* from *dukkha*. Therefore, these four mental faculties are absolutely vital.

You must not be heedless, but must always be vigilant and mindful. You should never think that the *kilesas* and you will ever be good friends. They are like fire. Can you get intimate with fire? If you really investigate, you'll see that they are like fire. That is why the Lord Buddha called them *rāgagginā*, *dosagginā* and *mohagginā* or the fire of lust, hatred and delusion. If they are not harmful, why would he call them fire? The Lord Buddha never lied nor exaggerated. He only spoke the truth. The problem with you is that you never look at the truth, but always deny the truth unknowingly. This is the work of the *kilesas*, which is similar to fire. When you touch the fire, knowingly or not, it will burn you. That is why you have to be very careful and must not expose yourself to the *kilesas*, because they are your enemy and they are like fire.

Wherever you are, whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, you must always meditate and establish mindfulness because it's your duty. You have to take the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha as your refuge. Ultimately, you have to put your life at stake for the freedom from all *dukkha*. This is your undertaking. You are abundantly provided with the requisites of living by the lay devotees who have faith in your endeavor and hope to make merit by support-

ing you. You are not lacking any of these requisites. What is lacking is your resolve and commitment to fight and eliminate the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. After you've accomplished your mission, you can then teach others. This is the most important point. If you can't teach yourself, how can you teach others? When you are not yet enlightened, your teaching won't be comprehensive and true. You should only teach after you've become enlightened. Then every aspect of your teaching will be true and your students will really benefit.

This is the way of Dhamma which has never done anybody any harm. It's the *kilesas* that harm everybody. That's why you have to concentrate all your efforts to destroy them. Whether you're standing, sitting, walking, or lying down, you should always establish mindfulness. Be vigilant and mindful! *Sati* or mindfulness is crucial for your Dhamma practice. You need *sati* to direct your investigation with *paññā*. *Sati* and *paññā* must always work together as a team.

The greatness of the Lord Buddha is due to his ability to reveal to others the supreme Dhamma. So when he teaches this Dhamma to the world, the world finds it to be priceless. However, when this Dhamma is heard by immoral listeners, it will appear worthless. You must, therefore, prepare yourself to be a proper vessel to receive the Lord Buddha's Dhamma, by developing *sīla* (morality), *samādhi* (mental stability) and *paññā* (wisdom) until achieving enlightenment and *vimutti*—freedom from *dukkha*. You'll then become truly great without the need to have someone to vouch for you. How can you not become truly great after you have acquired this supreme Dhamma?

How can your *citta* which is always agitated, restless and confused find any peace and happiness? It's because the *kilesas* keep manipulating it to see only trials and tribulations rather than peace and harmony. To you, the world appears gloomy and bleak when in fact it's not so. This is due to your delusion, and that is why it is necessary for you to develop your *sati* and *paññā*, so that you can become wise and intelligent. You should establish *samādhi* which is your *citta's* foundation, and should earnestly and mindfully develop *samādhi* with

the method that is most effective for you. The Dhamma is a serious teaching. The Lord Buddha took the Dhamma very seriously. So why are you fooling around? Is this the way to follow the Lord Buddha? The Lord Buddha seriously practiced and became enlightened. If you playfully practice, you'll become foolish. You'll never become enlightened. All that you will acquire are more delusions and deceptions.

If you earnestly practice, you'll definitely achieve results. *Samādhi* isn't beyond your ability. It's the *kilesas* that agitate your *citta* by manipulating and inciting it. Therefore, it is necessary to concentrate your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* right at the *citta* and practice relentlessly. How then can your *citta* become agitated? *Sati* must force the *citta* to totally concentrate on the task at hand and forget about everything else, such as life, death and time. You should only be aware of what you're doing, like repeating a mantra or watching your breath. Don't let your *citta* think about other things that will agitate it, which will happen if you're absent-minded. You should pretend that at this moment the world doesn't exist, although it actually does exist, by not thinking about it. Let there be only the *citta* and the meditation object. Then the *citta* will stay put and will definitely become calm. I have experienced this before. I'm not bragging. I have never seen any undertaking to be as difficult as the practice of mental development.

From the start when I tried to establish some calm and tranquility, I found the *citta* to be a lot more restless and agitated than a monkey due to the influence of the *kilesas* over the *citta*. I had to replace the *kilesas* with the Dhamma so that the Dhamma can become the *citta's* master and had to concentrate all my efforts into the practice, sometimes putting my life at stake. If I was going to die, so be it! Having been born, I am destined to die. The same with everybody whether he or she practices or not. Nobody is exempted from the cemetery. Who can live forever in this world? If I had to die fighting the *kilesas*, I was ready. It was either I die or become enlightened. When my practice started to home in on the *kilesas*, I was able to subdue the *kilesas* and establish calm, as well as making the *citta* bright and cool. It was

an incredibly amazing and wonderful experience that enormously enhanced my faith in the Dhamma teaching as well as my diligence, forbearance and perseverance to fight and completely vanquish the *kilesas*.

This is how it will be when you really exert yourself. When it is the time to make the *citta* go into *samādhi*, you must solely concentrate on developing *samādhi*. Don't develop *paññā* at this time. When you want to establish calm, you must do only that. If you want to use *paññā* to develop *samādhi* then you must investigate the body. This is called going on a *kammaṭṭhāna* sight-seeing trip. The term *kammaṭṭhāna* means the basis of action or task. The most suitable objects for this task are the thirty-two parts of the body. If you investigate the body, going from top to bottom, having *sati* or mindfulness directing your investigation, the *citta* will eventually become still. This is one way to develop *samādhi*.

Now let me tell you how to develop *paññā*. When the *citta* has gained enough calm, it will be contented, not hankering for anything. You have to direct this calm *citta* to investigate the various aspects of Dhamma, like the thirty-two parts of the body. You should investigate your body as well as other people's bodies. You should look for *paṭikkūla*, filthiness, or *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, because they are the truth. We all know how filthy the body is. The Lord Buddha did not lie to us. But the *kilesas* prevent us from seeing the body's filthiness. They are the masters of deception. Is there a person in this body? Look carefully. You have to look the way the Lord Buddha instructs you to look. Is there beauty in this body? It's actually full of filth, inside and outside. It's also full of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*.

But this isn't the picture the *kilesas* have drawn up, which portrays the body to be beautiful, good-looking, and to be I and mine, which contradicts the Dhamma teaching. The *kilesas* always contradict the Dhamma teaching. If your thinking and understanding are like this, then you're contradicting the Dhamma. You must turn around your understanding to conform with the Dhamma, by seeing the body

as filthy or *paṭikkūla*. You must investigate until you see the truth of this filthiness. Then it can be said that you are seeing the truth. You should also investigate the body to see it as *aniccam* (impermanence), *dukkham* (suffering) and *anattā* (the negation of an entity, self, or person in this body, which is just made up of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire). For truly, there is no such thing as a self, an animal or a human being. This is the truth.

When you see this truth, the *kilesas* will disappear from your *citta*. Your delusion will gradually disappear as the truth gradually appears. First, you'll see the truth of *paṭikkūla*. Then you'll see the truth of the four elements. When the body is just elements, how can you be attached to it? If the body isn't good-looking, how can you be attached to it? It's like excrement along the roadside. Who would dare step on a pile of excrement? This is how you should see the body in order to free your *citta* from this delusion. The *citta* will stay clear from the body like you stay clear from a pile of excrement. These are the means of removing the *kilesas* which are like thorns that irritate and annoy your *citta* and prevent you from having any peace and happiness. Although you may think that you're practicing mental development or *bhāvanā*, actually, you're most of the time making yourself restless and agitated by doing something else.

The time when you have any *sati* or mindfulness is only brief, but the time when you don't have any mindfulness and are being dragged away by the *kilesas* to do something else must be at least 95% of the time. So how are you going to find any tranquility, happiness and coolness, when 95% of the time belongs to the *kilesas* and only 5% belongs to the Dhamma? Is this enough to oppose the *kilesas*? You must, therefore, develop *sati* and *paññā* to a very high level. You have to be really earnest with your investigation of the body so that you can see its true nature with your own method of investigation. You must not be lazy when it's time for you to develop *paññā* and just wait for your teacher's advice or expect him to show you all the details of practice. The teacher will only point out the major points. You have to come up

with the details using your own *sati* and *paññā*. Whatever methods of investigation you've devised will be your genuine possession.

When you investigate, you will truly see the body's true nature and will eliminate your delusion. The more you truly see, the more your delusion will disappear. When you have completely seen the body's true nature, your attachment to and delusion of the body will be uprooted. The *citta* will then come inside. This is the investigation of the body. You have to investigate it so that you can see its true nature very clearly. You can investigate your own body or someone else's body. They are the same as long as you investigate for the purpose of uprooting your delusion and for insight. It will always be correct, because it's *magga*, the path. But when you incorrectly investigate your own body or someone else's body, it will be harmful to you. The purpose of your investigation is really crucial.

Sammādiṭṭhi, right views and *sammāsaṅkappo*, right thoughts are the components of *paññā*, which is the Lord Buddha's teaching that is designed for eliminating the *kilesas*, attachments and delusions. When you are skilful in your investigation with *paññā* of both your own body and other people's bodies, you'll not be deluded by them. So how can the *citta* become attached to them? The reason why the *citta* is attached to them is because it is deluded. It doesn't see the body's true nature. Even after you've listened to your teacher, it will be merely imagination. Your *citta* hasn't yet seen the truth, in other words the truth hasn't yet penetrated the *citta*. The only way to experience the truth is to practice mental development. The results that appear will be true knowledge and true insight that will enable the *citta* to let go. Whatever object you're attached to, for example your body, after you've seen its true nature, you'll let go of it.

After you've realized the truth of your body and is clearly impressed by the truth of the elements, the truth of *paṭikkūla* and the truth of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, your *citta* will definitely let go of the attachment to your body. You'll clearly see this without having to ask anybody about it. You'll see the harm of your attachment, and

how oppressive and burdensome this attachment has been for you. How then can your *citta* not relinquish your body? It will definitely let go. Your attachment to your body is now neutralised by your *paññā* and investigation. Your *citta* will now come inside because it has relinquished your body. You're now liberated from your attachment to your body.

Your next targets of investigation are *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, the four *nāma khandhas* or the four mental aggregates. There are three kinds of *vedanā* or feelings: good, bad and neutral feelings—*sukha*, *dukkha* and *upekkhā vedanā*—which are in the body and the *citta*. *Saññā* is memory or recognition. *Saṅkhāra* is thinking about all sorts of things, past, future and present. *Viññāṇa* receives or acknowledges the sense data, like when the visual objects come into contact with the eyes and the sounds come into contact with the ears. When these sense objects disappear, the acknowledgment also disappears. This is *viññāṇa*. They are merely mental phenomena. There is no self or essence in them. *Vedanā* is just *vedanā*, *sukha* is just *sukha*, *dukkha* is just *dukkha* and neutral feeling is just neutral feeling. There is really no essence in them. They are just phenomena.

When you've investigated up to this point, how can your *citta* not see the truth? It's your deluded *citta* that keeps thinking that *dukkha-vedanā* is harmful because it's used to think in this manner and make itself miserable. When you've investigated with *paññā* these three *vedanās*—*sukha*, *dukkha* and neutral—you'll see that they are *aniccā*, *dukkhā* and *anattā*. It's the same with *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. You'll relinquish them just like you did the body. You'll no longer have any attachment for any body or any feeling—good, bad or neutral—with the exception of those feelings in the *citta*, that you haven't yet relinquished, which are also good, bad and neutral feelings.

Saññā is memory or recognition. *Saṅkhāra* is thinking which continually rises and ceases, like flashes of lightning. *Viññāṇa* also rises and ceases. It rises just so that it can cease. It doesn't rise for any other purpose and not for any entity, self, people or animals. It just

rises and ceases. What essence is there in any of them? When you've seen their true nature, you'll relinquish them. You'll let go of *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which are merely mental phenomena and are not the *citta*. Although they might appear in the *citta*, they aren't the same thing, like men and women who live together yet you can tell them apart. You'll know beyond any doubt that *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, are not the *citta*. This is the knowledge that arises from practice. But you have to investigate in the manner that has been discussed here. When you've let go of them, there won't be any attachment left.

Destroyed are the paths used by the *kilesas*, which are the chief culprits that are deeply embedded in the *citta*. There is now no way for the *kilesas* to come out of the *citta*, because they can no longer use *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* as their paths. Neither can they use visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes and touch, for they all have been destroyed by *paññā*. Now you can see very clearly that within the *citta* there is just the *citta* and the *kilesas*. The *kilesas* are no longer attached to *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* or *viññāṇa*. They used to hide behind these five *khandhas*, claiming them as I and mine. When *sati* and *paññā* have finally rounded up the *kilesas* into the *citta*, the *citta* must now be the investigation target for *sati* and *paññā*. You no longer have anything to do with *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. However, you still have to use the arising and ceasing of *saṅkhāra* as the means of getting to the genuine *kilesa*, which is *avijjā*.

At this point the knowingness will stand out prominently from the *khandhas*. You'll see this very clearly. This is the time when you'll really get to know the *citta*. Although *avijjā* is in the *citta*, you won't know it, because *avijjā* is very subtle, smart and clever. When you first get to this stage, you won't know that this is *avijjā*, if you don't have an enlightened teacher to point *avijjā* out for you. You'll think it's a genuine gold bar, when in fact it is not. You'll now become enamored with this *citta*, which has converged to become extremely bright and magnificent. After you've let go of everything else, you now become

attached to the *citta* and think that the *citta* is all alone by itself, not knowing that there is a tiger lurking inside it. This tiger is *avijjā*. Even the automatic *sati* and *paññā* or *mahā-sati* and *mahā-paññā* can still be deceived by *avijjā*'s charms because *avijjā* is the king of the three realms of existence.

There isn't a single kind of *kilesa* that can be more subtle and clever than *avijjā*. The coarser manifestations of *avijjā* are the *kilesas* of *lobha*, *dosa*, and *moha*—greed, hatred and delusions. Even with these coarser kinds of *kilesas*, you can be deceived by them. If you were not deceived by them, how could you become so greedy, so hateful and so deluded? This is because you think they are valuable and a natural part of you. For this reason, they are all over the world of *saṃsāra*. If you know how dangerous and harmful they are to you, then what is the use of being greedy, hateful and deluded? It's the same with the *citta* that is being deceived by itself. This deception is on the most subtle level. It is, therefore, necessary to use *paññā* to investigate this phenomenon, in the same way that you investigated *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* to see its true nature.

You have to observe its activity or movement. If it is *sammati*, even at the most subtle level, there'll still be activity. This activity will expose the very subtle characteristics of *aniccaṃ*, *dukkhaṃ* and *anattā* of this very subtle phenomenon.

You have to keep on investigating with *sati* and *paññā* until you fully and clearly see its true nature. When you do, this phenomenon will be completely destroyed. There will be nothing left behind including the *citta*'s magnificent brightness, bravery, obsession and attachment. All that remains is the natural knowingness which is different from the knowingness tainted by *avijjā*. They are as different from one another as the sky is from the earth or stones from diamonds. This will be the final result of your practice. This is the ultimate freedom and the total destruction of the *kilesas*, the cause of suffering, birth, ageing, illness and death in the various realms of existences. But it's *kamma* that causes you to be born in a higher or a lower realm, and to have

happiness or sadness. *Avijjā* is the primary cause, and *kamma* is the secondary one. *Avijjā* incites you to make *kamma*. Once you have done *kamma*, you'll have to bear the results of *kamma* called *kamma-vipāka*. These are the causes of ceaseless rounds of birth, death, rebirth and suffering.

Like the Lord Buddha and all the *sāvaka*s, you have to probe and analyze the *citta*, because it's the one that takes up birth, ageing, illness and death. Why do you have to wait for them to reveal this truth and teach it to you? Why are you not capable of learning it yourself? If you don't believe in them, who else can you believe in? If you only believe in yourself, you'll remain sinking in the pool of *dukkha*. When will you ever transcend this pool of *dukkha* that has birth, ageing, illness and death as its cause? If you don't believe the Lord Buddha, who else can you believe? You have to believe in him by doing the investigation. You will then see clearly the *citta*'s involvement with the past and the future, and with all the things that cause you to take up birth, ageing, illness and death in the various realms of existence. Even if you take up birth in the higher realms of existence, it's still an existence, it's still *sammata* or relative truth that has *dukkha* embedded within it. The intensity of this *dukkha* corresponds to the realm of existence.

You have to eradicate *avijjā*, the real creator of existence, from the *citta* with the power of *sati* and *paññā*. You have to completely eliminate it. Then you'll see for yourself whether you'll have to take up birth and die again or not. You'll know this. How did the Lord Buddha get to know it? He got to know it by practicing mental development, not by memorizing the scriptures. He became enlightened by practice. You have to practice until you truly see and know *avijjā*. Then it will be permanently destroyed. How then can there be any more birth or existence when the principal cause of birth has been totally destroyed, as you can see it very clearly with *paññā*? There is nothing more left behind. All that is left is the purified *citta*. You will also know that you haven't disappeared. How can you disap-

pear when you know? This is a natural principle. This purified *citta* is the absolute truth. How can you annihilate the purified *citta*? This is merely speculation. You have to see this absolute truth yourself.

The Lord Buddha could teach this absolute truth because he had discovered it. It's not beyond the ability of your *citta* to also discover this absolute truth. You have to probe and search until you find it. When you do, all of your trials and tribulations will completely vanish. The questions concerning your future: what kind of birth you'll take up, good or bad—will all disappear. As for the present: you know at all times what it is like. You know there isn't any attachment left because all the *kilesas* have been entirely eliminated. The purified *citta* is not attached to itself, because there are no *kilesas* left in it. If the *citta* still has *kilesas*, it will still have attachment. The intensity of attachment corresponds to the intensity of the *kilesas* which will always create attachment. If they are still in the *citta*, they'll cause the *citta* to attach to itself. When you have completely eliminated them from the *citta*, there'll be no attachment left. What is left is the purified *citta* which is permanently freed from all forms of attachment.

This is *sandiṭṭhiko*, or visible here and now, that is constantly challenging you to experience it from the day of the Lord Buddha's enlightenment to the present. The Dhamma is never outdated. It is the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*, the Middle Way or the right path to enlightenment, beginning with *sammā-diṭṭhi* and ending with *sammā-samādhi*. It is *sandiṭṭhiko* or self-evident. You'll see it yourself because it's inside your *citta* and the way to achieve this has already been taught by the Lord Buddha and his noble disciples. This is the core of the Dhamma teaching, the core of practice. You have to practice following this Dhamma teaching, which the Lord Buddha called the *magga*, the path to enlightenment, the tool to permanently eliminate *dukkha* and the *kilesas*.

You must really exert yourself in your practice and must not relent or be lazy like a pig. The Lord Buddha didn't teach the pigs and the Dhamma teaching is not pig's feed. The Lord Buddha had to go

through fire and hell to become enlightened. He taught the Dhamma so that others could also become enlightened. You should, therefore, faithfully follow the Dhamma teaching and totally commit yourself to the practice to see if it's true or not. That's all that you have to do. The *kilesas* are sharp and clever. Nothing in this world can be sharper and more clever than the *kilesas*, but when they dominate you, they make you foolish. That is why they are the world's rulers.

It's the *kilesas* that rule the *vaṭṭa-cakka* or the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Don't ever think that it's something else. If you want to see this clearly, you have to dig into your *citta* in the way that I have just told you. You'll see it in your *citta*. After the *kilesas* have been eliminated from your *citta*, who'll be the ruler? There'll be no ruler because you've realized absolute freedom. Please be resolute and earnest with your practice.

Watching Your Thoughts

— September 10th, 1979

You mustn't think the practice for the total removal of the *kilesas* from your *citta* to be too hard for you, because that would be contrary to the Lord Buddha's Dhamma teaching that teaches you to exert yourself, endure and persevere. This kind of thinking is the work of the *kilesas* which have been opposing the Dhamma teachings from time immemorial. When you start to exert yourself in your practice, they will oppose the Dhamma and make you weak and discouraged. They will come up with various tricks to make your *citta* weak and irresolute in order to keep you under their control. You, as a Dhamma practitioner, must be constantly mindful of your thoughts to see if they're opposing or following the Dhamma teaching. This is the crucial aspect of your practice. You have to always be rational and always watch your thoughts or *saṅkhāra*.

There are two kinds of *saṅkhāra*. The *saṅkhāra* that opposes the Dhamma teaching will destroy you, the truth, and the Dhamma. They are *samudaya*, the origin of suffering. The *saṅkhāra* that follows the Dhamma teaching will destroy the *kilesas*. They are *magga*, the path of practice leading to the disbanding of pain and suffering. You

have to always watch your thoughts that your *citta* constantly generates. It is similar to a football that is being kicked back and forth. How can your *citta* remain still? It's constantly being surrounded by the *kilesas*, which are like football players that keep kicking your *citta* to constantly think. It is, therefore, necessary to apply the Dhamma teaching with your strenuous exertion, endurance and perseverance to correct the harm done by the *kilesas*. If you can't persevere and endure, then you're not totally committed to your task. If you don't strive, then you're not following the Lord Buddha, your teacher.

To be a good human being, you have to strive with your diligent effort to faithfully follow the Dhamma teaching, because this is the right kind of endeavoring. If you have to endure pain to achieve it, you must willingly put up with it. You're born in a world that is full of pain and you're in the midst of it. It's not possible to separate yourself from this pain, especially the emotional or mental pain which is a lot more painful than the physical pain. Your mental pleasure and pain are more profound than your physical pleasure and pain. In fact, the body never generates any pleasure. It only generates pain, when it becomes ill. When it's not sick, it doesn't produce any pleasure. It only generates pain when it becomes sick, and the pain can be extremely excruciating. If you haven't practiced any mental development before, you'll be consumed by this pain. There'll be two kinds of pain happening at the same time: the physical and the mental pain.

Mental pleasure and pain are very obvious and profound. When you experience emotional pleasure, it will make you joyful and happy, whether it's mundane or spiritual. I can't really say that the body produces any pleasure. To me, it only generates pain. When the body is normal and healthy, it doesn't produce any pleasure at all. But when the bodily pain appears, it really shows itself. The intensity of pain corresponds to the intensity of the illness. The *citta* then loses its mindfulness and clings to the body due to its own delusion. This is like trying to lift a mountain and roll it over. How can this be possible? The true nature of the body, which is *aniccāṃ, dukkhāṃ* and

anattā, is all over the body. It's a lot bigger than a mountain. How can you defy it? You should instead investigate to see the body's true nature. The *citta* will then be able to free itself from its attachment to the body and free itself from physical and mental pain.

As a practitioner, you have to constantly investigate and analyze and always watch your *citta*, which will become your most valuable possession after it has been trained and developed. If it hasn't yet exhibited any worthwhile or exceptional capability, it's because it's being covered with the defilements of greed, hatred and delusion. For this reason, it's necessary to practice mental development with your utmost ability and energy to cleanse them away. The *citta* is the one that takes up birth, ageing, illness and death, the one that ceaselessly wanders in the *samsāra-vaṭṭa*, and the one that experiences pleasure and pain. It's this *citta* that will excel after it has been purified to become the absolute truth and be completely free from all worries. The past will converge into the present. The future will also be clearly seen in the present. This purified *citta* will be complete, perfect, contented, most sublime and have no craving for the past or the future. Therefore, the *citta* should be relentlessly and diligently trained, developed, cleansed and purified until it becomes a pure *citta*.

Sati or mindfulness is absolutely vital. I have said this many times before. In all of the Dhamma talks that I have given, I have always emphasized *sati*, because it's indispensable for your practice. Whatever you do, if you have no *sati*, you will fail, especially in your practice. *Sati* is absolutely necessary. You have to be vigilant, careful and cautious, constantly maintaining your *sati* until it becomes *sampajañña* or alertness. *Sati* means mindfulness. When you continually establish mindfulness, it becomes *sampajañña*. This is the second level of *sati*. The third level is the automatic or always-on *sati*. When you get to this level, you don't have to establish it, because it's ever present. From the time you wake up to the time you go to sleep, you will never be absent-minded and leave your *citta* exposed for the *kilesas* to attack

it. That's why it's called automatic *sati*, or during the time of the Lord Buddha, *mahā-sati*.

Mahā-sati and *mahā-paññā* are inseparable. You'll see this in your practice. As soon as *sati* appears, *paññā* will follow immediately behind. Both of them will be tracking the *saṅkhāra* that thinks and conceptualizes, not to mention the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations that come into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, which are coarser phenomena. The *citta*'s thinking won't be able to slip away from this automatic *sati* that will become aware as soon as the *citta* starts to think. Automatic *paññā* will follow right behind, curbing and restraining it right away, except when the *citta* is investigating for insight and detachment. *Paññā* will let the *citta* continue investigating.

At this stage, whatever appears in the *citta* will immediately disappear. As soon as a thought appears, it will immediately disappear, just like the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations that come into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. You can't eliminate them, all you have to do is to know their true nature and be detached from them. It's the same with the five *khandhas*. Eventually, *sati* and *paññā* will learn the true nature of *saṅkhāra*, which is very subtle, and *saññā*, which is even more subtle. They're extremely subtle because they are mental phenomena or *nāma-dhamma*. As soon as they arise, *sati* and *paññā* will know right away as a result of continual developing of *sati* and investigating with *paññā*, which will gradually become more skilful without any doubt.

This is the path traversed by the Lord Buddha and his noble disciples in freeing themselves from *dukkha*. This was the way they practiced. They never became discouraged or relented in their exertion. Therefore, you, who are a follower the Lord Buddha practicing mental development, and who have taken up the robe and are striving for freedom from *dukkha*, must faithfully follow this path. You must not be discouraged or relent. You must face up to any kind of *dukkha* as you strive to gradually eliminate the *kilesas* from your *citta*.

We are all subjected to *dukkha*, because this is the world of *dukkha*, the world of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. Wherever you are, you can never escape from experiencing the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* of the body or the *citta*. You are not shielded from the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, so how can you not experience *dukkha*? Even when you're not exerting effort in your practice, you'll still have to undergo *dukkha*. So it's better to experience *dukkha* while you're exerting effort than to suffer while you're doing nothing, which doesn't do you any good. As a practitioner of mental development, you must really exert and commit yourself to the practice.

The *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* are in your *citta*. You mustn't think that they are somewhere else. The *dukkha* in your *citta* is much more excruciating than the *dukkha* in your body. What is *samudaya*? It is craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming. Where does it appear? It appears in the *citta*. Its source is in the *citta*. It uses the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind as its tools. It is, therefore, necessary to investigate the physical and mental phenomena that the *citta* is attached to. Find out why the *citta* is obsessed with them. If you're attached to the body, then you must analyze the body until you see clearly its true nature, lose your obsession for it and detach from it. What are the bodies of men and women really like? You have to look at the hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones and the other internal organs, starting from the outside and then going inside. You have to look at the truth.

You must constantly and relentlessly investigate with your *sati* and *paññā* these thirty-two body parts until their true nature is seen. You must not blindly investigate, because this is not the way the Lord Buddha and the sages investigated. After you have seen the body's true nature, your delusion and attachment to the body will be eliminated. What's the use of clinging to them with your delusion? This is the way to investigate. I'm demonstrating this method of investigating the body as an example. You have to adapt it to suit your preference.

You can either investigate your body or someone else's body. This will not be wrong, because it's *magga*, the path to the cessation of *dukkha*. When you're attached to someone else's body, you will love or hate it; this is *samudaya*, the origin of *dukkha*.

The most important part of your practice is the application of your diligent effort. You must not speculate about *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* or about the time and place that you will become enlightened. When the *kilesas* spring into action, they pay no attention to the time and place. They are in your *citta*, where you have to focus your attention. The *kilesas* are like fire that must be extinguished whenever they appear. Don't be concerned with the time and place. Suffering and the origin of suffering are in your *citta*. Suffering is a mental condition while the pain in your body is a physical condition. *Samudaya*, the origin of suffering is a mental condition. It is *kāma-taṇhā*, craving for sensuality, *bhava-taṇhā*, craving for becoming and *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming. Having been born, you don't want to die. How is that possible? This is *vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for not-becoming. These three kinds of cravings are in your *citta*.

Nirodha, the cessation of suffering, is the product of *magga*. This cessation of *dukkha* is a gradual one, corresponding to the strength of the *magga*, the eightfold path consisting of *sati*, *paññā* and the other path factors that will gradually eliminate the *kilesas*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of suffering that is created by the *kilesas*, will gradually appear. When the *magga* becomes stronger, more *kilesas* will be eliminated. You'll see the *kilesas* being eradicated from the *citta* as you do sitting or walking meditation. *Satipaṇṇā* will constantly and relentlessly keep on eliminating the *kilesas*, except when you take a rest, or when you go into *samādhi*. This is the only time when *satipaṇṇā* of this level will not be working. But as soon as you stop resting, *satipaṇṇā* will continue on working, constantly attacking the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* until they're entirely removed from the *citta*.

Therefore, you should diligently keep on developing *satipaṇṇā* to gradually eliminate the *kilesas* from your *citta* until you get to the

point where you'll have to search for them. These are the very subtle *kilesas*. When *satipaṇṇā* becomes very powerful, the *kilesas* will cower and go into hiding. But wherever they hide, they will be discovered by *satipaṇṇā* that is constantly searching for them. Eventually, they will all be destroyed. The *kilesas* are very overwhelming in the beginning stages of practice. Look at all the visual objects and sounds for example. They are all over the world. You're attached to them because you're affected by them. You're affected by the good and the bad sounds, the sounds of praise and criticism. You're also attached to the aromas, flavors and tactile sensations. For this reason, the *kilesas* are said to be all over the universe.

But when you investigate, you'll see that it's the flow of your thoughts that is attached to these sense objects by your mistaken or unfounded opinion or ideas. After you've investigated and seen their true nature, the flow of your thoughts will withdraw into the *citta*. The scope of your investigation that encompasses the entire world will become narrower. It was the *kilesas* that expanded the scope of your investigation. You have to round up the *kilesas* into the five *khandhas*, by letting go of all the sense objects with your *satipaṇṇā*. After you've done this, you won't have to investigate the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations anymore, because you've seen their true nature and let go of your attachment. Why do anymore investigation when you already know what they really are and are no longer attached to them or have any mistaken opinion about them? The one who has attachment and unfounded ideas about them is the *citta*, which has now disengaged from them and let go of them. So what is the use of investigating them anymore?

The investigation will now turn to the body, which is one of the five *khandhas*. You have to investigate to see its true nature. You can investigate any part of the body that you like until you see the three characteristics of *aniccāṃ*, *dukkhāṃ* and *anattā*. You can investigate any one of these three characteristics, because it will be like investigating all three of them, since they are all interrelated. When you have seen

with *paññā* as taught by the Lord Buddha the true nature of any individual part of the body, you will have seen the rest of the body. Then how can you be attached to this body? What is the use of being attached to the bones, skin and flesh? Is it really an animal or a human being? Is it really I or mine? The flesh is just flesh. The bones are just bones. The sinews are just sinews. The skin is just skin. This body will eventually become bloated and decomposed. So how can this rotting and bloating body be you? How can it be I or mine? It will eventually disintegrate into the four elements of earth, water, air and fire. How can it be I? If it's made up of the earth, water, air and fire elements, why do you take it as yourself? You have to investigate until you see it very clearly with your *citta*. The Lord Buddha called this kind of seeing true *paññā*.

It's the same way with pain. To investigate *dukkha-vedanā* or pain, you have to be fearless and daring. Wherever it arises, that's where you have to continuously and mindfully probe. If you have to die, let it happen. This world is a cemetery, a world of birth and death. If you should die whilst sitting in meditation, let it happen! There is no need to have the other monks chant the *Kusalā-dhammā* or wisdom for you, because you are right now developing the *Kusalā-dhammā* yourself. So why bother the other monks to do it for you when you can do it yourself? You must investigate the nature of pain. Don't be afraid. No matter how severe the pain might be, you must not wish it to go away. You must really investigate to see the truth. You have to clearly see the face of pain, see it as it really is. You have to see pain as just pain, because it's nothing more than that. You'll then see the *citta* that is being entangled with this pain.

You must now investigate until you see the *citta* is just the *citta*, pain is just pain and the body is just the body. They're just as they are, separated from one another. When there are no mistaken or unfounded opinions or ideas about the body, the pain and the *citta*, you'll see their true nature. When you see them just as they are, then the *citta* won't be troubled or shaken. No matter how severe the pain might

be, you won't have any qualms, because you've already understood it with *paññā*. You'll see more clearly the nature of feeling as *paññā* moves deeper into the *citta*. Notice, for instance, *sukha-vedanā* or bliss. When the *citta* becomes very subtle, there'll mostly be bliss, which will stand out very distinctly. You must see the true nature of this bliss.

You mustn't think that pain is the only form of suffering, because if you are attached to bliss, this is *samudaya*, the cause of suffering. You have to analyze until seeing this clearly. You probably have never heard before that attachment to bliss is a cause of suffering. The *kilesas* that create this suffering are called *samudaya*. When the *citta* becomes attached to this mental bliss, this is *samudaya*. You have to investigate with your inexhaustible *paññā* to see this clearly. *Paññā* knows this subtle kind of bliss and also knows this subtle kind of dissatisfaction.

The investigation of the four mental phenomena or *nāma-khandhas*—*vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*—can be done with anyone of the four phenomena, because they all have a similar nature. It isn't necessary to investigate all four. But the phenomenon that you're investigating must be live, happening now. When you're investigating *vedanā*, you'll also be investigating *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. After you've repeatedly investigated, you'll be able to detach from them, just like you've detached from the body. You have to investigate all three feelings, good, bad and neutral until you stop clinging to them. You'll then also stop clinging to *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, which perpetually rise and cease. How can you consider them to be a self, a human being or an animal? They're just phenomena that rise and cease in the *citta*. This is seeing with *paññā*.

You have to keep on investigating until the *kilesas* run out of places to hide. When their hiding places, which are the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations, have all been destroyed, they will then hide behind the five *khandhas*. So you have to search for them in the five *khandhas*, and destroy them with the *Tapa-dhamma*, the fire of Dhamma, beginning with the body. When you

have investigated until seeing the body's true nature, you'll realize that its nature is like the sense objects, and see that it's made up of the four elements. How then can you become attached to it, when it's just a phenomenon? When you see this with *paññā*, you'll immediately let go of it.

Saññā, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are just phenomena that continuously appear and disappear. That's the way they are, and they don't know what they are. It's you who incorrectly define them and become attached to them. When *paññā* has investigated until their true nature is clearly seen, you'll let go of them. You'll let go of *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. What you haven't let go of yet is the *citta*. The *kilesas* now only have the *citta* under their control. They can't go outside because all the exits have been blocked. They can no longer exit through the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, because they've been blocked by *paññā*. They can no longer exit through the *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*, by assuming them to be I or mine, because they have also been blocked by *paññā*. The *paññā* of this level is the automatic *paññā*.

When the *kilesas* have no other place to go, they go back to their nest where they rule the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, or the *vaṭṭa-citta* which still revolves around the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. Do you understand? The *kilesa* inside this *vaṭṭa-citta* is *avijjā*. All the rest of the *kilesas* have been neutralized. All their exits have been blocked. All that is left to them is the *citta*, where you'll have to probe. This is where the king of the *kilesas* resides. *Paññā* must now concentrate all of its investigating prowess at the *citta* to reveal the *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* hidden in the *citta*, just like the way it investigated all the other phenomena or *sabhāva-dhammas*. The only difference is that this one is more subtle than all the other *sabhāva-dhammas*.

You must not cling to the *citta*. Should it be destroyed, let it happen. You must now treat the *citta* like a football and kick it very hard. Should the *citta* be crushed by your investigation, let it happen. Don't

cherish it. You must kick it hard. Whatever is *sammati* or conjured into being by the *citta* is *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* and will naturally disappear. The purified *citta* will not be tainted with *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. It will be separated from everything. This *citta* has attained to freedom. It's right here. The *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* are realised right here. You don't realize them at that place or at that time, which is mere speculation and a waste of time. You must now concentrate your investigation right here. The first Noble Truth, *dukkha-sacca* and the second noble truth, *samudaya-sacca* that shroud the *citta* are in the *citta*. The fourth Noble Truth, the *magga*, the tool that eliminates the *dukkha* and *samudaya* is also right here. It consists of *sati*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. *Nirodha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, is the outcome of *magga*. When you've eliminated *samudaya*, *dukkha* will cease. The cessation of *dukkha* is called *nirodha*.

When the time comes for total elimination, you mustn't leave behind any trace of *sammati* or anything conjured into being by the *citta*. If the *citta* should be destroyed because it can't withstand your scrutiny, let it be. But the *citta* won't be destroyed. It is *avijjā* or *sammati* or *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* that will be eliminated. The Lord Buddha said: You have to let go of good and evil. You have to do it right here in the *citta*. It was here where the Lord Buddha became enlightened, terminated rebirth, eliminated the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, and became noble and the world's greatest teacher. It was the same way with all the noble disciples. They became enlightened by following the Dhamma teaching, which is the only thing that the *kilesas* are afraid of.

That's why when you practice, the *kilesas* will always oppose you, resist you and hypnotize you to make you weak. If the *kilesas* are doing this to my students, it will be a cause for concern. There are many of them here and they are increasing every day. I really am worried about their practice. When there are too many students the quality of practice will be diluted. When there are very few, it'll be highly concentrated. You must not relent in your practice. If you want to elimi-

nate the *kilesas* and want freedom and *Nibbāna*, you must always look at the *kilesas* as your enemy. You also have to closely watch your *citta*. If you do this, you won't be disappointed. Your *citta* has always been the right location to do your practice, because the *kilesas* are in your *citta* and are all harmful. Only the Dhamma teaching can neutralize the *kilesas*. Nothing else can, because the *kilesas* are not afraid of anything else. That's why you have to strive in your practice, be vigilant and mindful of the *kilesas* that will resist the Dhamma teaching and terminate your practice.

The Four Requisites

— September 18th, 1979

If you are a genuine Buddhist monk, your goal should be enlightenment. This was true for nine out of ten monks during the Lord Buddha's time. In the Pāli Canon, there are many stories about the enlightened disciples who left their home and their possessions to become monks, because they saw nothing more important than enlightenment. They came from every social status: kings, princes, aristocrats, wealthy men, merchants, commoners, paupers and outcasts. The Lord Buddha didn't care which class his followers came from because he was full of compassion for all beings. It's also true with his enlightened disciples. They weren't conceited or arrogant, which is the nature of the *kilesas*. All the disciples had their hearts set on enlightenment and faithfully followed the Dhamma teaching.

Some of them were kings and princes with lavish lifestyles. Their four requisites of living—food, shelter, clothing and medication—were of the highest quality. When they became monks, they didn't take with them their old lifestyles. This was true with the Lord Buddha and his relatives. All they had were the four requisites of a monk, which relied on the generosity of donors. Sometimes there

were plenty, sometimes very few, sometimes sophisticated and sometimes simple. It was all up to the givers. But they were happy with whatever they received, because they were faithful to the Dhamma teaching, even before they became enlightened. For the commoners and merchants who were used to a hard life, it was no problem for them. Those who were used to living in luxury and easy circumstances and had to abandon them were not deterred by the hardship. They willingly took up the monk's lifestyle. This is what a real monk should be.

When you go to live in the forests and hills, there aren't many amenities you can take with you. You just have to make do with what you can find. I used to wander in the hills and forests myself, so I know what it was like. You get from the donors what they have, what they use and what they eat. There is a huge difference between living in the town and living in the forest regarding the living requisites. So I can imagine what it was like for the Lord Buddha and his disciples, who usually lived in the forest, on a hill, or in a cave, and at least one kilometer away from a village or town. How could they find any comfort from these places? Their hearts, however, were faithfully following the Dhamma before they became enlightened. They were striving for enlightenment with diligent effort and pure motives. This was how they practiced before they could become our refuge, *Sangham saraṇaṃ gacchāmi*.

As a Dhamma practitioner, you should take only the Lord Buddha, his enlightened disciples and the Dhamma teaching as your refuge or role model. If you do, you won't be disappointed. When you're going through a lot of hardship from your practice, you should look to the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples for inspiration. They went through a lot of hardship. They didn't cop out. You have to think like this to make you tough and strong like them. In crossing the *vaṭṭa-samsāra*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, which is a boundless space of *dukkha*, you'll have to go through a lot of adversity, just like the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples did. For the upper

class, their hardships were much more severe than the merchants and the commoners who were used to a life of hardship before becoming monks. It's difficult to adapt to a new lifestyle. But they were not deterred because of their unshakable faith in the Lord Buddha and his teaching. They used the four requisites of living to sustain their lives so that they could diligently practice for enlightenment. Besides the requisites they were only interested in enlightenment.

You should follow their examples because they're your role models. You shouldn't take anybody else as your role model, because nobody is wiser than the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples. You should be prepared to face the hardships that come from fighting the *kilesas*, which have ruled over your *citta* for a very long time. Your *citta* is the *kilesas'* headquarters. How can they not dominate your *citta*? If you don't fight like the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples, how can you win? This world is full of hardships because all inhabitants, animals and humans, have to make a living and are surrounded by all sorts of dangers. The monks in this monastery are abundantly supplied with the requisites of living. There are lots of charitable people in this country who love to support monks who faithfully follow the Dhamma teaching, because it's a way for them to make lots of merit. That's why this monastery never lacks the requisites of living. Why then, can't you follow the Dhamma teaching and develop yourself to the utmost of your ability?

You have to accept the hardships that arise from your practice that will free you from *dukkha*. You have to be strong, resolute and courageous, and totally commit yourself to this noble endeavor. You should always be mindful of your *citta*, which is driven by the *kilesas*. *Avijjā paccaya saṅkhāra* means your thoughts are driven by *avijjā*. Listen to that! *Avijjā* is the major force that drives your thoughts and perceptions through your eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body. *Avijjā* makes you cling to the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations, which cause mental pain and stress, because you are not

mindful of your *citta*. You'll see this very clearly when you're enlightened. I've seen it (and I'm not bragging).

When the going gets tough, you have to be tough and strong. When you become skillful and proficient with your practice, the hardships will diminish. It's only at the beginning stages of practice that it's hard. When you keep on practicing you'll be skillful and competent. You'll be tough and strong, skillful and competent if you develop *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, which will generate the mental power to gradually eradicate the *kilesas* and *āsava*.

You'll see that the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava* are generated in your *citta* and you'll see the way to destroy them. Don't ever think that the *kilesas* are anywhere else but in your *citta*. The real *vaṭṭa-cakka* is the *citta* that ceaselessly revolves around the cycle of birth, ageing, illness, death and rebirth. I have realized this from my investigation with my *sati* and *paññā*. I have no doubt that the cause of birth is *avijjā* that is firmly embedded deep within my *citta* to the extent where it's impossible to differentiate my *citta* from *avijjā*. This is a crucial fact. When you dig into your *citta*, you'll see this principal driver of your ceaseless wandering and its followers that control your eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body, as well as *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*. Everything you do is driven by the *kilesas* that flow out of your *citta* to accumulate *dukkha* for you by your mistaken and unfounded opinions or ideas. These *kilesas* are directed by *avijjā* which is their master.

For this reason, the Lord Buddha had to teach you to be earnest and resolute with your practice of mental development. You have to concentrate all your efforts and mindfulness at your *citta*. Listen! The four *satipaṭṭhāna* or the four establishments of mindfulness is the Dhamma teaching that guarantees and certifies the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, and the complete elimination of the *kilesas*. The four *satipaṭṭhāna* and the four *ariya-sacca* or Four Noble Truths are the crucial teachings. Where are the four *satipaṭṭhāna* and the four *ariya-sacca*? They are in your *citta*. So you have to exert yourself to the

utmost of your ability and win in order to measure up to the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples.

It's the *citta* that thinks endlessly whether you have *sati* or not. This is natural for the *citta* that is under the control of *avijjā*. It is *avijjā* that drives this thinking. The *citta* thinks with craving or *samudaya* 99% of the time if you're not watching it and 100% if you're reckless. What does it think about? It perpetually thinks, becoming obsessed with love, hatred, anger, sadness, happiness, the past and the future. How can it find any peace of mind when it's deluded? Right now you can't comprehend this. That's why you have to develop calm for your *citta*. When it becomes calm, you should investigate with *paññā* the first of the four objects of *satipaṭṭhāna*, which is the body, to clearly see its true nature. What's this body made of?

You have to continually and mindfully probe the body, not casually, occasionally and carelessly, which is the way of the *kilesas* and *samudaya*. This is not the way to investigate the four *satipaṭṭhānas* for the purpose of eliminating the *upādāna* or attachment to the body. If you investigate with mindfulness or *sati*, how can you not see the body's true nature? How did the Lord Buddha get to see his body and the bodies of others? How did he become a *Lokavidū*, one who knows the world? His enlightened disciples are also *Lokavidūs*. But the scope of the Lord Buddha's knowledge is far more extensive and profound. *Lokavidū* means being enlightened to the Four Noble Truths that shake the foundations of the world. Every living being is cursed or blessed with the Four Noble Truths, depending on which parts of the truth it's exposed to. If you develop *sati* and *paññā*, you're exposed to the good truth, because it's the path to the cessation of suffering. If you develop craving and suffering, you're exposed to the bad truths. Craving and stress are inherent in every living being that still revolves around the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, because they are driven by *avijjā*.

It is, therefore, imperative to investigate the body's true nature, starting from the skin, to see clearly both sides of the skin, outside

and inside that are quite different. The Lord Buddha said it is *paṭikkūla* or filthy. The outer part of the skin is dirty with sweat and grime from top to bottom. When the body decomposes, it will be filthier. When it's alive it's wrapped with the skin to make it look attractive. But when you flip the skin inside out, you wouldn't want to look at it, be it the body of a man or a woman. The skin will deceive the eyes of undiscerning people. It's a very thin layer of skin, and yet you're not capable of penetrating it. How can you say that you have *paññā* or wisdom? The Lord Buddha had penetrated it and so had the *sāvaka*s, because they had *paññā*.

You have to look at the truth. Don't deny it by seeing something that's ugly as beautiful, something that's repulsive as attractive, something that's impermanent as permanent, and something that's not I and mine as I and mine. If you're constantly contradicting the Lord Buddha's teaching, it means you can't fight the *kilesas*, because when the *kilesas* tell you to reject the Dhamma teaching you'll promptly oblige. The *kilesas* will always oppose the Dhamma teaching, because they are adversaries. So you must always resist the *kilesas*. When you see, hear, smell, taste, feel or think about something that will give rise to the *kilesas*, you must stop. You have to restrain yourself. You also have to search for the *kilesas* that are hiding inside your *citta*.

If you want to investigate filthiness or *paṭikkūla*, you have to look inside your body. Is there a single part that isn't filthy? There isn't, because the whole body is filthy. It's also *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. Will you still keep clinging to it? The Lord Buddha's teaching is the means of removing your delusion and makes you see the truth. You have to apply this Dhamma teaching in your practice and not allow the *kilesas* to constantly hurt you. The *kilesas* are having a lot of fun, and you are having a lot of *dukkha* because you are under their influence and power. You have to really investigate the body: yours and others'. The body has no awareness. It has the five sense organs—the eyes, ears nose, tongue and body—to receive the five sense data. But these five sense organs are not the *citta*, the one who knows. Only

the practitioner of mental development will realize this truth. You'll see that the body is just a medium. When the *citta* detaches from it, there'll be no sense objects for the *citta* to perceive.

Normally, the *citta* will suffuse over the entire body and thereby shoulder the burden of the body with all the filth inside it, and shoulder the burden of I and mine, because the *citta* is deluded. That's why the Lord Buddha had to teach you to investigate the body in order to see the truth of *paṭikkūla*, *asubha*, *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. The body is always changing. There isn't a single instant when the *ti-lakkhaṇa* or the three characteristics of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* stop working. *Aniccam* or impermanence works around the clock. *Dukkham* constantly oppresses you. *Anattā* is not-self. Is there really I or mine? These truths are staring at you. You have to investigate with *paññā* to see these truths. When you see them, your delusion and attachment to the body will be severed automatically. You'll also see that the visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*.

After you've let go of your attachment to your body, you'll still look after it, but you won't consider it to be I or mine. The *citta* now knows that it's the *citta* and is fully contented. It doesn't need anything to make it happy. *Vedanā* is *vedanā*. The *citta* is the *citta*. *Dukkha*, *sukha* and neutral *vedanā* is merely *vedanā*. They are *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You should listen when you chant *vedanā anicca*, *vedanā anattā*. When it's *sukha*, it's *anattā*. When it's *dukkha*, it's also *anattā*. When it's neutral, it's also *anattā*. Similarly with *aniccam*. What is there to cling to? These phenomena rise and cease, because it's their nature to do so. *Vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are just phenomena. The *citta* is the *citta*. How can the *citta* cling to these phenomena and take them as itself? If it still does, it will unknowingly be like a football kicked around by the *kilesas* to take up birth in the various realms of existence, like a blind person who doesn't know where he's going because he can't see. Wherever he is led, he will follow.

Wherever the *citta* is led by the *kilesas*, it will follow. But it doesn't know where it's going and has to experience a lot of *dukkha*, like the *dukkha* of your body at the time of illness, old age and death. Please don't ever think that your body will bring you true happiness. It'll eventually become a heap on the fire. If there is attachment to your body or *upādāna*, the *dukkha* will be excruciating due to your delusion. So you have to investigate to see the truth of *aniccān*, *asubha* and *paṭikkūla*. You can investigate either your body or someone else's body. Do it repeatedly. At first you look at the pleasant and beautiful aspect of the body to fool the *kilesas*. Then you have to look at it when it decomposes and disappears until you see it vividly in your *citta* and let it go. This attachment to your body is very heavy, heavier than a mountain. How can you say that a mountain is heavy? Have you ever lifted a mountain? Has a mountain ever weighed down on you? It has never burdened you, because it keeps to itself.

But your body is a very heavy burden. The Lord Buddha said: *Bhāra have pañcakkhandhā*—the five *khandhas* are very heavy burdens. The Lord Buddha didn't say that a mountain is a heavy burden, but he did say it of the five *khandhas*. This is where you have to investigate your body and someone else's body. Look at it when it comes into being and when it disappears. How can the *kilesas* consider themselves to be an entity, pleasant and attractive? This perception contradicts the Dhamma teaching. You have to investigate to see the truth. Then you'll be able to eliminate the *kilesas*. The notion of beauty, pleasantness, permanence, I and mine will all vanish. The attachment to the body will disappear and the heavy burden removed from the *citta*, which will then rise up to freedom. This is how you should investigate, earnestly and diligently.

The *magga*, *phala*, and *Nibbāna* are here and now in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are also here and now. They can appear any time. Love, hatred and delusion can appear any time whenever there is an opportunity for them to appear. They are not subjected to time or ritual. In practicing Dhamma, you shouldn't pick the time, consult an astrological

chart, choose the postures of your exertion or perform rituals. You should concentrate your investigation at the place where the *kilesas* appear. What are they thinking about? *Paññā* must find out exactly what's going on. When you've investigated repeatedly, you'll see it clearly. This was how I practiced. I have great concern for all my students because our living together is not certain. We are all *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*, and we are living in a world of *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. So how can we find any certainty? There must always be parting from one another, either while we're still alive or when we pass away.

So while we are still living together, you have to really exert yourself, putting all your efforts into it and get something out of it. Don't let our living together be in vain. There's nothing in this world that can be a greater memorial than the enlightening Dhamma. All you have to do is to get the Dhamma into your *citta* to completely extinguish the fires of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, which drive the *citta* recklessly and uncontrollably. You'll then have completely rid yourself of all burdens and accomplished your most grueling endeavor, which the Lord Buddha proclaimed as *vusitam brahmacariyam*, and your *citta* will have realized absolute freedom. You'll no longer have to seek happiness, be bothered with the past, the future, birth, death or rebirth, because you'll be absolutely contented.

But right now, your *citta* is very hungry, restless, agitated and constantly seeking and grasping due to the influence of the *kilesas*. Can't you see their harm? After you have completely eliminated the *kilesas*, this grasping, restlessness and agitation will all disappear. Then you won't have to waste your time worrying about the past or the future, about birth, death and rebirth, or about happiness and sadness, because you've become enlightened, perfectly contented and you've purified your *citta*. This is the reward of your toilsome undertaking that has come to completion. From this point on, your meditation practice will be for recreation purposes only. Your body can get tired but your

purified *citta* won't. It won't gain or lose, or be afraid of birth or death, because it isn't born and doesn't die.

The Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples practiced walking or sitting meditation for rest and recreation to minimize the burden of the body on the *citta*. They would meditate as they liked. Some could enter into the various levels of mental absorption or *jhāna-samāpattis*, like the Venerable Mahā Kassapa, who could enter into *jhāna-samāpatti* for seven days at a time. He could enter into the deepest absorption called *nirodha-samāpatti* or complete cessation of all mental activities. For those who couldn't do this, they just calmed their *citta*. They meditated not to eliminate the *kilesas*. What *kilesas* are there to be eliminated when all of them have been completely removed? The *citta* is now purified. What is there to purify? This purified *citta* is no longer affected by time and place. It doesn't matter how the body should die, by accident or illness, or if the *citta* has entered into *samādhi* before the body dies or not, because nothing can affect or destroy this purified *citta*.

The reason why the Lord Buddha entered into *jhāna-samāpattis* before his final passing away or *Parinibbāna* was to show his accomplishments as the world's greatest teacher. After his enlightenment, he taught the world with the wisdom and compassion of a great spiritual teacher and made himself a perfect role model. Therefore, before he was to finally pass away, he showed his accomplishments by entering the first, second, third and fourth *jhāna*, which are the *rūpa-jhānas*. He then entered the four *arūpa-jhānas* and *nirodha-samāpatti*, the complete cessation of all mental activities. At that time, some of his enlightened disciples wondered whether he had already passed away. So they asked the Venerable Anuruddha who had the ability to read the minds and thoughts of others. No one could surpass the Venerable Anuruddha in this respect. Some of the enlightened disciples also possessed this ability, but they were not as good as the Venerable Anuruddha who was able to follow the *citta* of the Lord Buddha going through the various stages of *jhāna*.

When the Lord Buddha entered the level of *saññā-vedayita-nirodha*, the complete cessation of all mental activities, the other disciples couldn't tell whether the Lord Buddha had already passed away.

So they asked the Venerable Anuruddha, who was constantly monitoring the Lord Buddha's *citta*. He said, "No, not yet, he's in the level of *saññā-vedayita-nirodha*". The Venerable Anuruddha continued to tell the other disciples the movement of the Lord Buddha's *citta* that went through the various levels of *jhana* and finally passed away between the *rūpa-jhānas* and *arūpa-jhānas*. He didn't pass away in any of the *jhānas*, because he wasn't attached to them. The Venerable Anuruddha then told the others, "He has now passed away and entered *Nibbāna* where nothing more can be said." This is like flying in an aircraft in the sky that is totally empty of any clouds, where it's not possible to tell how fast the plane is actually going if not looking at the speedometer. It seems like the aircraft isn't moving at all.

It's the same with the purified *citta* that's free from all conventional truths or *sammati*. All the *jhānas*, from the first through the eighth and *nirodha-samāpatti*, are *sammati*. The purified *citta* that's completely free from all conventional truths is called *vimutti*. Whilst the *vimutti citta* or purified *citta* of the Lord Buddha entered any level of *jhāna*, it was possible for the Venerable Anuruddha to track. He could tell the other disciples about the *citta* of the Lord Buddha as it entered and exited the various levels of *jhāna*. But when this purified *citta* exited *sammati*, it was like an aircraft flying in empty space with nothing to serve as a point of reference. You can't tell how fast you're going. But if there're some clouds you can. It's the same with the *citta* that passes beyond *sammati*.

You have to investigate thoroughly to see that the five *khandhas* are merely the *citta*'s embodiment or avatar. When the *citta* is detached from this embodiment or avatar, it will be detached from all *sammati*. So it's not possible to describe this *citta* with the language of *sammati*. You can't say that it's here or there. Where does the purified *citta* originate from if not from your *citta* that is currently being shrouded

by the *kilesas*? Where are the *kilesas*? They're in your *citta*. And where are the *magga*, *phala*, *Nibbāna* and purity, if not in your *citta*? This is what you have to purify. You mustn't go after other things, because you'll be wasting your time. Don't speculate but go straight to the truth in your *citta*. Why do you only hear about the other practitioners attaining to freedom from *dukkha* and attaining to *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* at this place or that place? Why can't you attain freedom? They're human beings just like you are.

The Dhamma teaching that they used to eliminate the *kilesas* are the same Dhamma teaching that you're using. Their *kilesas* and your *kilesas* are the same *kilesas*. Why can't you eliminate them? The problem is really in your ability. The Dhamma teaching is not the problem, because it's complete and perfect. It can always eliminate the *kilesas*. The problem is with you, the practitioner, who applies this Dhamma teaching. How do you apply it? Do you apply it with weakness and fear of pain and hardship? If this is the case, you'll not succeed. Even when you're fully armed your enemies can still destroy you if you don't fight them with your weapons. Even when you can memorize all the Dhamma teaching, it'll be useless because the *kilesas* are not afraid. They're only afraid of your practice of *saddhā*, *virīya*, *sati*, *samādhi* and *paññā*. The *kilesas* are always afraid of the Dhamma. They were afraid during the Lord Buddha's time, they are afraid now and they will be afraid in the future. So you have to really commit yourself to the practice. Don't ever relent or give up.

Exposition on the Buddha

— October 13th, 1979

Buddhism was founded by the Lord Buddha, a mentor in spiritual and philosophical topics who was renowned for his profound wisdom and insight. As a prince, he ruled his father's kingdom for 13 years before relinquishing his power to pursue his spiritual goal. For six grueling years he meditated before attaining enlightenment. If his wisdom hadn't been up to the standard of a *Sabbaññū*, one who is all-knowing, he wouldn't have been enlightened and a great spiritual and philosophical teacher.

So while we are still living together, you have to really exert yourself, putting all your efforts into it and get something out of it. Don't let our living together be in vain. There's nothing in this world that can be a greater memorial than the enlightening Dhamma. All you have to do is to get the Dhamma into your *citta* to completely extinguish the fires of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, which drive the *citta* recklessly and uncontrollably. You'll then have completely rid yourself of all burdens and accomplished your most grueling endeavor, which the

Lord Buddha proclaimed as *vusitari brahmacariyam*, and your *citta* will have realized absolute freedom. You'll no longer have to seek happiness, be bothered with the past, the future, birth, death or re-birth, because you'll be absolutely contented.

The *kilesas* are very cunning. In the three realms of existence, nothing can be as clever as the *kilesas*, rulers of these three realms. How did the Lord Buddha manage to vanquish all the *kilesas* from his *citta*? It was through his ability to apply common sense and insight. How else could he have neutralized the *kilesas* and become the world's greatest mentor? How could an ignorant person do it? The intrinsic quality of a Buddha is profound and immeasurable wisdom that is boundless like the sky. The teaching of every Buddha is always complete and perfect in every respect—mental or physical or *sīla*, *samādhi* or *paññā*—and could be easily understood by the monks and the laity.

Although the Lord Buddha's teaching which was successively transmitted down to us might not be as complete and perfect as when the Lord Buddha taught it, it can still serve as an excellent guide. He taught his followers to be rational, especially those who practice mental development such as the *kammaṭṭhāna* monks. That's why I have always emphasized the development of *sati* and *paññā* as well as being thorough, observant, judicious, contemplative and rational to keep you from practicing incorrectly. This is the way to develop wisdom as taught by the Lord Buddha. Although you won't be as wise as the Lord Buddha, at least you'll be his wise, faithful student.

I love to listen to the results attained from practice of my students. Some have been here for quite some time. I have consistently taught them and have never neglected this responsibility. I consider teaching the monks and novices more important than teaching the laity because the monks are better prepared for the practice than the laity since they aren't encumbered by the laity's livelihood. The monks' principal task is walking or sitting meditation. It's something they have to do themselves. There are plenty of lay Buddhist devotees who admire monks who practice faithfully and are always ready to sup-

port and provide them with the four requisites of living. You're well aware of this fact. So what are you lacking other than exerting yourself in the practice for the *magga* and *phala*? You're not lacking in the four requisites of living. What you lack is exertion and the results from your practice beginning with calm and culminating in enlightenment. So how are you going to resolve this issue other than putting in your effort? If you don't, you'll never achieve any result.

No other vocation is more suited for enlightenment than a monk's vocation. But how can you expect to become enlightened when you merely toy with your practice and your chores. Whatever you do, you must never forget the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. You must always keep them close to your heart, recalling how the Lord Buddha and his disciples practiced and achieved their goals, to keep you from falling into evil ways and be boosted with diligence and energy. The Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples demonstrated how hard and earnest they practiced. Were they ever involved with mundane matters? Their worldly experiences were similar to yours. But when they turned their hearts towards enlightenment, they were really earnest and resolute to the end. They were totally committed to their practice. Their corresponding results were also total. Means and ends are inseparable. The reason why you haven't come across any results is because you haven't applied yourself. You only have yourself to blame.

I'm teaching you with the utmost of my ability and have never hidden anything from you. When it's time to reveal my practices and accomplishments, I do it fully. I make clear every aspect of Dhamma that I know, not holding anything back from you. Why can't you apply them in your quest for enlightenment? One who has gone forth is a fighter who doesn't flinch or retreat. Where are the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*? I have told you many times before not to speculate about the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* being in this place or that place, at this time or that time, in the sky or on the ground, because they are all *sammati*, or conventional reality. Everything that surrounds you, the five

khandhas and the entire world, is *sammati*. The *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna* are not in these places, but are in the Four Noble Truths.

The First Noble Truth is *dukkha*, that of the body and the *citta*. The Lord Buddha called *dukkha* a noble truth because it's absolute. The Second Noble Truth is *samudaya*, the origin of *dukkha*, which are the *kilesas* and created by the *citta*. This origin of *dukkha* is comprised of three kinds of cravings: craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming. Craving for sensuality means not being satisfied with visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors and tactile sensations that you experience from birth. This is the most troublesome *kilesa*. The more you glut yourself with food and sleep, the more you'll increase and strengthen your sex drive.

You have to identify *dukkha*. Where is *dukkha* now? It's in your body and *citta*. What generates *samudaya*? It's *sañkhāra* (thought-formations) and *saññā* (act of memory or recognition), as well as the objects of the five physical senses and the feelings and emotions in the *citta* that are created by your attachment to past experiences that consume you with burning desires. This is the way of amassing the *kilesas* and *dukkha*. This is the work of *samudaya* that the Lord Buddha exhorted you to relinquish. He said you have to identify *dukkha* and abandon *samudaya*. How do you let go of *samudaya* if not by the *magga*, the path of practice leading to the elimination of *dukkha*? What comprises the *magga*? It's principally comprised of *sati* and *paññā*, the most vital components that will enable you to completely let go of *samudaya*.

Regarding your craving for sensuality, you have to identify the objects of your desires. Why are you obsessed with this man or that woman. Are they really men or women? Are they worth cherishing? *Paññā* has to analyze and reveal their true nature before you can let go of your attachment. Regarding *dukkha*, you have to identify it, for example, *dukkha-vedanā* or painful feeling which arises from sitting for a long time or from illness. There is a cause for this *dukkha* to appear. You have to look for the cause of this *dukkha*. Where does it come from? Who says it's *dukkha* and bears this *dukkha*? Who rounds up the

dukkha of the body into the *citta* to afflict the *citta* with two layers of *dukkha*? Who can this culprit be if not *saññā*, memory or recognition, the master of *samudaya*? The Lord Buddha said you must study the nature of *saññā* to see that it's just a mental phenomenon.

The body is a physical phenomenon. *Vedanā*, feelings—good, bad or neutral; *saññā*, act of memory or recognition; *saṅkhāra*, thought-formations; and *viññāṇa*, sense awareness: all are mental phenomena. *Viññāṇa* will appear when the sense objects come into contact with the sense organs. When there is no contact, *viññāṇa* will disappear. These four mental phenomena originate from the *citta* while the body is the *citta*'s avatar. The *citta* is tenaciously attached to the body by the powerful *samudaya* and delusion that mistakenly view the combination of the four elements of earth, water, air and fire as one and inseparable. If you don't apply *sati* and *paññā* to reveal their true nature, you won't be able to separate the body from the *citta*.

It's similar with physical pain. When you say physical pain is hurting you, you'll also create mental pain, because you're not using *sati* and *paññā* to see it as it is. How can you say that you're relinquishing *samudaya*? You have to apply *sati* and *paññā* to separate the physical pain from the mental pain and study the true nature of pain. When pain appears, does it ever say I'm painful? Does it know it's painful? No, it doesn't! It's just a phenomenon that appears and will eventually disappear. That's all there is to it. It doesn't say it's painful or explain why it appears and disappears. It's the *citta* that says it's painful and as a result produces another layer of pain, namely mental pain.

For this reason, the Lord Buddha had to teach you to study the nature of mental pain with *paññā*. What causes mental pain to appear? It's *samudaya* that's formed by the *citta*'s unfounded opinion of the nature of pain. When the *citta* thinks that the physical pain is hurting it, it will also produce mental pain, because it will want the physical pain to disappear. The more it wants the physical pain to disappear, the more will be the mental pain. The way to eliminate this mental pain is not to have any desire for the physical pain to disappear. No

matter how intense the physical pain may be, you have to calmly and unflinchingly study the nature of this mental pain.

When you have let go of your desire for the physical pain to disappear, the mental pain will disappear. Sometimes the physical pain will also disappear. If it doesn't disappear, like during illness, it won't disturb the *citta*, because the *citta* has eliminated its mistaken opinion of the physical pain. This is the way of understanding the nature of pain through the Four Noble Truths, and of realizing that it's the *citta's* erroneous opinion of the nature of pain that's to blame. Who will have to bear the consequences of this mistaken opinion if not the *citta*? And it's in the *citta* where you'll have to study the Four Noble Truths.

I have already told you that the components of *magga* are *sati* and *paññā*. It's only *magga* that can remove *samudaya*. As soon as *samudaya* is eliminated, *dukkha* will disappear. There is no need to talk about *nirodha*, which is the disappearance of *dukkha*, because *nirodha* is the outcome of *magga*. *Nirodha* will gradually appear as *magga* gradually removes *samudaya*. When *samudaya* is completely eliminated, complete *nirodha* will appear. This is the ultimate *nirodha*, because *magga* is now the ultimate *magga*, and *satipaññā*, the ultimate *satipaññā*. *Nirodha* is now complete and perfect. The Four Noble Truths—*dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*—will each be undeniably true. When pain appears in your body, you'll accept that your body is the home of pain. If you can live in this body, why can't pain? But there'll be no *dukkha* and *samudaya* in your *citta* because they've been completely eliminated by *magga*.

What am I talking about? I'm talking about the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*, and about the Four Noble Truths. Do you have the Four Noble Truths? You're constantly being bombarded with *dukkha*, both of the body and of the *citta*. Why can't you see this *dukkha*? You can't make stew out of *sati* and *paññā*, but you can apply them in your contemplation. It's only *sati* and *paññā* that can eliminate the *kilesas*. You must always use *sati* to supervise your practice. This is vital for your

enlightenment. After your enlightenment, you'll never be shaken by anything. What you know, you'll confidently tell others like the Lord Buddha who after his enlightenment boldly propagated his complete and perfect Dhamma teaching to the world, the Dhamma that was previously unknown to others. He was a true sage who would fearlessly teach the timeless truth, the Dhamma that's still alive and well today. If the Dhamma isn't timeless, it would have disappeared a long time ago. What is this Dhamma? It's the Four Noble Truths: *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*.

Dukkha disappears because *samudaya* ceases. *Samudaya* is comprised of craving for sensuality, craving for becoming and craving for not-becoming—*kāma taṇhā*, *bhava taṇhā* and *vibhava taṇhā*. You have to relinquish your cravings with *magga*. When you see that your cravings produce your *dukkha* you'll relinquish them. What is *magga*? It is *silā*, *samādhi* and *paññā*.

Right views and right thoughts are the components of *paññā*. Right speech, a component of *silā*, is to talk about getting rid of the *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, and *āsava*, not talking politics or mundane matters. There are ten topics that conform to right speech and are called *sallekha-dhammas* or purifying talks. They are the following:

Appicchataṅkathā—wanting little.

Santosa—being contented with whatever is given.

Asaṃsaggakathā—not socializing or interacting with others.

Vivekathā—delighting in seclusion.

Viriyārambhakathā—practicing diligently.

Silā—being morally and ethically pure.

Samādhi—mental calm and stability.

Paññā—contemplating on the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self that will eventually lead to enlightenment.

Vimutti—freedom from suffering.

Vimutti nāṇadassana—realizing *vimutti*.

These are the ten topics of the *sallekha-dhammas*. If you want to talk, you should talk about these topics because they're uplifting and entertaining.

Right action is another component of *silā*. Walking and sitting meditating to eliminate the *kilesas* are right actions. There are other actions that seem to be right, like building temples, but if monks take them up they can unknowingly promote the growth of the *kilesas* and destroy the Dhamma in their hearts—if they have any. If they don't have any Dhamma, then these tasks will totally ravage their hearts and are not right actions for meditators.

There are four kinds of right exertion:

The exertion to prevent evil from arising. What is evil? It's the *kilesa*-driven actions that produce suffering.

The exertion to eliminate evil that has already appeared.

The exertion to do good and virtuous actions.

The exertion to maintain and nurture good and virtuous actions that you already have.

Right mindfulness is the establishing of mindfulness at the body, feelings, *citta* and Dhamma.

Right *samādhi* is making the *citta* calm and stable. Wrong *samādhi* is to have visions of heaven or hell and mistake them for the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. These are the components of *magga*, the weapon for the total destruction of the *kilesas*.

It's normal for the *citta* to accumulate the *kilesas*, because it's still under the spell of the king of the *kilesas*, which is *avijjā* that continually instigates *saṅkhāra* to think about the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*. *Avijjā* will never let *saṅkhāra* think about Dhamma. Only you can. In the beginning stages of practice, it's necessary to push *saṅkhāra* to think about Dhamma or *magga*. *Saṅkhāra* that thinks about *samudaya* is for the amassing of the *kilesas*. *Saṅkhāra* that thinks about Dhamma and eliminates the *kilesas* and *āsava* is *magga* and is in your *citta*.

So why don't you ever come up with any results from your practice? When are you going to get serious with your practice instead of being weak and lazy? How are you going to become enlightened if you're weak, lazy, foolish and incompetent? Are these the qualities for attaining *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*? If they are, all living beings would have already attained *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. There wouldn't be any need for them to strive with diligent effort, endurance and perseverance. But in truth, your exertion is your only weapon that will destroy the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āsava*, and achieve the freedom from *dukkha*.

Therefore, you must really put in your effort. Don't be complacent. The practice community is getting smaller with every passing day. Don't blame me for not warning you. The number of enlightened teachers who truly know the way are steadily decreasing. Some day you'll be like a loose kite in the sky with nothing to hold it from being blown away by the wind. You should now accumulate as much Dhamma whilst you still can, because those who can truly teach Dhamma are nearly extinct and you can actually count them. There are not many role model monks left for you to follow and those that are left are getting older with each passing day. If you don't accumulate the Dhamma now when it's conducive and favorable, when will you do it?

You're studying with your teacher now because you can't practice on your own. After you've learned how to practice, you should at least accomplish *samādhi*. Then you'll have to investigate with *paññā*, which is very extensive and profound. It's not possible to explain *paññā* to make every listener understand at the same time. But it's possible to explain to each individual practitioner who has specific questions arising from his investigation, because there are specific issues to be resolved. It's rather difficult to explain *paññā* in general terms.

The Four Noble Truths

October 19th, 1979 —

The words of the Lord Buddha are not ordinary because they originated from a brilliant and profound mind. If they had not been so, how could they destroy the *kilesas* of countless sentient beings, free them from *dukkha* and enlighten them right in his presence? In fact, his transcendent teaching is indispensable and vital for the removal of the *kilesas* and instantaneous enlightenment. Such is the power of experiential truth. Memory has no such power. Not a single *kilesa* can be eliminated by memory.

For example, you can recite *Nibbāna* is the supreme happiness, *Nibbāna* is the supreme emptiness, but it can't get you to *Nibbāna*. Talking about *Nibbāna* doesn't get you to *Nibbāna*. But practicing mental development will. When you do, you can distinguish truth from falsehood. The *citta* of a person who memorizes the scriptures is still tainted with the *kilesas*. The Dhamma realized in the *citta* from practice is the real Dhamma. *Sati* and *paññā* appear in the *citta*. Ignorance and the *kilesas* also appear in the *citta*. It's in the *citta* where you destroy the *kilesas* and realize freedom from *dukkha*, nowhere else.

As a practitioner, you should always watch your *citta* if you want to remove the *kilesas* with the Dhamma teaching. You should investigate everything that the *citta* is involved with. Find out why it has to get involved with these things and identify the trouble and pain that follow with *sati* and *paññā*. You can't run away from the Four Noble Truths. The Lord Buddha said *dukkha* is a reality although no one in the world has any desire for it. Why did he say *dukkha* and the origin of *dukkha* are noble truths? Because they are real. If you don't remove the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava* with *magga*, you'll never eliminate *dukkha*.

It is, therefore, necessary to develop *magga*, which is also a noble truth, so that *nirodha* (the cessation of *dukkha*) can appear. *Nirodha*—the cessation of *dukkha* is also a noble truth. These Four Noble Truths are in the *citta*. The *citta* is the container for the *kilesas*, *taṇhā* and *āśava*, the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth, and every form of *dukkha* and enlightenment. Wisdom originates in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are neutralized in the *citta*. Freedom from *dukkha* is realized in the *citta*. The transcendental and blissful experience occurs in the *citta*. Having attained enlightenment, the *citta* can either be called Dhamma or the purified *citta*. The term *citta* is used whilst it's still in possession of the five *khandhas*, because they are *sammāti* (conventional reality) and the purified *citta* has to abide with the norms of *sammāti* despite being an absolute reality. After the *citta* has realized absolute reality, it doesn't matter what it is called.

The problem is with the *kilesas* which are extremely tenacious. No other task is more grueling than the elimination of the *kilesas* that are deeply embedded in the *citta*. The *kilesas* are as infinite as the *citta* is infinite, as deep as the *citta* is deep, and they are capable of dragging the *citta* to wander endlessly in the various realms of existences. If you had to display the existences and *dukkha* that you've gone through, it would fill the whole world. If everyone had to display his or her *kilesas*, *taṇhā*, *āśava*, *dukkha* and existences, there wouldn't be enough room to show them. To eliminate the *kilesas*, you mustn't do

it lightly. If you aren't earnest with your practice, you'll never become enlightened.

When you've earnestly developed *magga*, the weapon that will destroy the *kilesas*, to full maturity, you'll see the true nature of the *kilesas*, which are *magga's* opponents, and eliminate them with an earth-shattering bang like the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples did. What they achieved still rings true today. Their illustrious achievements are celebrated by Buddhists of all nationalities. How could they be so highly esteemed if they were not enlightened? You have to have faith in them before the absolute truth can materialize.

The task of neutralizing the *kilesas* is an arduous one. I can confidently attest to this fact. It's a lot more difficult to discipline human beings than to train animals, because human beings are more sophisticated than animals. Correspondingly, the development of human beings takes more effort than animals. It requires a lot more effort, forbearance and know-how. Disciplining and developing human beings is the most difficult task. Who are these human beings? I'm referring to the Lord Buddha who strived in disciplining himself until he passed out. Is this difficult or not? I have also read from the scriptures how hard it was for the enlightened disciples to discipline themselves also.

When I say how hard it is to train human beings, I mean you. You're responsible for training yourself to become good and virtuous, by removing all evils, which are the products of the *kilesas*, from your hearts. This task is very arduous and requires a lot of effort. Otherwise you won't be able to come up with any results. You have to fight the *kilesas* blow for blow and must not be afraid of death, which follows you like your shadow. When the time comes, everybody, good or bad, still possessed with the *kilesas* or not, will have to die. Once you've acquired a body, you've also acquired death. Before you die, you should achieve the task of training yourself, completely eliminate the *kilesas*, and realize the supreme happiness. As long as the *kilesas* are still embedded in your *citta*, there won't be any supreme happi-

ness. Though you might look happy, you're just putting up a front, because you're still full of greed, hatred and delusion. This kind of happiness is not your goal. Your goal is the supreme happiness of enlightenment that can only be realized through strenuous exertion.

You should take the Lord Buddha as your role model. When you're discouraged, you should recollect the Lord Buddha's virtues. If the discouragement still remains you should recollect the Dhamma's and the Sangha's virtues; then your discouragement will disappear. This is the way to muster up your courage. The Lord Buddha is the victor. When you think of him you'll become courageous. You should always look at the way he practiced.

The *citta* can't freely do what it pleases because it's under the *kilesas*'s controls, like a prisoner who is always watched by guards. It's also true of the activities of *saññā* and *saṅkhāra* which are always supervised by the *kilesas*. The *citta* is like a buffalo held on a leash whilst left grazing in the pasture. We're all completely ignorant of the *kilesas*' harmfulness. As a result, the *kilesas* are having a great time amassing their power and influence over the hearts of all sentient beings. None of these beings can escape from their grip except those who take up the Dhamma teaching with strenuous exertion, which is the only way for them to be free. You must, therefore, strive for the total elimination of the *kilesas*. After the *kilesas* have been completely eliminated by *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya*, the—such as thoughts and perceptions—will all be free from the *kilesas*' influences and become the Dhamma's assistants in propagating the Lord Buddha's teaching to others. The Lord Buddha, after having attained enlightenment, used the *khandhas* to teach the Dhamma to the world for forty-five years.

How happy will you be after you're freed from the prison of the *vaṭṭa-citta*, which is the *citta* that is still under the *kilesas*' influences and controls, and the prison of the *vaṭṭa-cakka*, which is the endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth? The *vaṭṭa-cakka* and the *vaṭṭa-citta* have now been destroyed by the middle way of practice, the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*. You can now see very clearly that the *kilesas*, regardless of

how many there were, were the master puppeteers that supervised every activity of the *khandhas*. The one who had to reap the *khandhas'* actions driven by the *kilesas* was the *citta*, which was like a toilet bowl for the filth of greed, hatred, delusion, lust and suffering. When all of this filth has been removed, you'll see clearly that there is nothing left to oppress the *citta*. Throughout the day and night, you can freely see, hear, taste, smell, touch and think about anything without having any love or hatred for them. Previously, you were driven by the *kilesas* to think endlessly, aimlessly and emotionally. Now you think rationally, purposely and without any stress. This is the result of training human beings.

You have to earnestly exert yourself, even if it's difficult. The Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples all seriously exerted themselves and are now your role models. You're the Lord Buddha's follower and a frontline soldier, how can you be weak and relent in your exertion? As a *bhikkhu* or Buddhist monk you're a frontline soldier. Furthermore, you're a *kammaṭṭhāna bhikkhu* who is intent in the practice for the realization of the Four Noble Truths. If you're weak and discouraged, you're not following the Dhamma teaching. Therefore, you must be earnest and resolute. Don't ever dismiss from your mind that the training of human beings is extremely hard. This is a very vital point to remember.

Every type of *kilesa*, from the coarse to the intermediate to the subtle ones, are all harmful like fire. Be it the fire itself or the sparks from the fire, they are all hot and only differ in their intensity. All of them are detrimental. It's best to extinguish all of them. Then it will be *natthi santi param sukkaṃ*—no happiness can be greater than the happiness of the absolute peace which follows the total extinction of the *kilesas* that the practitioner of mental development will come to possess. There is no need to ask anybody for confirmation regarding this attainment. It doesn't matter how long ago the Lord Buddha passed away. I speak with the greatest respect for the Lord Buddha, not out of contempt. For whom did the Lord Buddha teach *sandiṭṭhiko*—

Dhamma is self-evident? For whom did he teach *paccattari veditabbo viññūhi*—Dhamma realised here and now by the wise? For whom did he teach the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā Tathāgatena abhisambuddhā*—the Middle Way, if not for all of us practitioners?

To neutralize the *kilesas*, you have to do it right here in your *citta*. How can you not know when the *kilesas* gradually disappear and happiness subsequently appears? The virtue of *sandiṭṭhiko*, or being self-evident, isn't solely preserved for the Lord Buddha and his enlightened disciples because it's the result from following the Middle Way, the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*. When you earnestly practice, you'll experience this result right in your *citta* and you'll be totally rid of all doubts.

I'm very concerned for my students. I'm getting older with each passing day. Eventually, I'll have to lay down my teaching responsibility. Taking care of my body will eventually take up all my strength and energy. I'll have to let go of everything else like Tan Ajaan Khao who can only watch his breath until it expires. But crucially his *citta* is never weakened. To him, his body is just a puppet he plays with. *Barā have pañcakkhandha*—the five *khandhas* are very heavy burdens. You play with them until they expire. After you're separated from them, you'll be free from all responsibilities, worries and anxieties. The numbers of enlightened teachers are steadily decreasing and close to extinction. Now is the time to really concentrate on your exertion.

You must never see anything in the entire world to be more valuable and greater than enlightenment. If there were, the *citta* would definitely not let it go. It would not abandon its wrong views, love, hatred and anger that are relished by everybody. We all like anger and love though we know they hurt. According to the Dhamma teaching, there's nothing better than a heart freed of love and anger. When you realize this fact, you'll relinquish everything and develop mental calm because the happiness derived from mental calm is far superior to all other happiness. The calmer your mind becomes, the more bliss-

ful you will be, the more you will be able to relinquish and eventually let go of everything.

You'll relinquish visible objects, sounds, aromas, flavors, tactile sensations and the five *khandhas*—*rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa*—because they aren't satisfactory. All that is left for you to let go of is the *citta*. What makes you love it and remain attached to it? Who is this perpetrator? You'll keep on investigating until you find it and let it go. You'll then have relinquished everything. This sounds rather easy. But looking back at the way I had to exert myself, it wasn't that easy because I had to wager my life for it. When you have fulfilled all the prerequisites, you'll definitely become enlightened. So you have to be resolute and earnest with your practice.

Don't ever make any trouble here. From the time this monastery was established, there has never been such an incident. There has never been any quarrel amongst the monks, because everyone respects the Dhamma, thus making it easy for everyone to live in harmony. You're here to eliminate the *kilesas*. So you mustn't let the *kilesas* incite you to make any trouble because it's really shameful. As a practicing monk, you must never think you're better than others, because this is morally wrong. When you act like you're better than others, you're just showing your dark side for others to see. If you're really good, you don't have to show off, because it will be obvious. If you're good and don't flaunt it, you're really good.

As a Dhamma practitioner, you have to be rational, not emotional. If you want to be good but don't have any goodness in you, you can't be good. You're not good simply because you want to be. And when you try to impress others with how good you are, your actions will be futile, shameful and vulgar. This is the work of the *kilesas* that you're supposed to eliminate. How can you allow them to incite you to quarrel with other monks like dogs do? Monks are not dogs, and this monastery is not a doghouse. When monks quarrel, it's like dogs fighting and the worst thing that can happen to a monastery. Here, I'm merely illustrating a point. It doesn't mean that the monks here

quarrel. I'm merely pointing out the differences between good and bad, benefit and damage.

You're here to develop moral excellence. So you have to be always mindful of your actions. When you're mad at someone, you have to remind yourself that this is the work of the *kilesas* that you must neutralize, not nurture. The more you think about the object of your displeasure, the more you will nourish the *kilesas* and your delusion. Instead, you must look at your *citta* which is being consumed by the fire of anger that you must extinguish before spreading out to burn others. As a practitioner, you must always *opanayiko*—look at your *citta*.

The Importance of Correct Behavior

November 7th, 1979 —

Some practitioners are confused and lost because they don't faithfully follow the Dhamma teaching. If they did, how could Buddhism ever decline? The problem is with the Buddhist followers who don't strictly follow the Dhamma teaching, but not with the teaching because the teaching is always complete and perfect. It is, therefore, imperative for monks living in a monastery to be always mindful of their actions. They must not allow the *kilesas* to direct their conduct so as to create friction amongst themselves that will at least cause resentment, and at worst, division or a schism. When you have resentment, it'll be difficult for you to meditate. This is crucial. It'll be good for you if you strictly adhere to the Dhamma teaching that will prevent the *kilesas* from directing your selfish behavior. Why can't you do it when it's so simple?

You and the other monks are grown-ups and are good friends, you should be able to settle your differences amicably. When a monk talks or acts improperly, he should be grateful when the other monks admonish him. This is *pavāraṇā*, to gratefully accept criticism. The monks will do this *pavāraṇā* every year on the last day of *vassā*, the

rains retreat. Each monk will say to the assembly of monks *sangham bhante pavāremi*, I gratefully submit myself to your criticism. Monks should, therefore, admonish other monks when they misbehave. But if monks aren't sincere about letting other monks criticize them, it will be useless and pretentious. An insincere monk is not a real monk, whose only aim is enlightenment, who will not instigate any trouble. The world, however, is usually full of clashes, clashes for happiness, money and power. Occasionally, these conflicts grow to catastrophic proportions. But monks are not affected by these clashes because they are constantly eliminating the cause of these clashes.

When you have to eliminate the cause of your suffering, it's usually hard. The hardship that arises from restraining and removing the *kilesas* is an unavoidable by-product that you have to experience in your quest for freedom from suffering. But this hardship is not for promoting the *kilesas* that create more suffering; it's for boosting the Dhamma that generates more happiness. The Lord Buddha undoubtedly serves as an excellent example in this regard. Had he not faced up to the pain of the body and the mind, he wouldn't have become enlightened and a great spiritual mentor. It's the same with all the enlightened disciples who also had to confront hardship in their quest for enlightenment. They never relented or quit. They all had to experience hardship right from the beginning.

There isn't much opposition in other tasks. But in the task of eliminating the *kilesas*, there are lots of *kilesas* opposing you, sometimes to the point where you can't put up with them and unknowingly fall for their tricks that'll put you to sleep. This occurs in many practitioners. For this reason, you have to constantly be on your guard. Mindfulness or *sati* is indispensable and when you're continually mindful, *sati* becomes *sampajañña*. It's hard when you have to force yourself to be mindful. But you have to constantly watch your mind and pull it inside. When you're not watching, your mind will go outside and will harm and burn you.

The *kilesas* are never relenting or lazy. It's normal for a practitioner to sometimes feel weak or strong especially during the beginning stages. But the *kilesas* are never weak—not until the time when your *sati*, *paññā*, *saddhā* and *virīya* are fully developed. Then the *kilesas*' opposition will diminish because they will become weakened by the power of Dhamma that will attack and completely destroy them. Then there will be no *kilesas* left to turn the *citta* against the Dhamma. I would really love to see you become enlightened after all the efforts I've put in teaching you. I have never kept any Dhamma secrets from you but have always been ready to explain any Dhamma that will benefit you because I want you to become enlightened. But you have to be resolute, wise, tough and strict with yourself.

As soon as you have realized mental calm, you'll immediately see the value of your practice. The happiness from this mental calm is far superior to all other happiness. After you have realized mental calm, you'll discover your true worth and the harm of your restlessness. You'll be enthusiastic to practice harder. These were the results of my practice.

There are two types of mental calm. The first type which most practitioners experience is mild and gradual. The second type which few practitioners experience is sudden and dramatic, like suddenly falling into a deep well or an abyss and then starting to experience psychic events, such as heavens and hells. This second type needs the supervision of an experienced teacher. But the first type can be practiced safely without any supervision.

When the *citta* enters into calm, it should be left alone until it exits from calm before it'll be ready for the work of investigation. The elimination of the *kilesas* must be done with *paññā*, not *samādhi*. *Samādhi* only rounds up the *kilesas* inside and subdues them but doesn't destroy them. When *samādhi* weakens, the *kilesas* will become active and aggressive again. Your emotions can also diminish your *samādhi*. When you investigate with *paññā*, the *kilesas* will gradually decrease. This is the proper way of practice that will eliminate delays caused by

your addiction to *samādhi*. In investigation with *paññā*, you should use the methods that suit you, on any object and within the framework of the Four Noble Truths. After you've understood the nature of that object, you'll also understand the nature of other similar objects.

You should also concentrate your investigation on the body, using it to lock up your *citta* by making the skin like a prison wall. You should force your mind to take a tour of the body, such as the flesh, sinews, bones, liver, kidneys, intestines, stomach, newly eaten food and digested food, going from top to bottom. If you investigate *paṭikkūla*, filth and *asubha*, loathsomeness, you'll see impurity and unattractiveness. If you investigate the four elements, you'll see that every body part is composed of the four elements. They're not I or mine. The body is not attractive as the *kilesas* lead you to believe. The *kilesas* are deceptive. Whatever they tell you is not true. Is there any part of your body that is really beautiful? There is none, but the *kilesas* keep telling you that there is, which contradicts the Dhamma teaching, which is true. As a result, they make you suffer.

You have to force the *citta* to investigate the various parts of the body, because they're the truth, in terms of *asubha*, elements, or *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā*. You can investigate whatever aspect you like. When you investigate *asubha*, it'll lead you to the elements as well. You can also investigate any one of the *ti-lakkhaṇa*, be it *aniccam*, *dukkham* or *anattā*, or you can investigate all three of them as they are all inter-related. This is investigation with *paññā*. You should also compare your own body parts with other people's body parts to see that they are all the same. How then can your *citta* become deluded or obsessed? Your *citta* will gradually become calmer. Your unfounded perception of beauty will gradually decrease. After repeated investigation with *paññā*, you'll eventually gain insight, dispel your delusion and sever your attachment to the body.

After having investigated with *paññā* for some time, your *citta* can become tired, similar to performing a physical task. It's then time to take a rest in *samādhi*. You should solely focus your attention on

your meditation object to draw the *citta* into calm. After your *citta* has rested and re-strengthened, it will exit from calm and resume investigating. When you investigate, you shouldn't speculate on the outcome but let it happen naturally. You should devise your own investigating methods based on what you've heard from your teacher. This is the way of developing wisdom. The investigation with *paññā* will only cease after all the *kilesas* are eliminated. When your *sati* and *paññā* have reached the level of *mahā-sati* and *mahā-paññā*, you'll no longer have to force *paññā* to investigate but you'll have to restrain it from investigating when it goes overboard and becomes exhausted. The *citta* can get tired like the body if it doesn't take a rest. But the *citta* at this stage is happier investigating than taking a rest. So you have to force it to take a rest. The way to rest the *citta* is to enter into *samādhi* or calm, which is the correct thing to do, because it's relaxing and soothing.

I'd really love to hear my students telling me about the results of their practice. Who will become enlightened? Who will do the investigation? Who will destroy the *kilesas*? Where are the *kilesas*? What are the methods used to eliminate the *kilesas*? These are the things that you have to see clearly from your practice, which is a lot better than hearing from your teacher. Don't pay any attention to the affairs of the world and *samsāra*. They are the *kilesas*' creations that have for a long time afflicted you with immeasurable pain and suffering. You shouldn't have any doubt about this by thinking that you'll be good, happy and at ease by letting the *kilesas* drag you around or by believing the *kilesas*.

You should always look up to the Lord Buddha, who also used to be the *kilesas*' storehouse like the rest of us. He had already experienced the suffering created by the *kilesas*. If he could have been enlightened with the *kilesas*, he wouldn't have had to practice mental development. He would have remained a prince. You should take the Lord Buddha as your role model. You shouldn't doubt the *kilesas*' ability to hurt you; be it greed, hatred, delusion or lust, they're hurt-

ing you all the time except when you fall asleep. When you wake up, the *kilesas* also wake up and start to hurt you with your eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and thoughts. This happens to every unenlightened person without any exception. As long as the *citta* is not purified, you'll never be free from suffering.

The *kilesas'* activities occur at the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and *citta*. So you have to make the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and *citta* activate the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. By practising mental development, you're changing the creator from the *kilesas* to the Dhamma, investigating with *paññā* whatever you see or hear. The result from this investigation is happiness. The result from the *kilesas'* action is suffering. The *kilesas* pay no attention to time, race, class or colour of people. They will always crush and ruin them. You have to change this by replacing the *kilesas* with the Dhamma. When you see, hear, smell, taste and touch, let *satipaññā* supervise you. When you think, let *satipaññā* direct you to think rationally.

If this is hard to do, so be it. Don't be deterred by hardship because it will hinder your progress, weaken and discourage you, which is just the *kilesas'* way of deceiving you. Dhamma never makes you weak. If you follow the Dhamma, you have to be rational. The *kilesas* are never rational because they despise logic. They love desire and craving which are their heart and soul. So how can you be ignorant of human nature after you've understood the *kilesas'* nature? The hearts of all people are similar. All human beings are created by the *kilesas* and their own good and bad *kamma*. Consequently *dukkha* is unavoidable. How can this human body avoid being the home of *dukkha*? Your house is not the home of *dukkha*, but your body is. It's an aggregate of *dukkha*.

Khandha means aggregate. Every *khandha* or aggregate is *dukkha*. *Rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* are all *dukkham*, *aniccam* and *anattā*. So how can these five *khandhas* not be aggregates of *dukkha*? The *citta* is also the home of *dukkha*. If you don't apply *satipaññā* to eliminate this *kilesa*-induced *dukkha*, the *citta* will always be the home

of *dukkha*, will never be free from *dukkha*, and will never be purified. If this is the case, what are you waiting for? How can you remain weak, lazy and inactive? You should fight the *kilesas* to the last breath. You should die fighting. If you don't die fighting, you'll surely reach the shore of freedom, the shore of *Nibbāna*, like a true follower of the Lord Buddha who is not obsessed with this world of cemeteries, births and deaths.

As long as you're under the shadow of birth, ageing, sickness and death, you'll never find contentment. Speculation and theory is not the truth, but realizing *aniccam*, *dukkham* and *anattā* is. When you've reached this level, your doubt in your practice will disappear and your diligence will increase. You'll enjoy practicing and fighting the *kilesas* for your freedom from *dukkha* without any concern for your well-being. When your *citta* becomes strengthened by your investigation with *paññā*, it will be very powerful. No power in this world can be greater than the *citta's* and *paññā's* combined. You must, therefore, develop *paññā*. Don't be weak or heedless and never neglect your practice. Be always mindful. Don't crave food but eat with moderation, just enough to sustain your body and support your practice. You have to be thorough and meticulous with your investigation, leaving no stone unturned, because it's the only way to become enlightened. The development of *paññā* requires careful contemplation, investigation and analysis in order to beat the *kilesas*, which are extremely clever and versatile, and to experience the enlightened bliss that was discovered by the Lord Buddha, whose sole purpose was to share it with all living beings.

As followers of the Lord Buddha, you have to keep practicing, having the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, as your guide, not the *kilesas* that are constantly hurting you. Don't be lazy. If you put in a lot of effort you'll be skilful like a boxer who has to do a lot of training before going into the ring and becoming a champ. It is likewise with the *citta*. When you practice a lot of *samādhi*, you'll be skilful with *samādhi* and become a *samādhi* expert. It's the same with

paññā. You'll practice relentlessly when you're completely certain of the *magga*, *phala* and *Nibbāna*. The *citta's* strength will become formidable and you'll practice very hard without having any mercy for yourself. During the time of my intense training, my body was very fit for this kind of exertion. It was also in its prime sexually, so I had to fast in order to curb it and to keep the practice going smoothly.

When I fasted, my practice went on smoothly, efficiently and easily. My *citta* was totally committed to the practice and paid no attention to my body. It wasn't concerned how grueling the practice might be. All it wanted was to achieve results. My dogged determination generated an intense diligent effort. My aspiration was the main driving force; the stronger my ambition, the stronger was my exertion. This will undoubtedly be obvious to every practitioner. I couldn't remain still because I was very eager and hopeful. I couldn't help but put in an all-out effort. Today, I can't do that kind of exertion anymore. My body is a lot weaker now and needs assistance to keep it from falling over, and my *citta* no longer has that kind of determination. I no longer have any aspiration for the *magga*, *phala*, *Nibbāna* and the desire to become an *arahant* any more. They have all unquestionably disappeared. So what is there to aspire for? Why do I have to practice when there're no goals for me to aim for? If I had to do that kind of exertion today, I wouldn't be able to do it. I would die before I got started.

After my *citta* had reached the ultimate goal, it stopped exerting right away. My *satipaññā*, which had been working around the clock like a Dhamma Wheel, stopped immediately, like shutting down a machine or a factory. I had finished my task and became an entirely different person. As soon as *mahā-sati* and *mahā-paññā* came to an abrupt halt, they disappeared, because there was nothing for them to destroy. Thereafter, I still practiced meditation, casually not seriously, when I felt like meditating for mental and physical relaxation. This was how I came to see the immeasurable benefits of the Dhamma that had fully taken control of my *citta*. At the same time I also saw the

harm done by the *kilesas* that used to dominate my *citta*, tyrannizing and hurting it for countless eons.

What, then, is there to be doubtful about? All the visual objects, sounds, aromas, flavors, and tactile sensations have existed since time immemorial. It's you who imagine and fantasize about them. When you see or hear something, it's your *citta* that imagines or forms opinions about them, fooling you by telling you that they're good or bad, pretty or ugly when they themselves don't even know it. Your *citta* is deluded by believing the *kilesas*. You don't know the danger posed by your imagination. Only *satipaññā* knows this and is capable of beating the *kilesas*. As soon as the *kilesas* start to form opinions, *satipaññā* will know it right away. So how can the *kilesas* ever deceive you when you always know of their deceptions?

For instance, when you think of a tiger. As soon as you think about it, it will disappear. You'll know right away that this tiger is the product of *saṅkhāra* or thought formation. Or when you think that a woman is pretty, you'll know immediately that it's you who thinks. The woman doesn't say anything about herself. She is just a visual object formed by the four elements of earth, water, wind and fire. It's you who form the opinion that she is pretty. As soon as this opinion is formed, *satipaññā* will know immediately, and the opinion will disappear right away. This notion of beauty or ugliness is the product of *saṅkhāra* which deceives you. This is where you'll see the deception of the *kilesas*, not out there, but here inside your mind. This is the way of realizing insight by knowing that you're fooled by the *kilesas* which use *saṅkhāra* to do it.

You have to keep on investigating until you've destroyed all the *kilesas* and experienced true peace and true happiness. Then the years, the months, the hours, the minutes, and all the conventional realities or *sammatti* will not affect you anymore because you have let go. Previously it was the *kilesas* that dragged you to cling to them. But after all the *kilesas* have been destroyed, the *citta* becomes entirely Dhamma. The question as to where the Dhamma is will disappear.

Where are you going to look for the Dhamma, when you have found and experienced the Dhamma in yourself? What is the Dhamma? You already know this. How can you ever be deluded again? After you've found the real thing, why would you follow its tracks? The tracks will lead you to the real thing you're looking for, like following the foot tracks of an ox. After you've found the ox, you don't have to follow the tracks anymore. When you've acquired the genuine Dhamma, your endeavor comes to an end. After following the tracks of truth until reaching the real truth, the tracking is over.

As a practitioner, you have to be resolute and earnest. When your train of thought becomes worldly and pierces your *citta* like an arrow, you must immediately take out the arrow by stopping your worldly thoughts, no matter how intense your desire to think might be. You have to understand that this is your enemy mounting an offensive. You must suppress these thoughts. Don't cherish them. Then it will be possible for you to stop them. You have to subdue them with *satipaṇṇā*, which will not only curb them, but will also search for them, round them up, and destroy them. This is the way to take care of yourself and free yourself from harm and danger. You've already experienced lots of births and deaths and should be completely chastised by them and should have learned your lessons by now. When you are born, you'll also die. When you take up birth, you'll also take up *dukkha*.

The Lord Buddha said, *Dukkham natthi ajjha tassa*—*dukkha* doesn't befall one who doesn't take up birth. *Saṅkhāra* not only causes you to take up birth, but it also causes you to experience *dukkha* by creating craving. For this reason, *dukkham natthi ajjha tassa* also means *dukkha* doesn't befall one who doesn't crave. *Tesam vupasamo sukho*—the extinction of *saṅkhāra*-created craving is supreme bliss. This *saṅkhāra*-created craving is now destroyed by the Dhamma Wheel, which is the Middle Way of practice, the *Majjhimā Paṭipadā*.

Investigating Avijjā

December 5th, 1966 —

Ven. Ajaan Mahā Boowa gave this desanā in response to an enquiry made by an Elder Bhikkhu concerning the citta and avijjā. This is what he said:

As long as one still doesn't know, one will then always go wide of the mark, for even while one is doing the investigation, one doesn't know that one is investigating *avijjā*. One can only guess and wonder to oneself as to what this thing really is. To oneself, it is still a perplexing question. One, therefore, focuses the *citta* with undivided attention to investigate in order to find out what exactly is happening right at that point. One will then eventually hit at the right spot, although one might not know what one has run into.

This is because the name of *avijjā*, and the true and genuine *avijjā*, are two different things. The flow of *avijjā* that spreads throughout the whole world is merely its branches. It is like when we go and chase after a band of bandits—when we catch the bandits, they usually turn out to be the followers. We are totally in the dark as to the whereabouts of the leader of the bandits. We must keep up our pur-

suit and keep on arresting these bandits. Then we must surround them. When we have many people helping and cooperating with us in chasing these bandits, then we will have mustered up an enormous strength. We must then surround their hideout. Then we must keep on catching and arresting them. Normally, if we question any of these followers, they will not tell us who their commander is. So whichever bandits we come across, we must arrest them and tie them up until all of them are caught and accounted for. The last of the bandits that we have captured will be the leader. The chief will be found in a very important hiding place which is well secured and protected, and guarded by the members of the band. We will keep on arresting the bandits until we arrive at the cave where the chief is hiding. When we have totally eliminated all the bandits hiding in that place, then we will know clearly.

But this is just a simile. So long as the *citta* is still involved with anything, then it is still deluded. Whether it is delusion in the way of good or evil, it is a branch of *avijjā*. But the *citta* doesn't know what the real *avijjā* itself really is. Therefore, all the techniques of investigation have a purpose which will be illustrated by the following simile. It is like emptying the water from a pond so that we can catch the fish in it. When there is plenty of water in the pond, we will not be able to make out how many fish there are, so we must first bail out the water. When the pond becomes steadily drier, then the fish will steadily converge together. All the fish will have to swim to where the water is, while at the same time the water is being continually bailed out. All the fish will steadily come together. As the water level decreases, one will get to see the fish swimming here and there. In the end, when all the water vanishes, then the fish will have no place to hide, and then one will be able to catch them.

The sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches, that intermingle and mix with the conditions of the *citta*, are like the water that covers up the fish and which the fish depend on as their living environment. The purpose of our investigation into these things is similar to the

man who is bailing out the water; his objective is not the water, but the fish themselves. The objective of our investigation is not these objects either. We just want to get to know about these things steadily, because as soon as we get to know about them, then the *citta* will lose its anxiety and worry. The *citta* will get to know about those things that it is involved with, and it will also get to know itself, the one which is involved with these things, and it will know that it is in the wrong. It will know that it is its own misperceptions that cause it to be obsessed with loving and hating these things. Then the scope of the investigation will become narrower and narrower as it steadily draws inwards.

This is similar to the water that steadily dries up. When one investigates the body, which is an element aggregate of earth, water, air and heat, one will see that it is similar to all of the other external material things. There is no difference between them. This is the aspect of materiality. They are all made up of the four elements. What is abnormal or unnatural is the perception of the *citta* that has preconceptions about these things. It is a branch of *avijjā* that leads towards the principal part. The more one investigates and sees clearly the things that come into involvement with oneself, the more clearly will one see the one who goes out to be involved with them. It is likewise with the water level. The more it decreases, the more clearly will one come to see the fish. The more one can see clearly from the investigation into the natural processes—both those outside and inside the body—and one's *cetasika-dhamma*, the mental concomitants, then the more one will see clearly the point or origin, or the principal determinant that gives rise to these things. The more we keep driving inwards, the more restricted will be the field of knowing inside the *citta*. Correspondingly, the anxiety of the heart will become less and less. The scope of the flow of the heart that is being sent outwards will become narrower. Whenever it stirs itself up to become involved with other things, it will investigate those things that it is involved with, as well as investigating its stirring up.

In this way, it gets to see both aspects of things. One gets to see the truth of both sides—that is, the things that come into involvement, and the one who becomes involved with them. One then keeps on progressively driving inwards. Once having got to the real *avijjā*, for most practitioners who do not have a teacher to forewarn them, they will take it as the real thing, since they have investigated everything else, and know clearly within their heart that they have truly realized the truth of all these things, and have truly let go of all of them. But the one who knows all of these things—what is it? One now becomes possessive and protective of this thing. This is the convergence of *avijjā*, and one now becomes deluded with it. This *avijjā* is the delusion of oneself. Concerning the delusion for the external things, this is just a branch of *avijjā*. It is not the real *avijjā* itself. This is what one becomes deluded with. One is now deluded with the one who knows about all of these things. But who is this one? What is it? This is what one has forgotten to investigate and analyze. Once the *citta* has been restricted into a very close and small sphere, it will gather into a point. This nucleus of the *citta* that appears at that time is very bright and luminous. It is rapturous, joyful, bold and courageous. It seems that all of the happiness has gathered into that point.

What are all of these things the results of? If we want to speak in terms of cause and effects, then this is a result. We can say that this is the result of our *paṭipadā*—our mode of practice. This is correct as long as we are not deluded in it. But if we are deluded, then this is *samudaya*. This is the core, or the heart, of *samudaya*. But for the practitioner who is interested in investigating everything that comes into contact with him, he will then inevitably be drawn towards this point, because everything else that one has investigated and realized the nature of, will no longer attract one's attention. And whenever one turns the *citta* to investigate these things, the *citta* will take no interest in them, for it is already satiated with these investigations. But the thing that can attract its attention will draw its interest towards it. It will now become interested at that point. All the mental conditions arise from this point. The concoctions of the *citta* arise from this

point. The *sukha* that arises appears at that point, but the *sukha* that appears also exhibits its changes. It then becomes a cause of one's investigation, because at this level one is extremely watchful. This *sukha* is not constant. The *avijjā*-contrived *sukha* is not stable. Sometimes it manifests its changeability by becoming slightly dull enough to indicate that it is fluctuating. And this is how it keeps on changing. This process of change is as subtle as the subtlety of the Dhamma of this level.

This is the point which can cause one to become complacent. This is the point where an intent and indefatigable practitioner can become complacent if he doesn't have anyone to forewarn him and exhort him about this. However, in spite of this complacency, if he still keeps up his interest and scrutiny, he will still be able to know, for this is the only place which can attract the heart. It is the cause of the attraction and the cause of one's satisfaction in doing the investigation, and of the gratification in that experience. Such is the way it was with my investigation. It can really bewilder one, to the extent where one cannot make out what *avijjā* really is. One then ends up with the understanding that it is this thing, which is all the time brilliant and luminous, that will be *Nibbāna*. When I say all the time, I refer to all the time of one who is constantly exerting, and one who is continually doing the work of purification. One is extremely protective and possessive, not allowing anything to touch or impinge upon it. One is extremely vigilant and mindful. As soon as anything comes into contact with it, one will immediately try to remedy it. But the thing that one is being possessive of—one doesn't know what it is. This protectiveness and possessiveness is a burden to the *citta*, but during that time one doesn't know this.

It is not until the time is ripe that one becomes interested in doing the investigation at this point. One now raises the question: "What is this thing? I have investigated everything else, but what is this thing?" The *citta* then begins to concentrate at this point, while *paññā* is also being directed and focused right at it. What really is this thing? Is this

the truth, or not yet the truth? Is this *vijjā* or *avijjā*? All of these are the perplexing questions that arise out of one's investigation. One then keeps on with the investigation with the following approach: Why is there protectiveness and possessiveness? If it is really the truth, why is there the need for protectiveness or care? Taking care of it is also a burden and a responsibility. If this is the case, then this thing must be one form of harm to one who still has protectiveness and care or a thing that one should not put one's trust upon although one still doesn't know what this thing is—whether it is the real *avijjā* or not—since one has never experienced or seen the difference between the true genuine *vijjā* and *avijjā*, or in other words, between *vimutti* and *sammati*.

This is how *paññā* can arise. That is, one has now become interested at that point. One then investigates at that point. Looking in retrospect at what I have investigated, this thing is really quite involved and unusual. But what I have said here is brief, precise, and right to the point, and enough to bring the point across in as much as it is appropriate to do so. This can be summarized as follows: Whatever manifests itself, that is what one must investigate. Whatever appears, it all has to do with *sammati*. This refers to the subtle Dhamma that appears within the heart. Finally, the point that is very bright and luminous is precisely the spot of *avijjā*. One must concentrate right there with *paññā*. This particular nature is also one form of a natural process, similar to all of the other *sabhāva-dhammas* everywhere. One cannot take it as 'I' or 'mine', but one's possessiveness and protectiveness indicates that one is taking it as 'I' and 'mine'. Consequently, it means that one is going on the wrong path. This is how *paññā* keeps probing and moving in. What is this thing? It is like looking back at oneself. When one looks outside, one can see the earth, the sky and everything else that comes within the field of one's vision. But when one doesn't look at oneself, one will not be able to see oneself.

The *paññā* of this level is the *paññā* that turns around to look at the termination point or the end. When *paññā* contemplates and in-

vestigates, it does so in the same way that it did with all the other things—that is, not for the purpose of holding on to them. This is the investigation to see according to the truth of these things that appear as they are. When this particular thing ceases, it doesn't go out like all the other things. As far as the cessation of all the other things is concerned, they happen at the time when one can feel within oneself that one has now understood them. That is the way that it is with these things. But it is not so with this particular thing. This thing just dissolves suddenly. It is similar to a lightening flash. It happens just at one instant. Or it can be said that it just turns over and then vanishes. It is only after the disappearance of this thing that one realizes that this thing was *avijjā*. This is because once this thing has disappeared, then there is nothing left behind. There is nothing to appear as *sammati* anymore. What remains is not like the other things—it is the nature that is purified. Even though one has never come across it before, once it appears, one does not have any doubt. This is when the burden is totally shed off.

It was this thing that was taken as 'I'—this was when it was still unbroken. Whatever one investigated, it was for this thing. As far as "knowing" was concerned, it was this 'I' that knew. Brightness—it was this 'I' that was bright. Being light, it was this 'I' that was light. Being happy, it was this 'I' that was happy. This 'I' refers specifically to this thing. This is the real *avijjā*. Everything was done for this thing. Once this thing has dissolved, there is nothing to strive for anymore. Finished!

This can be compared to a pot whose bottom has fallen out. No matter how much water is poured into it, none can be retained. Everything that is concocted up following the natural way of the *khandhas* can still be created, but there is nothing to retain them. This is because that particular container or vessel has already been dissolved away, leaving nothing behind. As soon as they are concocted up, they will immediately cease, pass away and disappear, for there is nothing to retain them and there is no one to possess them. The

nature that knows that there is no longer a possessor is fully contented within itself. This is the nature that is completely satiated. It has got rid of all responsibility and care. This is the state of contentment, or the absolute state. It was this *avijjā* that concealed this nature, and which prevented one from seeing the natural wonder of the *citta*, which is the true and natural thing. Instead, one took and saw this *avijjā* as a natural and wonderful thing. One, therefore, becomes obsessed, protective and possessive of this *avijjā*, and has the understanding that this thing is 'I' and 'mine', by thinking that "My *citta* is bright and luminous; my *citta* is bold and courageous; my *citta* is happy; my *citta* knows everything."

But this nature doesn't know itself. The Lord Buddha called this the genuine *avijjā*, but as soon as one turns around and realizes this, then this thing just dissolves away. As soon as one knows it, then this thing cannot remain standing. It will then disintegrate. As soon as this thing fades away, it is like opening the cover of a pot and being able to see all the things contained within it. It was only this thing that covered everything up. The ultimate truth, which is apart from the Four Noble Truths: *dukkha*, *samudaya*, *nirodha* and *magga*, is the state of purity. It is the truth that is distinct from the Four Noble Truths.

Among these Four Noble Truths, two of them bind, and two of them unbind. What do they unbind or bind? They bind this pure *citta* by enshrouding it. To unbind means to reveal it, by removing the veil of concealment, so that one can see the true and natural state of purity. For the truth of it has always been so. But the two truths of *dukkha* and *samudaya* cover up like the cover of a pot, covering the pot so that it is not possible to see the things contained within it. The *magga*, which is one's mode of practice, reveals or exposes. *Magga* and *nirodha* uncover it, so that one can see what is contained within the pot, seeing clearly what they are. Even though the state of purity has always existed, it is blotted out by *dukkha* and *samudaya*. But on the other hand, *magga* and *nirodha* are on the correction side, and they will expose it. That which they reveal is this state of purity. It is this

state of purity that *dukkha* and *samudaya* conceal. Once it is exposed, then that is the end of the problem.

These two truths are phenomena—they are *sammati*. The *magga* is *sammati*. *Nirodha* is *sammati*. Once having manifested themselves, they then pass away. *Dukkha* and *samudaya* are also *sammati*. Once the two *sammatis* have overcome and corrected the other two *sammatis*, then that nature becomes an absolute or unconditioned nature, which is called *vimutti*, and this is what is revealed. This is the unveiling of *vimutti*, the natural state of purity. This is where the burden is shed off. That is the end of it. Once one has attained to the state of purity, one no longer conceives up the illusion of self. But externally, all the external *loka-dhammas*, the external worldly things, still remain as they are. The internal *loka-dhammas*, which refers to the good and evil and the *dukkha* and *sukha* within oneself, ceases to be a problem when this point finally dissolves away. One who has investigated up to this level will find that the scope of his work is not wide. Once he has learned the way of tackling it from a teacher who has known, experienced, and passed beyond it, he will be able to progress on very quickly. But the crucial point is that he must not engage in speculating or imagining about it, as this is not the way. Instead he should investigate whatever appears within the field of his awareness, and get to understand them, going on like this step by step; this is the correct way to do it.

Avijjā refers specifically to this thing. This is the genuine *avijjā*. All the other things are just its branches and divisions. It is like vines and creepers that grow in one place but can spread anywhere. They can extend very far and wide. As soon as one takes hold of them, and traces them back to the root, they will then lead one back to this one point. This is where the main stem is, and where the root is. Once the root has been pulled out, then they will all wither away. The branches and divisions of *avijjā* are involved numerous and expansive. So when one has got to the real *avijjā*, one doesn't know what it is. But one keeps on investigating. One has *paññā*, so one keeps on investigating. Even though one doesn't know that this thing is *avijjā*, if one still keeps on

investigating, then this is the correct way of doing it. Consequently, it will be revealed. It is like when one is eating. The state of fulfillment will steadily appear so that one can see it very clearly. What I have related to you here is a summary of *avijjā*.

Avijjā is the origin of birth, the origin of *kamma* and the origin of the *vaṭṭa cakka*, the cycle of birth, death and rebirth. The *citta* under the control of *avijjā* perpetually builds up births and existences right within itself. It is the nature of this *citta* not to remain still, but to be constantly creating births and existences. It goes in pursuit and accumulates things for itself. Usually it collects things to push itself down morally. To destroy the wheel of *kamma* is to exterminate *avijjā*. Once it is obliterated, there will be no rebirth.

All the external things that one used to be involved with will still come into contact, but they just come and go, and do not get in to take up roots and residence right within this point anymore. They merely pass by, come and go. One can also see with absolute clarity that this nature does not continue on with anything. One has seen previously, step by step, how this nature used to carry on with things. Once this nature no longer goes on with anything, one then knows. So concerning birth and existences, as to whether one will be born again or not, it will not be necessary for one to speculate about it, because one's present state has clearly indicated to one. Once it no longer continues on or goes on building up any more lives or existences, then there is no birth or life to follow in the future, since the generating source has been destroyed. It will no longer build up itself, nor erect any cause for itself, like it used to do in the past.

This is the demolition of the generating source. This is when the *khandhas* become entirely *khandhas*. The *khandhas* are now entirely pure, having nothing to do with the *kilesas*. When that particular *citta* is without any *kilesas*, then these *khandhas* are also free of the *kilesas*. They are now just instruments. But if the heart is tainted by the *kilesas*, then correspondingly, all the *khandhas* will be equally defiled. *Rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāṇa* will then become the

factors that will enhance and strengthen the *kilesas* within the heart. If the *citta* is pure, then the *khandhas* are also pure. Nothing is defiled by the *kilesas*. But as long as the *citta* is still tainted with the *kilesas*, then the *khandhas* will always be defiled. That is the way it is.

The ceaseless building up of lives and existences is the way of the *citta*. It cannot remain still. Such is the nature of the *citta* that is still possessed by the revolving wheel as the prime mover. It will still have to turn round continually, because all of its turning around is solely geared towards lives and existences. But once that nature has disintegrated, then there is no longer a builder. One then knows that one will not take up birth anymore. It was the same way when the Lord Buddha made his utterance. One knows right within the present, that there is nothing to build itself up anymore. Good is one kind of virtue and it does not intermix. One also knows that evil is another thing, while this one, which is the *citta*, is also another different thing. They are not connected.

This separation is not forced, but is something that happens naturally. But when they merge together, then one does not force this either. There are causes that bring them together. When these causes disappear, then they consequently dissociate by themselves. From my own experience and investigation, there was a particular instant when this thing came to cease. It happened at a single moment. It was a time that one had never thought of before. It was an instant that attracted one's attention. At the time when *avijjā* ceased, it happened in a single moment. It was as if it had turned itself over into another world—that is, if one uses the world as a simile. It turned into a new world by suddenly turning itself over. It just suddenly flipped over. *Avijjā* then ceased at that moment. It was not foreseen or anticipated that it would turn over—it just happened of itself. This is the subtle aspect.

In following the Buddhist path of practice; for the purpose of freeing oneself from *dukkha*, there are two tricky points. During the time when the attachment, the *upādāna*, between the body and the *citta*, is

being cut off, and they are going their separate ways, there is a twist to it. There's another trap is at this point. These are the two places that a practitioner can misperceive. Apart from these, there should not be any doubt. It is only at these two places.

I used to spend time developing my practice at Wat Doi Dhammachedi, of Ven. Ajaan Kong Mar. It was there where I was puzzled by the question of *avijjā*. During that time the *citta* was so bright that I was amazed and awe-struck by it. All the radiance, luster splendor, and marvel, had all gathered within it. I was lost in the wonder of the magnificence of the *citta*. Looking at my body, I could not see it at all. Everything that I looked at seemed to have turned into the space element. Everything was all empty. The *citta* was at its brightest. While I was lost in amazement and awe, I was actually lost in delusion unknowingly. Speaking in terms of the subtle Dhamma, this is one form of delusion. But fortunately, while I was admiring the magnificence of the *citta* and murmuring to myself how fantastic this *citta* had become, the Dhamma unexpectedly arose within me. It was as if someone was talking to me inside.

This is what it said: “Wherever there is a centre or nucleus of the one who knows, that is where the source of birth is.” That nature actually has a focus. There actually is a nucleus of this knowing and brightness. But then I was not considering what this point was, so I was really puzzled. Then I concentrated in contemplation and meditated on this question. It was in hind-sight—after I had turned my investigation to this point, and had finally solved this problem—that I realized the implication of this guidance that had foretold that wherever the spot or nucleus is, that is where the source of birth is. Indeed, it referred to this very nucleus. Before, I could not comprehend this. It was, in fact, a spot. No matter how wonderful it is, it is still the nucleus of that wonder. It is a spot that is readily discernable. But once that nucleus disintegrates, then there is no longer a spot, because this spot is also *sammati*. Regardless of its subtlety, it is still *sammati*. This is what I call the true and genuine *avijjā*.

Whenever I exhorted my fellow *bhikkhus*, I always told them that when they have got to this point, they must not be protective of anything. They must not cherish, but they must investigate. Even if the *citta* should be completely destroyed from by the investigation, then let it happen. Let's get to see what will be the thing that will realize and experience the state of purity. Should everything be totally annihilated, without anything to experience this state of purity, let's find that out. But just don't hold on to anything.

This is for the purpose of preventing the monks from becoming protective of this thing. If this drastic measure is not applied, then they will unavoidably become attached to it. All that is needed is just to get to know. If anything should cease, then let it cease. Even if the *citta* should cease due to the power of the investigation, then let it be. Don't cherish it. This is what one has to commit oneself to while doing this investigation. But nothing can escape from the truth. Whatever arises must cease. Whatever is real and in its natural state, will not cease. That is, this pure *citta* will not cease. Everything else ceases, but the one who knows these cessations does not cease. The one who knows that all of these things have ceased does not cease. That is just the way it is.

Now if one wants to say that one has withheld this, one can. Or if one wants to say that one hasn't retained this, how can one assert this when one knows within oneself? But one must not be possessive, for if one should cling, then it is similar to holding on to *avijjā*, because *avijjā* is subtle and it is inside the *citta*. If one cherishes the *citta*, it is similar to clinging on to *avijjā*. So if the *citta* should be exterminated along with *avijjā*, let it be. One should go right ahead and cut them down. Don't leave anything behind. Wipe them all out, for this is the most fitting way to do it. If there is any hesitance, one will definitely be attached to it. This refers to the practice at this stage. One must not waver, but must wholly commit one's effort into revealing and uncovering it all. Whatever should cease, let them cease. This is the right and proper approach to it. The part that does not cease will not

cease under any circumstances. Regardless of what one may assert, it will not cease.

Consider the following example: When a bandit has taken refuge in a house, if we want to save the house, then that will allow the bandit to shoot at us. But if it is deemed necessary to burn down this house, then we must do it. If we want to save the house and consequently allow the bandit to go on living, then it will cause more damage to things that are much more valuable than the house. So we have to sacrifice this house and set fire to it. In like manner we should set fire to *avijjā*. Should the *citta* cease, then let it cease. But in fact the *citta* does not cease. But one only gets to know this after *avijjā* has been totally burned down. One now realizes that this precious state of purity has been covered up by *avijjā*. Once *avijjā* has ceased, then this state of purity is revealed. Instead of disappearing with *avijjā*, this state of purity does not vanish. But if one becomes possessive of *avijjā*, then one will become attached to it and will not make it through.

From what I have investigated, that is the way it is. All of the *sāvakas* who had seen the truth of the Lord Buddha had all accepted the Lord Buddha. They accepted him on the basis of the principle of truth, and not based on appearances or concepts. Their acceptance was based on the living truth that they had similarly experienced, just like the way that the Lord Buddha had experienced before them. It is an acceptance that has never faded away. Whether one is near or far away from the Lord Buddha, this will never diminish, as the truth is identical. Even the fact that the Lord Buddha had passed into *Parinibbāna* over 2,500 years ago, is not in conflict with this truth, since that has to do with *sammati*, with the time and place, or with the element aggregate.

But the truth principle itself is unchanging. That state of purity always remains to be the state of purity, both during the time when one is still alive, and when one has finally passed away into *Nibbāna*. This is the absolute truth. One who has known the principle of truth will believe in the principle of truth. The important point is that one should not hold anything back. When it is the time to exterminate,

one must get rid of all of them. Don't cherish anything. One must investigate so that one gets to know everything. Whatever appears, one must take that appearance as the object of one's investigation. If nothing becomes manifest, then one doesn't know what to investigate. When good arises, one must be aware of it. Evil, *sukha* and *dukkha*, all arise within the heart, and nowhere else. One must keep track of them and know them all, because all of these things arise and cease. They are the things that deceive and cause one to be deluded. There is nothing else but these things—the things that arise and cease. They fool one and make one become deluded. Apart from these things, there is nothing else that deceives. But we take it as I and Self. The *citta* has a thousand-and-one faces. It can really manifest as 'I' and self. Even without using any device, it can easily deceive us. It does this right in our presence. This is the way we deceive ourselves. Other people might fool us some of the time, but we fool ourselves all of the time. This is really sad.

Once one has corrected one's own deception, then all the harm is eliminated. Then there will be nothing to fool oneself anymore. Everything is true. All the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches, will not deceive one anymore. It was only oneself who threw dust into one's eyes. Before, when one saw things, one began to imagine that they were such and such, and thus began the process of forming pictures and images. One used one's own *ārammaṇa* to deceive oneself, while the object had already disappeared into the blue. Like when one had seen something or witnessed some event which subsequently passed away and disappeared: the mental images that were drawn within the *citta* did not vanish. This was the thing that deceived oneself, constantly fooling one. Stepping on a branch and thinking that it's a snake, one then jumps into the air. Checking it and seeing that it was not a snake, one then loses one's apprehension. But if one was still uncertain, one would jump again. Having examined it and realized that it was a piece of wood, one would then have overcome one's doubt.

It is likewise with one's practice when one has investigated, and known what it is, one then loses, one's doubt. When one knows within oneself that such and such is so and so, one then will have got rid of one's uncertainty. If one doesn't know what these things are, one will hang in suspense. The alarm and anxiety of the *citta* is boundless—it can only be curbed by the Dhamma. Nothing else in this whole world can do it. It is therefore good to be inclined to meditate and contemplate—one will inevitably find a way out. Even if one is blocked by a mountain, one will still be able to make it through. It can be achieved by the power of investigation. When one keeps on probing and examining, one will eventually come across the solution to the problem. Having comprehended the cause and effect relationship, one will then see through the riddle. In the beginning stages, these puzzles will be gradually solved. Finally, at the climax, when *avijjā* is uprooted once and for all, this will happen all in one instant.

Glossary

This glossary covers many of the Pāli words and technical terms used in this book.

abhidhamma: (1) In the discourses of the Pāli canon, this term simply means ‘higher Dhamma’, and a systematic attempt to define the Buddha’s teachings and understand their interrelationships. (2) A later collection of analytical treatises based on lists of categories drawn from the teachings in the discourses, added to the Canon several centuries after the Buddha’s life.

abhiññaa: Intuitive powers that come from the practice of concentration: the ability to display psychic powers, clairvoyance, clairaudience, the ability to know the thoughts of others, recollection of past lifetimes, and the knowledge that does away with mental effluents.

Ajaan: Teacher; mentor; Pāli, *ācariya*.

akālika: Timeless; unconditioned by time or season.

anāgāmi: Non-returner. A person who has abandoned the five lower fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth, and who after death will appear in one of the *Brahma* worlds called the Pure Abodes, there to attain *Nibbāna*, never again to return to this world.

ānāpānasati: Mindfulness of breathing. A meditation practice in which one maintains one's attention and mindfulness on the sensations of breathing.

anattā: Not-self; ownerless.

anicca: Inconstant; unsteady; impermanent.

anupādisesa-nibbāna: *Nibbāna* with no fuel remaining (the analogy is to an extinguished fire whose embers are cold); the *Nibbāna* of the *arahant* after his passing away.

arahant: A 'worthy one' or 'pure one'; a person whose mind is free of defilement, who has abandoned all ten of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth, whose heart is free of mental effluents, and who is thus not destined for further rebirth. A title for the Buddha and the highest level of his noble disciples.

ārammaṇa: Preoccupation; mental object.

āsava: Mental effluent, pollutant, or fermentation. Four qualities—sensuality, views, becoming and ignorance—that "flow out" of the mind and create the flood of the round of death and rebirth.

asubha: Unattractiveness, loathsomeness, foulness. The Buddha recommends contemplation of this aspect of the body as an antidote to lust and complacency.

avijjā: Ignorance; obscured awareness; delusion about the nature of the mind.

bhāvanā: Mental cultivation or development; meditation. The third of the three grounds for meritorious action.

bhikkhu: A Buddhist monk; a man who has given up the householder's life to live a life of heightened virtue in accordance with the *Vinaya* in general, and the *Pāṭimokkha* rules in particular.

brahma-vihāra: The four “sublime” or “divine” abodes that are attained through the development of boundless *mettā* (goodwill), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (appreciative joy), and *upekkhā* (equanimity).

buddho: Awake; enlightened. An epithet for the Buddha.

caṅkama: Walking meditation, usually in the form of walking back and forth along a prescribed path.

citta: Mind; heart; state of consciousness.

dhamma [Skt. dharmā]: (1) Event; a phenomenon in and of itself; (2) mental quality; (3) doctrine, teaching; (4) *Nibbāna*. Also, principles of behavior that human beings ought to follow so as to fit in with the right natural order of things; qualities of mind they should develop so as to realize the inherent quality of the mind in and of itself. By extension, “Dhamma” (usually capitalised) is used also to denote any doctrine that teaches such things. Thus the Dhamma of the Buddha denotes both his teachings and the direct experience of *Nibbāna*, the quality at which those teachings are aimed.

dosa: Aversion; hatred; anger. One of three unwholesome roots in the mind.

dukkha: Suffering; pain; distress; discontent.

dukkha-vedanā: Painful feelings.

kamma [Skt. karma]: Intentional acts that result in states of being and birth.

kammaṭṭhāna: Literally, ‘basis of work’ or ‘place of work’. The word refers to the ‘occupation’ of a meditating monk: namely, the contemplation of certain meditation themes by which the forces of defilement (*kilesa*), craving (*taṇhā*), and ignorance (*avijjā*) may be uprooted from the mind. In the ordination procedure, every new monk is taught five basic *kammaṭṭhāna* that form the basis for contemplation of the body: hair of the head (*kesā*), hair of the body (*lomā*), nails (*nakhā*), teeth (*dantā*), and skin (*taco*). By extension, the *kammaṭṭhāna* include all the forty classical meditation themes. Although every meditator may be said to engage in *kammaṭṭhāna*, the term is most often

used to identify the particular Thai forest tradition lineage that was founded by Ajaan Mun and Ajaan Sao.

khandha: Heap; group; aggregate. Physical and mental components of the personality and of sensory experience in general. The five bases of clinging—*rūpa* (physical phenomenon), *vedanā* (feeling), *saññā* (perception), *saṅkhāra* (thought) and *viññāṇa* (consciousness).

kilesa: Defilement—*lobha* (passion), *dosa* (aversion) and *moha* (delusion) in their various forms, which include such things as greed, malevolence, anger, rancor, hypocrisy, arrogance, envy, miserliness, dishonesty, boastfulness, obstinacy, violence, pride, conceit, intoxication, and complacency.

kusala: Wholesome, skilful, good, meritorious. An action characterized by this moral quality (*kusala-kamma*) is bound to result (eventually) in happiness and a favorable outcome. Actions characterized by its opposite (*akusala-kamma*) lead to sorrow.

Lokavidū: Knower of the cosmos. An epithet for the Buddha.

magga: Path. Specifically, the path to the cessation of all suffering. The four transcendent paths—or rather, one path with four levels of refinement—are the path to stream-entry (entering the stream to *Nibbāna*, which ensures that one will be reborn at most only seven more times), the path to once-returning, the path to non-returning, and the path to *arahantship*.

majjhima: Middle; appropriate; just right.

***Nibbāna* [Skt. *nirvāṇa*]**: Liberation; literally, the “unbinding” of the mind from the mental effluents, defilements and the round of rebirth, and from all that can be described or defined. As this term also denotes the extinguishing of a fire, it carries the connotations of stilling, cooling, and peace. (According to the physics taught at the time of the Buddha, a burning fire seizes or adheres to its fuel; when extinguished, it is unbound.) “Total *Nibbāna*” in some contexts denotes the experience of Awakening; in others, the final passing away of an *arahant*.

nimitta: Mental sign, image, or vision that may arise in meditation.

nirodha: Cessation; disbanding; stopping.

Pāli: The canon of texts preserved by the Theravāda school and by extension, the language in which those texts are composed.

paññā: Wisdom; insight; intelligence; common sense; ingenuity, discernment. One of the ten perfections (*pāramīs*).

parinibbāna: Total Unbinding; the complete cessation of the *khandhas* that occurs upon the death of an *arahant*.

pariyatti: Theoretical understanding of Dhamma obtained through reading, study, and learning.

Pāṭimokkha: The basic code of monastic discipline, consisting of 227 rules for monks and 311 for nuns.

paṭipadā: Road, path, way; the means of reaching a goal or destination. The Middle Way (*Majjhimā Paṭipadā*) taught by the Buddha; the path of practice described in the fourth noble truth.

paṭipatti: The practice of Dhamma, as opposed to mere learning (*pariyatti*).

paṭivedha: Direct, first-hand realization of the Dhamma.

phala: Fruition. Specifically, the fruition of any of the four transcendent paths.

rāga: Lust; greed.

sabhāva-dhamma: Condition of nature; any phenomenon, event, property or quality as experienced in and of itself.

saddhā: Conviction, faith. A confidence in the Buddha that gives one the willingness to put his teachings into practice. Conviction becomes unshakable upon the attainment of stream-entry.

sakadāgāmī: Once-returner. A person who has abandoned the first three of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth, has weakened the fet-

ters of sensual passion and resistance, and who after death is destined to be reborn in this world only once more.

sallekha-dhamma: Topics of conversation for effacing defilements—few wants, being content with what one has, seclusion, uninvolvedness in companionship, persistence, virtue, concentration, discernment, release and the direct knowing and seeing of release.

samādhi: Concentration; the practice of centering the mind in a single sensation or preoccupation, usually to a state of one-pointedness.

sammati: Conventional reality; convention; relative truth; supposition; anything conjured into being by the mind.

samsāra: Transmigration; the round of death and rebirth.

saṅkhāra: Formation, compound, fashioning, fabrication the forces and factors that fashion things (physical or mental), the process of fashioning, and the fashioned things that result. *Saṅkhāra* can refer to anything formed or fashioned by conditions, or, more specifically, (as one of the five *khandhas*) thought-formations within the mind.

saññā: Act of memory or recognition; interpretation; allusion; perception; label.

sāsana: Literally, “message.” The dispensation, doctrine, and legacy of the Buddha; the Buddhist religion.

sati: Mindfulness, self-collectedness, powers of reference and retention.

satipaṭṭhāna: Foundation of mindfulness; frame of reference body, feelings, mind, and mental events, viewed in and of themselves as they occur.

sāvaka: Literally, ‘hearer’. A disciple of the Buddha, especially an *arahant* disciple.

sīla: Virtue, morality. The quality of ethical and moral purity that prevents one from falling away from the eightfold path. Also, the training precepts

that restrain one from performing unskillful actions. *Sīla* is the second theme in the gradual training.

sotāpanna: Stream winner. A person who has abandoned the first three of the fetters that bind the mind to the cycle of rebirth and has thus entered the “stream” flowing inexorably to *Nibbāna*, ensuring that one will be reborn at most only seven more times, and only into human or higher realms.

sukha: Pleasure; ease; satisfaction.

Tathāgata: Literally, “one who has truly gone (*tathā-gata*)” or “one who has become authentic (*tathā-agata*)”, an epithet used in ancient India for a person who has attained the highest spiritual goal. In Buddhism, it usually denotes the Buddha, although occasionally it also denotes any of his *arahant* disciples.

vaṭṭa: The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. This denotes both the death and rebirth of living beings and the death and rebirth of defilement within the mind.

vedanā: Feeling—pleasure, pain or neutral feeling.

Vinaya: The monastic discipline, spanning six volumes in printed text, whose rules and traditions define every aspect of the *bhikkhus’* way of life. The essence of the rules for monastics is contained in the *Pāṭimokkha*. The conjunction of the Dhamma with the *Vinaya* forms the core of the Buddhist religion: *Dhamma-vinaya*—“the doctrine and discipline” is the name the Buddha gave to the religion he founded.

viññāṇa: Consciousness; cognisance; the act of taking note of sense data and ideas as they occur.

virīya: Persistence; energy; effort.

