The background of the cover is a painting of a Buddha figure sitting in a meditative posture on a path in a lush green forest. A vibrant rainbow arches across the scene behind the Buddha. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a bright and peaceful atmosphere. The title and subtitle are overlaid on a golden rectangular box in the upper half of the image.

THE *Way* TO  
THE *Happiness*  
OF *Peace*

Understanding the Basics  
of Insight Meditation

**SAYĀDAW U PANDITA**

*Compiled by* VENERABLE SUJIVA

*Edited by* BODHISĀRA and SUMANGALO

*The happiness of peace is  
the supreme happiness  
of Nibbāna,  
the ending of all suffering.  
To tread the way to  
this supreme goal the Buddha  
practised and taught meditation,  
the intuitive insight into  
the true nature of things.*

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sayādaw U Paṇḍita entered a monastery in a remote village in Burma at the age of seven, and progressed to become renowned as one of the outstanding teachers in the tradition of Mahāsī Sayādaw, famed for reviving and developing a rigorous meditation technique found in ancient texts.

Sayādaw U Paṇḍita teaches from his own profound meditative experience gained over 62 years of monastic training, and from his detained study of the Pāḷi suttas.

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AN INWARD JOURNEY BOOK  
IJ002/97/05

THE *Way* TO  
THE *Happiness*  
OF *Peace*

Understanding the Basics  
of Insight Meditation

**Plus**

*Appamāda* (Heedfulness) &  
Guidance for Yogis at Interview

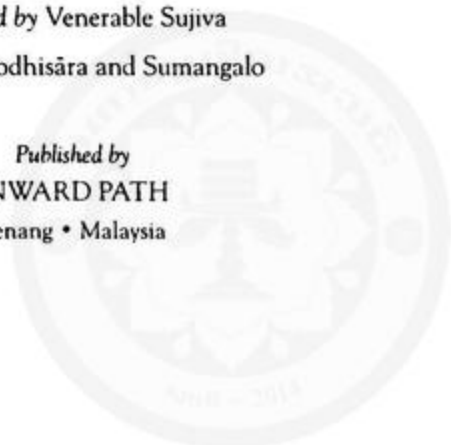


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# Contents

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## ● THE Way TO THE Happiness OF Peace

- Preface v
- chapter one The Culture of the Buddha ...1
- chapter two The Way to the Happiness of Peace ... 5
- chapter three Basic Principles of Insight Meditation ...11
- chapter four Arousing Skilful States ... 43
- chapter five The Ten Armies of Māra ... 47
- chapter six Nibbāna ...55

## ◦ *Appamāda* (Heedfulness) ...57

- The Way of the World ...58
- Appamāda* ...60
- Pamāda* (Negligence) ...61
- The Benefit of *Dāna* ...64
- The Benefit of *Sīla* ...66
- The Benefit of Tranquility ...67
- Three Grades of *Appamāda* ...70
- Vipassanā Bhāvanā* ...72
- Refined *Appamāda* ...73
- The Development of Wisdom ...74
- The Benefit of Equipoise ...77
- The Five Controlling Faculties ...79
- A Dhamma Revolution —
- The Benefit of Wisdom ... 80
- The Bliss of Liberation — Attaining  
    the End of The Buddha's Dispensation ... 81
- Prosperity ...84
- The Key of the Dhamma ...84
- The Buddha's Way ...87

Guidance FOR Yogis AT Interview ...89

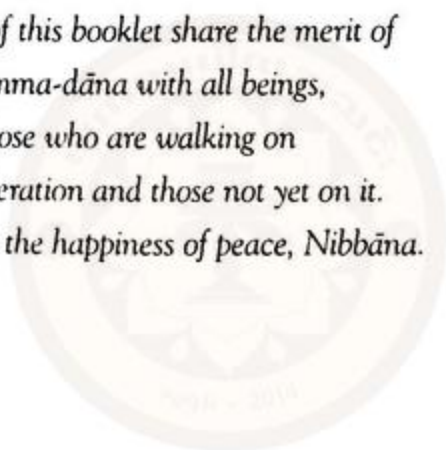
*May this booklet be of help to many for  
deeping their understanding of  
the Dhamma and practice of meditation.*

*“It is hard to be born human;  
the life of mortals is hard.  
Teaching of truth is hardly ever heard;  
Buddhas hardly ever appear.”*

*~Dhammapada 182*



*The sponsors of this booklet share the merit of  
this Dhamma-dāna with all beings,  
with those who are walking on  
the path to liberation and those not yet on it.  
May all attain to the happiness of peace, Nibbāna.*





## Preface

THE *Way TO THE Happiness OF Peace* was published many years ago under a different title, *The Principles of Sati-*paṭṭhāna Vipassanā**. They were talks given by Sayādaw U Paṇḍitabhivaṃsa while I was in Myanmar. It has now been freshly edited by Bodhisāra and Sumangalo for re-publication.

This collection of talks is a comprehensive teaching of Buddhist practice in brief. The Dhamma is timeless. That which has been said then is still as relevant to us today. What has been learnt has to be learnt by newcomers to the practice. Veterans should have frequent reminders of what has been said before.

May all who come to the Dhamma put it into practice and reap its benefits to the best of their ability.

SUJIVA

*Santisukharama Kota Tinggi, Johor*

*12 December 1996*

*The Way to the Happiness of Peace*





## CHAPTER ONE

# THE Culture OF THE Buddha

The Buddha's dispensation (*Buddha-sāsana*) is the instructions given by him for self-development in thought, speech, and bodily actions. It could perhaps be more appropriately rendered as the Buddha's *culture* or *refinement*. To be truly cultured or civilized requires the ability to restrain oneself from all harmful actions directed towards living beings through the three doors of mind, speech, and body.

To be able to restrain the mind requires the ability to differentiate wholesome from unwholesome actions. This is the cultivation of wisdom. If an action is harmful yet one still does it, then one is uncivilized. If an action is harmful but one restrains oneself from doing it, then one is civilized.

One should place oneself in another person's shoes when contemplating any harmful actions. The Buddha instructed that one has to put oneself in the position of a mother of other beings to understand them. Expressed poetically, we could then say the teaching lies in the heart.

### THE CULTURE OF THE BUDDHA:

- culture of moral integrity (*sīla*)
- culture of concentration (*saṃādhi*)
- culture of understanding (*paññā*)

**THE FIVE PRECEPTS:**

1. to refrain from killing
2. to refrain from stealing
3. to refrain from misconduct
4. to refrain from lying
5. to refrain from intoxicants

Keeping the Five Precepts is the way to be cultured in all physical acts. It is called the **culture of moral integrity**. Other religions too have such guidelines to moral purification.

There is a controversy about the last precept, the abstinence from alcohol, when it comes to small quantities, especially during social drinking. But even small amounts are often risky temptations. Where should we draw the line between a little bit and too much? Transgressing this rule is a frequent cause for the breaking of the other four precepts.

Considering the faults and pains in disregarding the precepts helps us to shun breaking them. Considering the benefits of keeping precepts encourages us to observe them. Perfection in moral integrity indicates a high level of true civilization. Yet, although one's precepts are kept pure, unwholesome states of mind can still arise. That is, *the mind* is still uncivilized and barbaric. To be mentally civilized, we have to go to the next step—the **culture of concentration**.

**THE CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION:**

1. tranquillity meditation
2. insight meditation

The culture of concentration falls into two categories, tranquillity meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) and insight meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*). This exposition will be mainly concerned with the culture of insight meditation. When one notes mindfully the bodily processes, the mind ceases to wander. At that moment, there are no thoughts of aggression, lust, or breaking the precepts. The mind is clear and pure. The three factors—energy, mindfulness, and concentration—contribute to a truly cultured mind. This is moral integrity which comes about through concentration. To really enjoy the benefits of such a

cultured mind, one should fully resolve to be serious and continuous in one's practice.

The main benefit of insight meditation is the seeing of things according to their true nature—seeing that all that exists are conditioned mental and material phenomena and that these are impermanent, oppressive, and governed by impersonal laws. This insight culminates in the attainment of the first stage of enlightenment, which has the important function of eliminating forever certain classes of unwholesome consciousness. This culmination marks the establishment of the culture of understanding, which is the Buddha's teaching not outside of us but in our hearts.

Two factors contribute greatly to such a noble aim, the faithful listening to instructions given by the teacher and the serious application of the teaching in one's practice.

**ALL CONDITIONED PHENOMENA ARE:**

- impermanent (*anicca*)
- oppressive / unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*)
- without self / impersonality (*anattā*)

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO A NOBLE AIM:**

1. Faithful listening
2. Application of teaching



*“Most vehicles are noisy. The primitive carts and carriages used in the Buddha’s time creaked noisily, especially if they were poorly greased, or were badly made, or carried a heavy load of passengers. Modern cars and trucks still make quite a racket. The chariot the Buddha offered, however, was no ordinary vehicle. It is so well made that it moves without a sound, no matter how many thousands or millions or billions of beings ride upon it. This chariot can carry all of them safely across the ocean, the desert, through the jungle of saṃsara. It is the chariot of vipassanā practice, of the Noble Eightfold Path.”*

*~Sayādaw U Paṇḍita, In This Very Life*







## CHAPTER TWO

# THE Way TO THE Happiness OF Peace

The way to the *happiness of peace*<sup>1</sup> has three strands in the basic, the preliminary, and the Noble Path.

### THE BASIC PATH

To enter the **basic path** one must gain a proper understanding of the fundamental right view on *kamma*, which holds that moral actions lead to wholesome results and immoral actions lead to unwholesome results. It is on the basis of this understanding that one follows the morality which is in accordance with the Eightfold Path. One leads a virtuous life, cultivating good intentions, effort, speech, and livelihood, and is mindful of the higher things in life. By 'good' we mean that which is conducive to the extinction of defilements.

This right view on *kamma*, however, can not only become absent in individuals but may get lost even in whole societies. Still, it will not disappear altogether from the surface of the world. If it vanishes in one country, it will to some degree spring up in another.

### THE WAY TO THE HAPPINESS OF PEACE:

1. Basic Path
2. Preliminary Path
3. Noble Path

#### NOTE

- 1 In Pāli: *Santisukha*. *Santi*: peace, *sukha*: happiness. This is the happiness of the peace of Nibbāna, contrary to the limited happiness gained from sensual pleasures of meditative states.

For this reason, it is also called *the light of the world*, or the light of *samsāra*, the round of birth and death. The benefit derived from this right view is the ability to avoid evil deeds and to perform good actions with strong determination.

### **The Preliminary Path and the Noble Path**

#### **EIGHT PRECEPTS:**

1. not to kill
2. not to steal
3. to be celibate
4. not to lie
5. not to take intoxicants
6. not to eat after midday
7. not to dance, sing, enjoy music, put cosmetics or adornments
8. not to use luxurious seats and beds

#### **SIX SENSE DOORS:**

1. eye door
2. ear door
3. nose door
4. tongue door
5. body door
6. mind door

In meditation centres yogis, bent on avoiding evil and doing good, usually observe eight precepts. Such a wholesome and moral life is essential to the serious practice of mindfulness and concentration. The dedicated observance of precepts frees one from the gross faults of greed, hatred, and delusion. There arises momentary peace from the defilements. This also occurs when one is noting phenomena arising at the six sense doors. For example, while watching the rising and falling of the abdomen, the transgressive defilements as well as those that occur at the mental level do not arise. With continued exertion of energy the power of observation will gather momentum. The defilements are more easily kept away.

What matters most is that the drive against the defilements is constant and vigilant. Otherwise one may drift in the opposite direction, towards laziness, unmindfulness, and distractedness.

The application of energy may be described with the use of a simile: It is like filling an empty, narrow-necked bottle (full of air) with water. Each drop removes a little air. But because the entry point is tiny, one needs to be accurate and careful to ensure that the drops fall straight in to the bottle.

Like the vacuum flask which can keep the water cool for a long time, one should likewise be able to keep the mind free from defilements for a long time. When there is the right object at the right time and one is able to go on noting, one will begin to gain insight<sup>2</sup> into mind and matter, their causal relationship and so on, until one reaches the Noble Path where the relevant defilements are completely uprooted.

The practice of mindfulness in the preliminary path is none other than the mind-training given by the Buddha in the *Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness*<sup>3</sup> (see chapter 3, pp.13ff.). If one practises the foundations of mindfulness seriously, then one treads the Noble Eightfold Path itself:

- a. The careful noting at the sense doors, for example the occurrences of the rising and falling at the belly, has to be done with effort. This is *Right Effort*.
- b. One ensures that nothing escapes mindfulness, for example one closely notes every sound, every painful sensation, etc. This is *Right Mindfulness*.
- c. While noting the object mindfully, the mind concentrates intently on the noted object. This is *Right Concentration*.

These three factors constitute the concentration group of the Eightfold Path.

- d. While watching the rising of the abdomen the mind is aware of the characteristics of the primary elements such as hardness, heat, and

**EIGHTFOLD NOBLE PATH (ARIYA-*AJTHANGIKA*-MAGGA):**

**WISDOM GROUP**

1. Right View
2. Right Aim / Thought
3. Right Speech

**MORALITY GROUP**

4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood

**CONCENTRATION GROUP**

6. Right Effort
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

**NOTE** .....

- 2 In Pāli: *Vipassanā*. It is the deep, intuitive seeing or understanding of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self in all conditioned things. Reflective or superficial insight (*We are all growing old...*) does not amount to *vipassanā* insight.
- 3 Satipatthāna Sutta, Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourse) No.10.

motion. It is also aware of the arising and vanishing of these characteristics, of their unsatisfactory nature, and the absence of anyone controlling their occurrence. This knowledge arises in meditators not because the meditation teacher speaks about it and not through study, but intuitively, based on direct personal experience. This is *Right View*.

- e. At the time of observation the mind must attend to the right object in the right way. This is *Right Aim*, which is free from wrong aim at thoughts of sensual desire, ill-will, and cruelty.

These two factors make up the wisdom group of the Path.

- f. During his retreat a meditator abstains from lying, slanderous speech, harsh speech, and idle chatter. This fulfils *Right Speech*.
- g. On retreat one also abstains from taking life, stealing, sexual misconduct, taking intoxicants, etc. This is *Right Action*.
- h. In abstaining from wrong speech and wrong action in earning one's living, one also satisfies the conditions for *Right Livelihood*.

These last three factors constitute the morality group of the Path.

A meditator also develops during insight meditation the understanding of the **Four Noble Truths**. This is illustrated as follows:



- i. While trying to observe the rising and falling of the abdomen, pain, restlessness, etc., are noticed. These things are suffering. One comes to know what there is to be known about the **truth of suffering** inherent in all conditioned things.
- ii. In meditation one is abandoning the **cause of suffering**, namely, craving with its companions ignorance and anger.
- iii. There comes about a momentary extinction of defilements, which is the **mundane truth of the cessation of suffering**.
- iv. And of course the **truth of the path** is being developed with each moment of proper mindfulness.

**FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS (ARIYA SACCA):**

1. truth of suffering
2. truth of the origin of suffering
3. truth of the cessation of suffering
4. truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering



*“One cannot fail to notice that effort is basic to the Buddha’s vehicle design. Just as it is necessary for a worldly chariot’s two wheels to be firmly affixed, so too mental and physical effort must always be engaged to move this chariot of the Noble Eightfold Path. We will not get anywhere if we do not actually make the physical effort to sit in meditation; nor if we fail, while sitting, to keep the mind penetrative, continuous and accurate in noting. If the twin wheels of effort are kept moving, however, the vehicle will roll on straight ahead.”*

*~Sayādaw U Paṇḍita, In This Very Life*





### CHAPTER THREE

## Basic Principles OF Insight Meditation

Before commencing insight meditation (*vipassanā bhāvanā*), it is advisable to practise the four guardian meditations.

#### RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA

One recollects the special virtues of the Buddha. One can select just one of the many qualities and reflect on it. For example, the Buddha has the quality of an *arahant*, a perfected one. A brief contemplation is sufficient.

At some phases of one's meditation one may meet with fearsome objects. This recollection helps to overcome such fear.

#### CULTIVATION OF LOVING KINDNESS

In this practice one develops friendliness towards all beings using the concise phrase:

*May all beings be free from enmity.*

#### THE FOUR GUARDIAN MEDITATIONS:

1. recollection of the Buddha (*buddhānussati*)
2. cultivation of loving-kindness (*mettā bhāvanā*)
3. recollection of loathsomeness (*asubha bhāvanā*)
4. recollection of death (*marañānussati*)

One radiates loving kindness to all beings repeatedly. The short and concise phrase has a wide range in meaning. For example, *enmity* refers both to internal enemies (i.e., defilements) and external enemies (unfriendly beings, dangers, etc.). If people are really free from enmity, then there is true peace in humanity. Such a practice creates a friendly atmosphere around oneself and therefore one will not be harassed or disturbed by other beings.

### **RECOLLECTION OF LOATHSOMENESS**

In the recollection of loathsomeness one need not refer to corpses. One can refer to the loathsomeness of the living body. Normally people have a lot of attachment to *bodies*, their own or others. If one really looks closely into the body's parts, one can loosen the attachment to it.

For example, reflect on head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin.

The perception of loathsome with regard to the body helps to overcome lust, which may arise as a strong hindrance in the meditation practice.

### **RECOLLECTION OF DEATH**

Frequent recollection of the inevitable nature of death irrespective of caste, rank, age, place, etc., cultivates a sense of fearlessness of death together with an increased sense of urgency to purify the mind and practise the foundations of mindfulness. One will also be able to endure excruciating sensations that arise in the course of one's practice.



For those who intend to practise insight meditation, these four guardian meditations may occupy a total of eight minutes (i.e., two minutes each) once or several times a day at the beginning of a round of sitting meditation.

In insight meditation mindfulness establishes itself with firmness and continuous occurrence in four domains of mind and body. This establishment is called four foundations of mindfulness.

### CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY

This is the repeated observation of the material qualities in the body. Four postures are used when one contemplates the body. For the beginner the sitting and walking postures are suitable because the standing posture needs a lot of energy and can be too demanding for the beginner, and the lying posture easily leads one to fall asleep. Sitting and walking, on the other hand, are most suitable for the balancing of faculties. In the sitting posture the body is allowing concentration to develop, yet a certain amount of energy is required to keep it upright. Walking increases the faculty of energy and helps to balance out the strong tranquillity developed in sitting still.

Traditionally, sitting is done cross-legged. If done awkwardly, a lot of pain may arise within a short time, so it should be done carefully and properly. The trunk should be erect, preferably perpendicular. This prevents the arising of unnecessary painful feelings. It also helps blood circulation.

### THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS (SATIPATTHANA):

1. contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*)
2. contemplation of the consciousness (*cittānupassanā*)
3. contemplation of the feelings (*vedānānupassanā*)
4. contemplation of the mental objects (*dhammānupassanā*)

### THE FOUR POSTURES:

1. walking
2. standing
3. sitting
4. lying



Seated cross-legged,  
with straight back;  
the mind centered  
on the belly.

**THE BASIC:**

**1. RIGHT PLACE**

Place mindfulness  
on the process of  
rising and falling  
of the abdomen—  
meditation  
objects

**2. RIGHT TIME**

The time in very  
moment of  
occurrence

After sitting like this, place the mindfulness on the basic meditation object, *the rising and falling process of the abdomen*. Watching the rise and fall enables one to find the natural phenomena which can be seen in their true nature.

To bring forth penetration or insight into the phenomena one has to be in the right place at the right time. The right place is the process of *rising or falling* of the abdomen. The right time is their *very moment of occurrence*.

The mind is too readily swept away by defilements. By fixing the mind on the rising and falling of the abdomen, the mind is temporarily freed from them. This, of course, initially requires a lot of effort.

A simile: A little boat is easily swept downstream but to get it upstream is difficult. To make it go upstream one must first manipulate the rudder, which compares with the placing of the mindfulness on the belly. After that one needs to row, that means one needs to follow the rising and falling uninterruptedly and relentlessly with continuous effort, to move upstream.

For this, two kinds of power are required: **Energetic power**, which is the complete and relentless effort to follow the rising and falling, and **accurate power**, which is the accuracy in the following. Accuracy comes from hitting each and every occurring

**THE TWO  
NOTING  
POWERS:**

1. power of effort
2. power of accuracy

phenomenon with right mindfulness. The breathing rhythm should be normal and natural and not forced. When these two powers of effort and accuracy are balanced, there is momentary concentration.

The procedure may be compared to a spider in its web. Normally the spider is poised at the centre of the web. Whenever an insect gets caught, it rushes to it, saps its nutrition, and returns to the centre. Likewise the meditator puts the attention on the centre, the primary object of observation, the rising and falling of the abdomen. Whenever any other object arises the mind takes quick note of it, due to the power of effort and accuracy.



*Breathing naturally,  
fix the mind on  
rising and falling.*

In each moment of careful attention and precise noting of the rising and falling of the abdomen the mental factors for the elimination of defilements are developed.

These factors are:

- i. **Right Effort**, which has the function of not accepting defilements.
- ii. **Right Aim**, which has the function of applying the mind accurately on the desired object, putting it right on the target.
- iii. **Right Mindfulness**, which has the function of guarding the mind from defilements.

- iv. **Right Concentration**, which has the function of preventing the mind from being scattered.

The mind thus is in a pure state. This itself is virtue and goodness, benefits that arise simultaneously with every moment of mindfulness. Therefore at every noting in meditation one is cultivating the skilful and wholesome mind.



*Pure dwells  
the mind,  
free from guilt,  
and in true virtue.*

When we begin our practice, we start to see how wild the mind is—like a kid neglected by his parents. If we leave the mind in this state, we will not be free of obstacles blocking our spiritual growth, as we are under constant bombardment by objects giving rise to pleasant and unpleasant feelings, thus to greed, hatred, and delusion. This reactive mind can only be tamed by proper mind control.

If parents, for example, do not exercise control over their children, they may, through the influence of bad company, become juvenile delinquents. However, if proper control is exercised, the children would eventually mature in wisdom and gain the discretion to keep away from unskilful actions, even at times when their parents are not around.

It is the same with meditation. The mind now and again runs after sensual desires, gets upset. We



need to control it and allow it to grow up. This period of discipline, though painful, is necessary.

Despite initial resentment in the child's mind, it will eventually come to realize the benefits of wise control as a basis for a successful life. Becoming independent, the control will then come from within, no longer having to be imposed from outside, and the child will know how to discern wholesome from unwholesome actions and keep to the good throughout life.

At the beginning, it is difficult to centre the mind on the rising and falling of the abdomen. But it is reassuring to know that the invested effort and discipline provide space to grow and develop skilfulness. This difficult technique of attentive mind control is essential for mental purity. This is what meditation means: the cultivation of skilful states which enable wisdom to blossom.

What do we mean by insight and wisdom? When the hindrances to concentration are absent for longer periods of time, one can see natural phenomena directly, for example the movement, stiffness, heat, sensations, etc. in the rising and falling of the abdomen. As one goes further, one begins to be able to differentiate between mental and physical phenomena occurring within the field of awareness. Furthermore, the intricate chain of conditioning of phenomena can also be discerned.



*Stiffness, tension,  
movement,  
and displacement:  
discern them all.*

The mechanism which enables one to see how all these natural phenomena truly behave can be compared to watching a cinema movie (see chart next page).

In this way, the characteristics of these natural phenomena are experienced directly. They fall into two categories. The sensations of the body which have each their specific quality like heat, cold, hardness, softness, flowing, pressure, etc., are characteristics of the first category. They are called the *specific* or *unique characteristics*. In the second category are the qualities which can be found universally in all compounded phenomena. They are called *universal* or *common characteristics*. They are the arising and vanishing of all objects, their unsatisfactoriness, and the lack of absolute ownership over them. In Pāli, they are called *anicca*, *dukkha*, and *anattā*.

**SPECIFIC / UNIQUE  
CHARACTERISTICS:**

1. hard and soft
2. hot and cold
3. pushing and supporting
4. cohesion and fluidity

**UNIVERSAL /  
COMMON  
CHARACTERISTICS:**

1. impermanence
2. unsatisfactoriness
3. non-self or impersonality

When the specific characteristics of phenomena are noted with relentless effort and high precision, the universal characteristics become evident. This is the arising of insight.

### CONTEMPLATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

During the noting of the rising and falling of the abdomen the mind frequently happens to wander off and get lost in thinking. This is called *wandering mind*. It is an occurrence of the mind. It happens when mindfulness slips and the mind moves away from the primary object. Mindfulness has the quality of guarding the mind from the defilements. Without the guardian, pollutants rush in, especially when the mind turns to an object that can stimulate greed, hatred, and delusion. When we take careful note of

**PROCESS:**

**APPEARANCE  
OF  
OBJECT**

**DIRECTING  
OF  
ATTENTION**

**CLOSE  
OBSERVATION**

**UNDER-  
STANDING**

Focusing  
attention  
on belly



**Insight Meditator**



Appearance  
of rising and falling  
of the abdomen



Distinguishing  
the process  
by labelling



Discovering  
what the special  
characteristics are  
and how they  
actually behave

Focusing  
attention  
on screen



**Cinema Audience**



Appearance  
of characters  
and scenes



Making out what's  
happening by  
observing carefully



Discovering  
the plot and  
appreciating  
the movie



the wandering mind, it disappears and is immediately followed by a pure mind. In the course of noting mental processes, the whole process and nature of consciousness can be discovered. One is encouraged to catch the very moment the mind starts wandering.



*Wandering thoughts,  
miss them not,  
note them all,  
on the spot.*

Can one gain any benefit from watching negative mind states like anger or greed? Would they not turn on us and gain power over us? The teachings tell us that by being with the present moment, not only can one see their true nature, one can also put a stop to the defilements. This is just as, by being watchful of infiltrators or guerrillas, the police can stop their activities.

**THE WILD MIND:**

1. hard to tame
2. extremely quick & superficial
3. capricious & frivolous

The untrained mind is naturally wild and easily possessed by negative mental states. It is not useful, like an untamed horse for the owner. The wild mind can be characterized in three ways: it is difficult to tame; it is extremely quick and merely skims superficially over what is really happening; and it is capricious and frivolous. Therefore it is treacherous and painful to the owner. For these reasons the Buddha praises the taming of the unruly, wild mind. How to tame it? One tames it as one does taming a wild elephant. First, one has to catch hold of it in the place where it originates from, the wild jungle. Similarly, one catches the mind where it originates, at the six sense doors. One has to be with each moment of occurrence at whatever door

it arises—the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind door—persistently and relentlessly. Only then can one experience peace one never experienced before.

In the Pāli texts it is said: *Bhūtaṃ bhūtaṃ passati*. This can be translated as: One looks at things as they really are/occur. *Things* refer to all the conditioned phenomena and must be things that can be directly experienced, for example, the mental intention to sit down and the whole physical process of sitting down that follows.

In the beginning one uses the help of labelling the object as it really occurs. For example, one mentally labels as *intending* (to sit) when there is intention and then *sitting* when the process of sitting occurs. Or *rising* for the rising process of the abdomen, and *falling* for the falling process of the abdomen. When one is directing attention to the rising and falling of the abdomen which is caused by gross breathing, one is able to distinguish the form or shape of the belly, the modes of disposition, and the sensations that are felt through bare experience. *Rising* and *falling* are modes of disposition. When noting these modes of disposition, with the improvement of practice, one experiences them as *bare sensations* such as tension, hardness, motion, heat, pain, etc.

During the Buddha's time the concise instruction of *Bhūtaṃ bhūtaṃ passati* was sufficient for people with keen wisdom, who could act on simple and bare guidance to gain insight. Later on, this type of people became rare and therefore teachers of the commentaries explained the necessity of labelling as a supportive tool in steadying the awareness and

**THREE LEVELS OF PERCEPTION:**

1. form or shape
2. mode of disposition
3. bare sensations

clarifying the nature of the observed object.

**LABELLING:**

- a supportive tool in steadying the awareness
- clarifying the nature of the observed object
- appropriate concept, use by beginners as a tool to direct the mind to the object.
- with deepening in practice, the labels are automatically dropped.

There is an argument which says that labelling is actually an introduction of a new set of concepts and contradicts the actual instruction of seeing things as they really are. The commentaries refer to a certain type of concept, *appropriate concept*. For example, heat can be felt without naming or labelling, but there is a name concept for it: *heat* in English, or *uṇha* in Pāli. This concept can be used by beginners in insight meditation, whose concentration and mindfulness are weak, labelling is used as a tool to direct the mind to the object. With the deepening of practice, the labels are automatically dropped and the mind will experience its object free from concepts. The labelling helps to keep the noting mind in order—as a ruler held below a line of writing on the page helps a child learning to read.

When insight matures, especially at the strong fourth and fifth insight knowledges, there is a sudden increase in the rate of what is happening. It is so fast that one does not have time to label. Then there will be only bare awareness of phenomena, sensations without shape, form, or mode of disposition.

At this point, the yogi has two choices: either one continues labelling, or one just allows the mind to flow with what is happening without using labels. When the student wants to keep labelling, only part of the quickly arising and disappearing phenomena can be labelled, not all. The second method is preferable, because if one continues trying to label, there is a tendency for fatigue to set in quite soon.

Only if one can catch the phenomena on the spot

does one see things as they really are. 'Only' is important because it emphasizes the present moment. There is no place for thinking, reflection, speculation, or interpretation. One has to be with the moment, with the here and now on the spot, not before or after. Just as, if one is to behold a bolt of lightning, one has to watch it at the moment it occurs. Lean your weight on one side (with a hand resting on the floor and the arm propping up the body) and label *supporting*. Close your eyes and at the same time put your whole attention onto the mode of the body posture.

After some time, you can experience stiffness, tension, discomfort, vibrations, heat, hardness, or similar sensations. The labelling is simply a skilful tool to direct and fix the attention on a chosen object so that the real characteristics can become evident.

## CONTEMPLATION OF FEELINGS



*Good, bad, and  
neutral feelings.  
Bungle not!  
Note! Note!*

### THREE TYPES OF FEELING:

1. painful feelings
2. pleasant feelings
3. neutral feelings

### • Painful Feelings

While the yogi is engaged in his work of mindfulness discomfort is frequently encountered, such as itches, aches, pain, and the like.

To overcome discomfort, one has to be mindful at the very moment of its occurrence so that one can see into its true nature. For if one does not note, one cannot be aware of it and might be deluded to think

that "I am in pain." Furthermore, the mind usually reacts to pain with anger or disappointment, so one suffers unnecessarily. This is what happens when one *thinks about* the pain and *reacts* to it rather than just *stays with* it. One is not encourage to increase the suffering, but should firmly and composedly watch and penetrate it.

Every time one is not mindful of a painful sensation as it occurs, anger arises, followed by unhappiness and oppression. In addition, one is also likely to crave for pleasant sensation. This is disguised as hope.

For example, when one drinks dirty water, one suffers not only by having to drink it but also from wishing for clean water. This wish is another form of suffering. When the diligent effort to look into these sensations is insufficient, a lot of aversion and hopeful feelings will arise. So one should be firmly resolved and endeavour to look at the pain. Then its true nature will emerge.

Energy is a wonderful quality that can arouse the mindfulness to have a good look at the pain. It can also bring about collectedness of mind and penetration into the object. When this happens, then there is no chance for anger and wishful thinking to arise. With the deepening of practice one can even lose the perception of the body form. Then there is just the noting mind and the various bare sensations. At that time the mindfulness is exact and impeccable. And one can have good meditation despite all the pain. This is an evidence of *equipoise*, the supreme quality of meditative penetration. This wonderful quality

is developed when there is relentless effort, collect-  
edness of mind, and accuracy of application on the  
desired object at every moment.

But before insight matures, the observed pain  
may increase to such an extent that one comes  
to think one has never experienced so much pain  
before. As a result, doubt about the practice and  
regret about having started it might arise. What really  
happens is that the pain is magnified by the power of  
concentration. Watching insects with a magnifying  
glass makes them also look huge and dangerous.

At this stage it is essential to be patient and cul-  
tivate a heroic effort to watch the pain being expe-  
rienced. With the deepening of insight there will  
very likely be nonidentification with the pain. Then  
there will be only bare noting and bare sensations.  
One must not be afraid of pain or even death. In all  
of Sayādaw's experience there has not been a single  
person who died because of his encounter with pain  
in the course of meditation. One should therefore be  
like a fearless warrior.

The other quality to cultivate here is patience. This  
practice is indeed a good test of valour, patience, and  
strength of mind. So try your very best not to move  
and give in. Just freeze and watch. Once one is able  
to overcome this initial difficulty, then one has gained  
confidence in one's own strength and effort. A lot of  
energy and concentration will also build up. This vic-  
tory over fear and oppression by pain develops good  
qualities. One will have real appreciation for the work  
of insight and is very likely to encounter special expe-  
riences in the future.



### ● Pleasant Feelings

Pleasant feelings arise in both body and mind as comfort and happiness. If one is not mindful when they arise, one tends to be swayed by craving. One wishes them to last longer and this gives rise to never-ending desire. The Buddha taught that feelings are a condition for craving. One therefore should check this link by noting it at the very moment of its occurrence. When doing so, one can also penetrate into its true nature.

#### TWO TYPES OF PLEASANT SENSATIONS:

1. worldly
2. meditative

There are two types of pleasant sensations, *worldly pleasant sensations*, such as those induced by good sights, sounds, odours, tastes, touches, and thoughts, and *pleasant sensations* that are strictly *concerned with meditation*. The latter ones arise when the practice deepens. One experiences tremendous peace and calm. There is also a lot of buoyancy and satisfaction. The mind becomes bright and alert. These pleasant experiences are quite remote from sensual pleasures, but if the yogi is still not well-trained, there remains a tendency to get attached to them.

The Buddha once posed a riddle for one who is bent on peace:

*One neither allows the mind to  
wander outside nor to stop inside.  
If one is able to do that  
one will experience true peace.*

*Wandering outside* means to be careless when sensual objects strike the eye, ear, nose, etc., and the mind runs after them. It is like a child up to mischief behind the parents' back. If the parents are wise and



understanding, they can help by being strict. Therefore, one must try to free the mind through disciplined attention from mindless running after sense pleasures.

Actually, the pleasant sensation arising at the moment an external object contacts the mind is kammically indeterminate. The danger lies in the *reaction* to it, for example, when one allows craving for a continued experience of it to arise. So the first step is to be mindful and clean up any possible reaction. As a result the mind becomes bright and peaceful. Many pleasant sensations such as thrills and rapture will follow. One may even enter stages of extreme calmness and coolness. Again there is a danger of a lot of satisfaction arising after allowing a subtle form of craving to creep in. This is called *stopping inside* or *stagnating within*. The antidote is again to be mindful and note every arising.

If a traveller is on a journey to meet a friend, she cannot afford to stop too long at some pleasant places along the way. Doing so, she may be exposing herself to dangers and miss the appointment. So she has to go according to the schedule.

After the yogi has overcome this subtle craving, he needs to keep on noting whatever arises. Impeccable mindfulness which prevents wandering outside and stagnating inside will lead to the true happiness for which one aspires.

#### ● Neutral Feelings

It is natural for pleasant feelings to arise after meeting with an agreeable object and unpleasant feelings after meeting with a disagreeable object. Similarly, neutral

feelings follow after meeting with a neither agreeable nor disagreeable object. However, it is difficult for beginners to spot these indifferent or neutral feelings. Daily one meets with a lot of neutral objects. For example, one may glance at a stone or a pebble. At the very moment of contact there is neutral feeling. It also occurs with sounds, smells, tastes, touch sensations, and thoughts. In the instructions for the beginner, one is told to concentrate on prominent objects. Among the feelings one should watch are pleasant feelings and painful feelings rather than neutral feelings.

As practice deepens, one will be able to distinguish these more subtle indifferent feelings too. They become very distinct starting from the insight knowledge of dissolution up to the insight knowledge of equanimity about formations, where they become most obvious. This latter stage is a peaceful and tranquil state where one has a lot of energy and can silently watch and meditate for long hours. At this point again one can easily become attached to the tranquillity and may convince oneself that one has at last attained to the Special Dhamma.

But as long as one is still clinging to good practice there is a tendency to stagnate. The strategy to combat subtle attachment is to be very mindful of the specific and universal characteristics of neutral feelings. For the yogi at the stage of equanimity about formations it is even more important to be continuous and relentless in the effort throughout the day. Having overcome this attachment, one may experience a jump into emptiness while clearly watching the object; that means a disappearing of the noting mind.

## CONTEMPLATION OF MENTAL OBJECTS

Mental objects here can be interpreted as *natural phenomena* which are experienced directly through any of the six sense doors and are empty of a permanent entity.

### ● The Process of Seeing

Firstly, let us investigate a set of prominent mental objects involved in the act of seeing. The process may be compared to the striking of a match (striker) on the box (receptor) to produce a flame (ignition). There are three component parts present for it to occur:

- a. the visual object (striker)
- b. the eye basis (receptor)
- c. the seeing consciousness (ignition)

#### FOUR PROCESSES:

1. process of seeing
2. process of hearing
3. process of touching
4. process of knowing

The receptor or the sensitivity of the eye is a natural phenomenon. It is the sensitive material basis for the reception of the visual object. It is egoless and liable to change. At the moment of contact between the striker (visual object) and receptor (eye basis), there is ignition (the Seeing consciousness). The striker and the ignition, like the receptor, are egoless and liable to change. Each of these phenomena also has its peculiar or unique characteristics. These three elements occur *simultaneously* during the act of seeing.

In meditation this act can be noted in a general way with the use of the convenient label *seeing*. When noting it, the mind will be able to pick up any one of the three elements which happen to be predominant at that particular moment. If one is able to take note in this way, one is said to be contemplating mental

objects. One has to penetrate the unique characteristics and see the cause and effect relationship between these elements. If one is not mindful and does not see the impersonality of these natural phenomena, one is overcome by ignorance. Heedlessness is also the cause of craving for any of the three elements to arise. One may crave to see, be attached to the eye, or feel lust for the object seen. When craving increases it turns into grasping, to indulgence in sensuality and the wrong belief in a self or soul.

**TWO PROMINENT  
CHARACTERISTICS  
OF DEFILEMENTS:**

1. oppressive  
mental objects
2. like strong heat  
(burn like a fire)

Fear arises because clinging knows no bounds. Clinging is a *sticky attachment*. The knowing frees one from craving. There are two prominent characteristics with these *sticky defilements*. They are *oppressive mental objects*. There arises a lot of frustration while trying to get the objects craved for. There is also a lot of suffering from the possessive guarding of obtained objects and the inevitable separation from them either during one's lifetime or at the moment of death.

The defilements are like *strong heat*. Craving, clinging, lust, etc., burn like a fire. The mind is burning while scheming to get something or even more when one is unsuccessful in getting it. A fire burns off the fuel leaving only filth and ashes. Similarly, defilements burn us, leaving our minds dirty and unhappy. Knowing this, let one build up an efficient and effective defence, mobilizing the fire brigade of mindfulness to put out the raging fire of defilements.

*Not knowing, one clings;  
clinging brings fear.  
Knowing is freeing;  
freedom is clear peace.*

### ●The Process of Hearing

At the moment of hearing there also occur three elements:

- a. sound (striker)
- b. ear base (receptor)
- c. hearing consciousness (ignition)

If one is unmindful, there is ignorance and therefore one tends to cling to pleasant sounds or has aversion towards sounds one does not like. One tends to think that *I am hearing*, and one gets attached to the physical ear as well. Unless one is mindful, one cannot successfully penetrate into their true nature.

When one is unmindful, three cycles start running, the cycles of *defilements*, of *actions*, and of *results*.

For example, one might hear a sweet singing sound of a person of the opposite sex. If one is not mindful, one first clings to the sound. If unchecked, one clings also to the song. Further, there can be a shift of clinging to the singer and all these types of clinging perpetuate the *cycle of defilements*. This leads to desire for possession, which will result in a lot of scheming and actions which are fuel for the cycle of actions. One might even resort to illegal and immoral means to obtain the craved objects. All this is bound to make us reap kammic results. This is the cycle of results.

Therefore, if one does not nip the defilements in the bud, the cycles will start rolling and create a lot of becoming: continued rebirths and suffering. But if one is in the habit of being mindful and at once notes

#### THE THREE CYCLES:

1. cycles of defilements
2. cycle of actions
3. cycle of results

the process as hearing, one would at times be able to notice the most prominent one of the three elements. One might penetrate intuitively into the true nature of that element. Then the cycle of defilements will be cut off. So will the cycle of actions and their results. The same principle applies to the conscious processes occurring at the other sense doors.



*Seeing, hearing,  
sensing and knowing.  
Don't be careless.  
Note! Note!*

### The Process of Touching

When one is watching the rising and falling process of the abdomen the three elements are likewise present. The *body base* is like the receptor, the *sensations* manifested as tension, tightness, movement, vibrations, relaxation and so on are like the striker, and the *body or touching consciousness* is like the ignition. The purpose of watching the processes is to penetrate deeply into the nature of these three elements.

The defilements we mentioned above can be classified into three types in terms of intensity. The most gross are the **defilements of transgression**, that is, the breaking of one's precepts, or the stepping over the rights of others. The medium gross defilements are **obsessive defilements** that occur purely at the mental level and do not manifest in physical action or speech. The most subtle defilements lie **latent**, having the potential to arise given the appropriate conditions.

**INTENSITY OF  
DEFILEMENTS:**  
1. transgressive  
2. obsessive  
3. latent

In taking the five or eight precepts lay people on retreat accomplish the three path factors of right action, speech, and livelihood. This pure conduct has the quality of abandoning the defilements of transgression. The right effort, mindfulness, and concentration which are also developed have the ability to abandon defilements at the mental level. But it requires right aim and right understanding, the two factors of the insight group of the Eightfold Path, in a developed form, to cut off the latent defilements. Therefore, when one practises the foundations of mindfulness, every time one is clearly aware of the observed object, there is purification of the defilements at the three levels. Even if one has still yet to reach the state of nobility through enlightenment, the latent tendencies are temporarily abandoned in the sense that they have no room to arise.

The latent defilements can be understood in two ways. As impurities that can arise within the continuity of existence of a being in *samsāra*; they arise when conditions are favourable for their arising. They are called **latent defilements in continuity**. Or they can be understood as impurities that can arise in connection with all clear objects of mind and body. They arise when the conditions are favourable and when the perceived objects are not understood through *vipassanā* insight as they really are. These are called **latent defilements in objects**. Latent defilements can only be uprooted by the noble attainment of enlightenment.

It is these three types of defilements that cause turmoil and conflicts in those whom they afflict. True

- LATENT  
DEFILEMENTS:**
1. in continuity
  2. in objects



missionary work involves first the establishment of the Dhamma in oneself before one can share it with others. Only when one is at peace with oneself will one also be at peace with others. This peace will shine forth from one's own heart and encompass the hearts of others. Without the practice of insight meditation one is like a dry parched desert. Existence is meaningless. But one who is established in mindfulness and insight is like an oasis that is cool, fresh, and alive.

### ● The Process of Knowing

The process at the mind door is similar to that of the eye or ear door (*see above*) since three different elements give rise to mental processes:

- a. the mental object (striker)
- b. the mind element (receptor)
- c. the mind consciousness element (ignition)

#### MENTAL OBJECTS:

1. 5 sensitivities
2. 16 subtle material qualities
3. 89 consciousness
4. 52 mental factors
5. Nibbāna
6. concepts

#### MIND ELEMENT:

1. life-continuum consciousness (*bhavanga citta*)
2. mind door advertent consciousness

The *mental objects* include five sensitivities (which are eye base, ear base, nose, tongue and body base); sixteen subtle material qualities (including the water element); all classes of consciousness; all mental factors; Nibbāna and concepts. All these are ultimate realities, except for concepts.

Two classes of consciousness make up the *mind element*: life-continuum consciousness (*bhavanga citta*) which occurs during deep dreamless sleep, and the mind-door advertent consciousness.

The *mind consciousness element* includes all classes of consciousness which can imagine or think, like seeing images, visions, hallucinations in the mind, hearing sounds in the mind, and the like.

The *material basis* for the mind is the heart base. Although not specifically named, it is stated in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka that consciousness and the associated mental factors have a material basis. Commentators say that this material basis is located in the clear blood found within the anatomical heart: thus the term *heart base*. Modern science, however, refers its site to the brain. One may question how the latter assertion is possible since the rebirth consciousness arises simultaneously with this material basis and at that time, just after the moment of fertilization, the brain, eyes, etc., have yet to develop. If one's insight develops, one can experience directly the site of the mind consciousness element within the heart.

All objects arising at the mind door, with the exception of concepts and Nibbāna, can be used for insight practice. That is, one should note all activities of the mind. If one is not mindful while thinking, one tends to think that there is someone behind the process. But if one is mindful, one will know that there is actually no one, no self or soul which is thinking. There are just mental phenomena behaving according to their true nature: impermanent, unsatisfactory, and egoless.

Mental objects occupy a very wide range. Here we shall look at five categories.

- i. At the moment of *seeing* it is possible that the yogi when concentrated and mindful picks up the eye sensitivity in one of the three ways, that is, as the sensitivity that allows visual objects in, as the connection between the seeing consciousness

and the visual object, or as the physical basis upon which the seeing process depends. The same can be applied to the other sensitivities.

- ii. When experiencing physical sensations such as trickling, solidity, heat, hardness, etc., one may experience them in lumps. This *cohesive quality* is actually the characteristic of the *element of water*. It is always experienced together with another element, like hardness (earth element), heat (fire element), or pressure (air element). While watching the cohesion one is contemplating a mental object, as the water element cannot be directly experienced at the body door.
- iii. One object for the contemplation of mental objects is picked up usually after meals: the *nutritive essence*. It can be felt as increased strength, together with fullness of the belly and tightness of the body.
- iv. One is also contemplating mental objects when observing the *five hindrances*: sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt. When craving for attractive objects arises one might come to know of it automatically or one might note it deliberately as *sensual desire*. Then one is contemplating a mental object. While noting, one may come to know the cause for the arising of these hindrances, the cause for overcoming them, and the cause of their eradication. This is also contemplation of mental objects.

**FIVE HINDRANCES**

**(NIVARANA):**

1. sensual desire
2. ill-will
3. sloth & torpor
4. restlessness & worry
5. sceptical doubt

v. Included in the field of contemplation of mental objects are the **seven factors of enlightenment**, namely:

1. **Mindfulness** : Mindfulness becomes obvious at the stage of the insight knowledge into arising and passing away of phenomena. At that point it is clear that mindfulness and its corresponding object occur in pairs. This mindfulness is the *enlightenment factor of mindfulness*.

2. **Investigation of States** : Investigation of states actually refers to insight knowledge itself. At times, as intuitive insight knowledge arises, there is a looking back on it and acknowledging it. This is a contemplation of mental objects, that is, watching the *enlightenment factor of investigations of states*.

3. **Energy** : At a certain point in the practice one may notice that even without any deliberate or special exertion effort comes about automatically and evenly. One is then aware of the *enlightenment factor of energy*, which is another instance of contemplation of mental objects.

4. **Joyful Interest** : Similarly when insight knowledge arises, it may occur with various forms of joyful interest or deep satisfaction. When one takes note of this, one is watching the *enlightenment factor of joy*.

**SEVEN FACTORS OF ENLIGHTENMENT (BOJJHANGA):**

1. mindfulness
2. investigation of states
3. energy
4. joyful interest / rapture
5. calmness / tranquillity
6. concentration
7. equanimity

5. **Calmness** : Again, at that stage, one also experiences ease of body and mind. Being free from worries one is tranquil. This is the *enlightenment factor of calmness*.
6. **Concentration** : Furthermore, the mind keeps on sinking, penetrating into whatever arises. That is, the mind is not scattered but collected, falling accurately onto the object observed. This is the *enlightenment factor of one-pointed concentration*.
7. **Equanimity** : Lastly, the mind becomes very balanced. It is observantly noting with composure all pleasant and unpleasant phenomena appearing in its field of awareness, without reacting either positively or negatively to them. This balanced state is the *enlightenment factor of equanimity*.

## **PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS**

The immediate benefit of the practice of the foundations of mindfulness is the development of the seven factors of enlightenment, which eventually will lead to the utter release from suffering. A by-product of the practice are changes in material phenomena. In the Saṃyutta Nikāya the Buddha once commented that one who has regrets and remorse over the past, and worries and craving for the future, will not be blessed with health, beauty, and the like. But if one does not have remorse, worry, or craving for things of the past and future, but is easily satisfied, then one

will have a complexion that is pleasant and clear.

When a yogi is engrossed in insight meditation, he is, with every moment of mindfulness, developing special qualities manifested as light, joyful contentment, and other nonsensual ecstasies. One becomes very calm, and with the deepening of practice, mindfulness and insight arise to abandon the mental defilements. This also brings about a radical change for the better in the physiological system, especially in the blood circulation. As a result there is heightened awareness and sensitivity through the sense organs. What is more, there have also been cases of yogis being cured of many chronic ailments and diseases. I will cite two cases.

● **Case A**

Fifteen years ago at the Mahāsī branch centre in Moulmein, Myanmar, there was a man suffering from stomach ulcer. He had been advised by a physician to undergo a surgical operation. Being afraid that he might die, he decided to put it off and went to do meditation instead. After one week, he had a relapse and he suffered intense pain. If not for the teacher's encouragement, he would have given up. By the third week he felt the ulcer stiffen, which gave rise to a lot of pain. But by then the concentration and mindfulness had increased and he could endure it. At one point he lost all sense of bodily form and there was only the mindful consciousness noting pain. There was detachment while watching phenomena arising and passing away.

Then once he heard a loud sound of the ulcer bursting. He was cured of the ailment! He no longer had to avoid certain types of food, nor to undergo the operation. After the retreat his eyes and skin became very clear and bright. He had even put on weight. Ever since he has been helping the Buddha's dispensation in many ways.

● **Case B**

There was a lady who had high blood pressure for thirty years. She had spent a lot of money consulting physicians but to no avail. About ten years ago she came to practise meditation in the meditation centre. After a while there was a lot of tension and pain in her brain, and at times she felt as if the blood vessels were at the point of bursting. Though her relatives pleaded with her to go back, she endured the pain and continued the practice of pinpointing the pain whenever it arose, until she even felt giddy at times. Later a lot of heat began to emanate, together with profuse sweating, followed by a stinking odour coming out of her armpits. As she persisted noting observantly, the heat subsided and her whole body eventually cooled down. After that she was completely cured of high blood pressure.

Many yogis have been cured through the practice of the foundations of mindfulness, that is to say, through the development of the enlightenment factors, especially of ailments connected with the blood, stomach, and nerves. In the Pāḷi Canon, we also come across the Buddha and his close disciples being cured by this practice. Mahākassapa once became



ill because of unhealthy food. His sense organs dulled. When the Buddha recited to him the factors of enlightenment he listened and reflected on how he had first become a monk and within one week of practice had penetrated the Four Noble Truths and perfected the development of the seven factors. As a result of this reflection there was an upsurge of joy and he was filled with praise for the Buddha and his teachings. After that his faculties and complexion became very clear.

The factors of enlightenment have great power and potency. They are said to be the most effective medicine. Though this practice of the four foundations of mindfulness is essentially the process of purification of the mind, it can also result in the purification of the body.



*“The last and best way to arouse energy is persistently to incline the mind toward developing energy. The key to this practice is to adopt a resolute stand. ‘I will be as mindful as I can at each moment, sitting, standing, walking, going from place to place. I will not allow the mind to space out. I will not allow a moment of mindfulness to be missing.’”*

*~Sayādaw U Paṇḍita, In This Very Life*





## CHAPTER FOUR

# Arousing Skillful States

We are always surrounded by objects with the potential to elicit unwholesome reactions of the mind. Paying attention to **four avenues of mental habits** can ensure a higher degree of safety in the face of tempting objects. They are essential in arousing skillful states to counteract mental pollutions.

#### FOUR AVENUES OF MENTAL HABITS:

1. restriction
2. reorientation
3. consecutive occurrence
4. giving apt attention

The first habit is **restriction**. It is the skillful confinement of the mind to wholesome states:

*“May my mind dwell only in  
the field of wholesome states.”*

This is a powerful force which carries on even when one meets with strong objects that tend to stimulate unwholesome mental activities. For example, before one goes to a busy town, one can resolve not to cause an accident. As a result, one drives into town very mindfully. Similarly, one may resolve to abstain from harmful food even though it tastes very nice. In the same way a resolve can restrict the mind

to dwell only in the realm of mindfulness.

The second is the habit of reorientation. Despite the resolution of restriction, the mind may still wander to unwholesome states of mind. When this happens, one should disengage from those unwholesome states and reorient it to wholesomeness. That is, one should bring the mind back to the principal object of meditation. For example, a foolish driver may cause one to swerve from one's lane, but afterwards one brings the car back to where it should go. In the practice of insight meditation, one is supposed to note whatever arises, but there are times when one is unable to handle predominant object effectively. That is to say, the strong object tends to take the mind away to unwholesome states. At such a time, it is wiser to disengage it from the interven in object and reorient it to the primary meditation object. This is really a technique of tranquillity meditation rather than insight meditation. The latter can handle any dominant object for its contemplation.

The third accomplishment of mental habit is called **consecutive occurrence**. This is a mastery that comes from continuous practice. As a result of uninterrupted mindfulness, one becomes progressively more skilful in maintaining wholesome mental states. There will come a time when one will not be drawn even to a very attractive object. The foundation for this is twofold, in that one has firm confidence in the practice of insight and one's motivation is pure and noble. After the establishment of the foundation one has to exert a lot of effort to develop the power of accuracy and mindfulness. Unbroken mindfulness

leads to wholesome states occurring consecutively, culminating in the power of mind to stay unaffected even at times of crisis, and in the realization of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self.

The fourth accomplishment is the ability to give **apt attention** whenever encountering attractive, repulsive, or delusive objects, as a natural inclination arising from supportive kammic and social conditioning. To be able to develop apt attention four conditions need to be fulfilled. These conditions carry the name of **four wheels of fulfilment**:

- i. A **suitable locality** is required, where one can find conducive social conditions that can bring about wholesome actions. That is, one can find the four classes of the Buddha's following—monks, nuns, male and female devotees and can practise generosity, morality, and meditation. In other words, it is a place where Buddha Dhamma is flourishing and expressed in the life of the people.
  
- ii. Once one has found a suitable locality, then one also needs **suitable company**. The most important people to influence one's spiritual growth are one's parents, teachers, and intimate friends. If one associates with those who are always kind and considerate, and are pure in their deeds, not malicious, who hold *dhammic* values in high esteem, then one is able to develop a lot of spiritual enthusiasm and a sense of urgency to perform meritorious actions. One can also hear a lot of Dhamma and have an opportunity to discuss it regularly.

**FOUR WHEELS  
OF FULFILMENT:**

1. suitable locality
2. suitable company
3. suitable moulding  
of oneself
4. one's past  
meritorious  
actions

- iii. When with the help of one's good friends, one has gained understanding of the teachings, then it is up to oneself to value, cherish, and practise these spiritual principles correctly. By **skillful moulding of oneself** one achieves perfection in morality, purity of mind, and insight by penetrating the Dhamma and getting a glimpse of Nibbāna. Then it doesn't matter where one is, because the spiritual values have become an integral part of oneself and will never be lost.
  
- iv. That one has this wonderful opportunity to come across a suitable locality, rely upon good people, and find success in skilfully moulding oneself is because of **one's fast meritorious actions**. The results of these past deeds help to create in the present an environment most conducive to spiritual growth.





## CHAPTER FIVE

# THE Ten Armies OF Māra

At one time the Buddha addressed his monks: “Listen, monks, I will tell you the weapon that will completely pulverize the army of Māra. It is nothing other than the seven factors of enlightenment.”

Meditation is actually a battle between the inner forces of good and evil. Most people are at the mercy of the evil forces.

A weak mind, on meeting with an object likely to trigger off greed, hatred, and delusion, gets swept away by unwholesome tendencies. Therefore, these people are trapped in the vicious cycle of *samsāra* for a long time. One may doubt the possibilities of overcoming evil, but effort is a very potent force. One can use it to conquer the seemingly powerful forces of Māra.<sup>4</sup> Defensive tactics too are needed, and with each step of progress in insight a battle is won. The armed forces of Māra are ten in number.

Māra's first army is sensual pleasures. They fall into the two groups of the sensual objects and the hankering for them. The hankering after these

### NOTES.....

- 4 In Pāli term *Māra* is derived from a Pāli word meaning ‘death’. Māra is the personification of the force of ignorance, delusion, and craving that kills virtue as well as life.



**TEN ARMIES OF  
MĀRA:**

1. sensuous pleasures
2. dissatisfaction
3. hunger & thirst
4. craving
5. sloth & torpor
6. fear
7. doubts
8. conceit
9. gain, fame & obstinacy
10. over-estimation & exaltation of oneself while disparaging others

objects is a vicious cycle, a perpetual drowning. One has to overcome it to start treading the path, but total conquest occurs only at the third stage of enlightenment. Although one might not yet have overcome it completely, there is a radical change in one's attitude towards these pleasures at the stage of knowledge of rise and fall. Delight in the mental object will make sensual pleasures look unworthy.

His second army is **dissatisfaction**. Those of you from an affluent society may find the routine in the intensive meditation retreat rather boring. You may also become unhappy with the lower quality of food and the lack of comfort in the meditation centre. But if the dissatisfaction is mindfully noted, one can get over it and carry on with the meditation, the path of purification.

His third is **hunger and thirst**. The dissatisfaction will drive the yogi to thirst for good things such as special kinds of facilities or food. But at the stage of insight into rise and fall of phenomena one realizes that the mental object is itself very sumptuous food.

The fourth army is **craving**. Craving comes from being deprived of what one likes. Frequent disappointment, for instance in shattered hopes of getting fruits and cakes at lunch or of having something other than rice gruel and beans for breakfast, leads to a frantic effort to search and get what one craves for. But again, at the stage of rise and fall the yogis realize that there is no taste that can beat the taste of the Dhamma. Then there is no more of that familiar hankering.

**Sloth and torpor** is the fifth army. When one is unable to stop the hunger and frantic search to gratify one's sensual desires, one gets exhausted by many ingenious schemes and clandestine activities. As a result mindfulness slackens and one finds the mind at the mercy of Māra's fifth army, lethargy and sleepiness.

This army is completely overcome only in a fully enlightened person. Nevertheless, as the factors of enlightenment are developed, one dispenses with more and more sleep. In fact, at the insight stage of rise and fall, one is boosted up with energy. This energy can go on by itself. One becomes accomplished in energy as the mind is crystal clear, fresh and alert. We are told in the Aṅguttara Nikāya that Moggallāna encountered sloth and torpor while striving for the higher stages of enlightenment. The Buddha gave some pointers and a strategy to combat this fifth army of Māra:

- a. Sleepiness is aggravated by thoughts that encourage rest or taking a nap. One should therefore make a *firm resolution* to put away such lazy thoughts at once and strive on with vigour. One can also choose to *increase the number of objects* to watch. For example, if there is an interval between the rising and the falling of the abdomen, it can be filled in with either notings, for instance of the sitting posture or of various touch points. The second method can be illustrated with a simile. There is a bright child in the class who finds the work easy and gets bored. His boredom

**ANTIDOTES TO SLOTH & TORPOR:**

1. firm resolution
2. accurate application of the mind on the object
3. recitation
4. mental recollection
5. pulling the ear lobes or rubbing the body
6. washing or splashing the face
7. visualizing light
8. brisk walking
9. graceful surrender

can be challenged with an increase in his work load.

- b. The characteristic of sloth and torpor is a shrunken state which does not pick up objects easily. The opposite is *accurate application* of the mind on the object. For example one makes the mind note precisely each rise and fall. This has the power to open and refresh the mind.
- c. In the advice to Moggallāna, the Buddha recommended the *recitation* of inspiring passages. But care should be taken that this does not disturb the other yogis.
- d. The *mental recollection* of inspiring passages of the Dhamma is also invigorating.
- e. *Pulling* the ear lobes, *rubbing* the body, head and limbs vigorously helps to stimulate the blood circulation and thus clears up drowsiness.
- f. One may also *wash* or *splash* the face with cold water and then look mindfully in all directions, for example at the sky full of stars.
- g. One may also *visualize light*, the moon, stars, etc., or actually sit in a lighted room. Another interpretation of this perception of light is the creation of an intense wish to see more clearly what one is actually doing.
- h. If all the above six methods fail, then one can get up to do *brisk walking*. But bear in mind that while doing so, one has to be very mindful and restrained in the senses, while

trying to keep the mind concentrated on the process of walking.

- i. If this still does not work, then it is time for a *graceful surrender*. That is, go to bed mindfully, lying down in “the lion’s posture.”<sup>5</sup> Before sleeping, set the alarm—not of the clock but in the mind—and then continue to watch the rising and falling processes of the abdomen. At the very moment of waking up, be mindful. A very short nap is allowable in the case of sleepiness due to a heavy meal. But this should not be longer than the time it takes for the hair of a monk to dry!

Māra’s sixth army is **fear**. It can arise in the meditator who lives in the forest and deter him in the practice. Sounds which may lead to images of non-existent ghosts or wild beasts can produce fear. In meditation centres in the city these sorts of incidents may not be so obvious. But this sixth army of Māra can assume the form of dread of interviews, disappointment, inferiority complex, self-pity, and all sorts of paranoia. If we are able to transcend all these, we will have a lot of inspirations instead.

The seventh army is **doubt**. A yogi may begin to doubt the authenticity of others’ reports, one’s own capability (*maybe I don’t have enough pāramīs ...*) and the method of practice (*this method is great for others but maybe it doesn’t suit me ...*), the teacher (*even during the Buddha’s time different people had affinities with different teachers ...*), and so on. Doubt is yet another formidable army of Māra.

**NOTE**.....

- 5 The lion’s posture is the Buddha’s way to rest, lying on the right side and sustaining the head with the right arm.

The eighth army is **conceit**. When the practice becomes better one may have many unusual experiences. As a result one may feel that one has attained to some supernormal state. When assaulted by this subversive force of Māra, one is not willing to listen to the teacher's instructions and may begin to look down on other peoples' practice or other traditions. One may even end up being a fanatic.

The ninth army comes in the form of **gains, fame, and reverence** as a result of good practice. One can easily become attached to all these, thus slackening in one's own practice. This is comparable to the rare flowers of a bamboo that spell the end of the plant.

Māra's tenth and last army can arise out of the respect and homage shown by people, which tempt the yogi to greatly **overestimate** and exalt himself or herself while **disparaging** others.

The yogi who cannot defeat the armies of Māra is like a titan who lacks courageous effort. One who has the ability to win each and every battle is indeed endowed with heroic effort. There are three phases of heroic effort, the *launching phase* whereby the initial effort is made, the *booster phase* when increased effort is required to overcome the assault by hindrances, pain, and so forth, and the *sustaining phase* when practice is good. In the last phase one still has to keep looking out for infiltration by subversive elements from Māra's armies like pride, complacency, fame, gains, veneration, etc., and clear them up. The energy needed for this clearing up operation comes from the touchdown phase that leads to final victory in the war with Māra. At this stage one must still

**THREE PHASES  
OF EFFORT:**

1. launching phase
2. booster phase
3. sustaining phase

remind oneself that the end of the journey is not yet reached.

As there are enemies within and without, so wars are fought internally and externally. The external wars should be avoided at all instances. They cause immense suffering and senseless destruction. But the energetic and mindful resistance to the mental corruptions is a cause of much peace and happiness. Weapons of war are lethal but are also subject to wear and tear with continued use. In the days of old, for instance, the more heads were cut off, the blunter the warrior's sword became.

The weapons employed in the war with Māra's armed forces, however, are not only effective, formidable, and powerful, but increase in efficiency and sharpness with frequent usage. For example, the more continuously mindfulness is used, the sharper it becomes, enabling wisdom to penetrate into even more profound depths of reality. With the deepening of practice heroic effort is strengthened, as the spiritual weapons are incredibly sharpened, until one cuts through all delusion with a single strike and attains enlightenment.



*“Normally when a person dies, people grieve and cry out in deep sorrow. There is lamenting, wailing, sadness to see a being leave this world. For an arahant who has uprooted all the imaginable kilesas (defilements), however, death is something to look forward to. ‘At last this mass of suffering can be discarded. This is my last life. I’ll have no more confrontation with suffering but only bliss in the haven of Nibbāna,’ he or she can say.”*

*~Sayādaw U Paṇḍita, In This Very Life*







## CHAPTER SIX

# Nibbāna

Nibbāna is said to be a reality just like consciousness, mental factors, and matter. It is therefore not a mere concept or imagination. It is also a mistaken view that the Noble Ones have a special mind-body complex or a special core to the mind-body complex. It is, however, true that Nibbāna cannot be really described to one who has not realized it. One description is *freedom from all suffering*, that is, *peace*. It is something better than all the good things in life. The Dhamma classifies happiness as of two kinds, happiness *associated with feelings* (like pleasure) and happiness *dissociated from feelings*, which refers to the peace of Nibbāna. The first kind of happiness is *conditioned* by three factors: the base, the object, and consciousness. The second kind of happiness is Nibbāna which is *unconditioned*.

The first kind of happiness, sensual pleasure, lasts a short time but one has to work hard to get it. One can also get sick of sense pleasures. In the search for them, one encounters a lot of suffering. In the final

### TWO KINDS OF HAPPINESS

1. happiness associated with feelings — sensual pleasures
2. happiness dissociated from feelings — the peace of Nibbāna

analysis these sense pleasures are impermanent, troublesome, and illusory.

For ordinary folks, happiness is bound up with feelings. They cannot think of it dissociated from feelings. So their satisfaction in life is sensual pleasures because they can't think of it otherwise. To illustrate that there can be a happiness which is not associated with sensual pleasure, we take the example of a millionaire who can enjoy many things like food, music, etc. After enjoying sensual pleasures he goes to bed and sleeps so soundly that he does not want to wake up.

When someone does indeed wake him up, so that he is able to enjoy all the blissful pleasures of the senses again, he gets angry. Why? Because that sleep, though not directly a sensual pleasure, is a kind of happiness.

Suffering in this world originates from the defilements. In order to overcome suffering, to get nibbanic peace, we have to remove the cause. Therefore yogis practise mindfulness, which guards against the defilements arising from moment to moment at the six sense doors. When they do so they are at least temporarily released and have peace. But if one is vigilant and persistent one can reach the peace that is timeless!



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## **THE ELEPHANT'S FOOTPRINT OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING**

*“Just as the footprint of  
any beings which moves about,  
falls within the confines of  
an elephant's footprint and the  
elephant's footprint is reckoned  
as the biggest of the footprints  
on account of its greatness,  
even so, whatsoever  
good qualities there are,  
all of them are based on  
heedfulness, converge in  
heedfulness, and heedfulness is  
considered to be the highest of  
all these qualities.”*

~Majjhima Nikāya

### **THE WAY OF THE WORLD**

**A**t one time the Buddha was asked by King Kosala "Is there any one quality which if possessed will benefit one's welfare in this life and in future lives?" Before we can understand the Buddha's simple answer we must know what one's welfare or needs are. We need or want many things and the Buddha has concisely enumerated them for us. It is self-evident that all beings want to have a long life with good health, and to be able to work for one's own and others' welfare and prosperity.

*"Good health is wealth."*

So too, one wishes to be beautiful or handsome, not ugly or deformed, so that one will be well-liked. Even the Buddha gave due consideration to the role of beauty. He considered that ideally one should look respectable, be venerable and properly shaped to work for the benefit of all beings. If given a choice

one would also want to have a high standard of living where one can enjoy and indulge in pleasures such as delicious food, pleasant music, luxurious clothes and homes in beautiful surroundings, — in short, a material paradise. Some say life in America or Hawaii is like this!

Finally, one wishes to be considered a person of high status. It can be seen from history that irrespective of their geographical locations, the ruling class and the highly educated have been held in the highest esteem. This is the classification by worldly standards and not that of the Buddha. It is the way of the world. The Buddha would however classify as high status one who acts, speaks and thinks in a blameless, flawless manner for the benefit of oneself and others.

Other than these five desires (long life, health, beauty, high standard of living and status) of human society, what else does one need? Fulfillment of these five things is said to be the cause for happiness and satisfaction in human life. Fulfillment would of course vary between village and city and between different societies and just as there are differences in degree of happiness and satisfaction in the worldly or mundane sphere, so too there are differences in degree within the *dhamma* sphere. The satisfaction and happiness one gains by almsgiving (*dāna*) is different in degree than that from practising morality (*sīla*), which in turn is different in degree than the happiness and satisfaction one gets from concentration of mind (*samādhi*) and so on. There are also differences in degree of happiness and satisfaction gained from the various insight knowledges into the

**FIVE DESIRES**

1. long life
2. health
3. beauty
4. high standard of living
5. statue

**FOUR NOBLE  
INDIVIDUALS  
(ARIYA-PUGGALA):**

1. *Sotāpanna* —  
the Stream Winner
2. *Sakadāgāmi* —  
the Once-Returner
3. *Anāgāmi* —  
the Non-Returner
4. *Arahatta* —  
the Holy One

**TWO TYPE OF  
ENLIGHTENED  
BEINGS:**

1. *Paccekabuddha* —  
Independently  
Enlightened One,  
who has realized  
Nibbāna without  
having heard the  
Buddha's doctrine  
from others. He  
comprehends the  
4 Noble Truths  
individually and  
not in the capacity  
to proclaim the  
Teaching effectively  
to others.
2. *Sammā-sambuddha*  
— Universal  
Buddha or Fully  
Enlightened One,  
one by whom the  
liberating Law  
(*dhamma*) which  
had become lost  
to the world,  
has again been  
discovered,  
realized and clearly  
proclaimed to the  
world.

intrinsic nature of things (*vipassanā-nāṇa*) and the attainments of *sotāpanna*, *sakadāgāmi*, *anāgāmi*, *arahatta*, chief disciple (*aggasāvaka*), *Paccekabuddha* and *Sammāsambuddha*. Within either the mundane worldly sphere or the *dhamma* sphere, if one wants to attain or strive for a higher grade or the highest grade of happiness one must also ask oneself the question posed by King Kosala to the Buddha: "What quality must one possess or develop?"

**APPAMĀDA**

If one is alert and unflinching in abstaining from what will lower one's status and unflinching in observing what will uplift one's status, one will be able to win everything one needs. Just as when eating one must avoid taking unwholesome food to be free from discomfort and disease, so too one must abstain from unwholesome or immoral behaviour to be free from harm and danger. And just as one must consume wholesome food regularly and in sufficient quantity in order to quench one's hunger, maintain one's health and replenish one's energy, so too one must practise wholesome behaviour by body, speech and mind (*puñña-kiriya*) in order to uplift one's status to the highest degree in the mundane and *dhamma* spheres. Such practice should be made a habit which requires one to be unflinching, non-negligent and unforgetful in one's behaviour. Hence one must be heedful, diligent, alert, earnest and watchful, in short, living with mindfulness. In Pāli, the language of the Buddha, this is known as APPAMĀDA or EKADHAMMA. This was the Buddha's simple response to the question posed by King Kosala.



### PAMĀDA (NEGLIGENCE)

When one looks at how people live their lives one sees that the majority are unmindfully desiring and pursuing material objects and gain. Absent-minded and distracted their minds are enshrouded with ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving (*taṇhā*) as they resort to unwholesome speech and actions to get more pleasant sensual objects and to have less unpleasantness in their lives. Except for the time one is sleeping one is seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and knowing a great variety of available objects and if one does not know how to be mindful one finds that greed, desire or covetousness (*lobha*) enters the mind when one experiences a pleasant object and anger, ill-will or hatred (*dosa*) enters the mind when one experiences an unpleasant or painful object. Hence one is living with a mind filled with corruption or defilement (*kilesa*). And since one does not know the true nature of things one will be ignorant and deluded (*moha*) and hold wrong views (*diṭṭhi*). One will also experience or live with vanity, conceit, pride (*māna*), doubt (*vicikiccha*), sloth and torpor (*thina-middha*), restlessness, arrogance (*uddhacca*), moral shamelessness (*ahirika*) and moral fearlessness (*anottappa*) as one's constant companions.

When the mind is allowed to roam freely, filled with *lobha* and *dosa* it remains in a confused, lowly condition. It is human nature to have such an unrestrained mind which has developed since one was a baby at mother's breast and these *kilesas* have grown as one is accustomed to always seeking what one wants without restraint or consideration for others.

### 14 UNWHOLESOME

#### MENTAL FACTORS:

1. delusion (*moha*)
2. shamelessness (*ahirika*)
3. moral fearlessness or not having normal dread (*anottappa*)
4. restlessness or distraction (*uddhacca*)
5. greed or covetousness (*lobha*)
6. wrong views (*diṭṭhi*)
7. conceit (*māna*)
8. hatred or anger (*dosa*)
9. envy (*issā*)
10. jealousy or selfishness (*macchariya*)
11. worry (*kukkuccha*)
12. sloth (*thina*)
13. torpor (*middha*)
14. sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*)

One selfishly wants to satisfy oneself and would not tolerate any restriction or constraints. The fault also lies with parents who lack wisdom and blindly yield to a child's desires instead of controlling or restraining them. The parents lack training in mindfulness, have uncontrolled minds and thus fail to develop good behaviour in their children in body, speech and mind. Hence one begins life with two kinds of negligence (*pamāda*):

**TWO KINDS OF  
NEGLIGENCE**

**(PAMĀDA):**

1. failure to abstain
2. failure to observe

1. failure to abstain from what should be abstained from, and
2. failure to observe what should be observed.

This condition of negligence causes suffering in oneself and this suffering spreads throughout the society. Is it any wonder then that there is so much sorrow, unhappiness, dissatisfaction, discontentment, grief and rage in the world?

**PAMĀDA:**

- carelessness
- negligence
- indolence
- remissness

*Pamāda* is carelessness, negligence, indolence and remissness that permits one to perform unwholesome physical, verbal and mental deeds which cause harm to oneself and others. This results from a basic lack of sympathy for others and the effects of our actions on them. All beings fear pain, punishment, death and no one wants to be harmed, lied to, slandered, robbed, tormented, sexually abused, etc. By putting ourselves in another's position we will feel sympathy for others, and we will realize that we should abstain from behaviour which would inflict physical and mental pain and suffering upon any being. Failure to do so is not befitting a human being, in fact, we could say that one has failed to become a proper human being.

*All are afraid of the stick,  
all fear death.*

*Putting oneself in another's place,  
one should not beat or kill others.*

*All are afraid of the stick,  
all hold their lives dear.*

*Putting oneself in another's place,  
one should not beat or kill others.*

*He who seeks his own happiness  
by oppressing others who  
also desire happiness will not find  
happiness in his next existence.*

*He who seeks his own happiness  
by not oppressing others who  
also desire to have happiness will find  
happiness in his next existence.*

~Dhammapada 129-132

Though the Buddha pointed out this (above) moral precept, it is not meant to be practised by Buddhists alone but should be recognised as a universal precept or universal law. All should conduct themselves by body and speech for the welfare of all beings especially human beings. Failure to abstain from unbecoming behaviour is negligence (*pamāda*) as is failure to behave in a sympathetic manner conducive for the welfare of all beings.

**THREE BASES OF  
MERITORIOUS  
ACTIONS:**

**(PUÑÑA-KIRIYĀ-  
VATTHU):**

1. generosity (*dāna*)
2. morality (*sīla*)
3. mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*)

**OTHER  
MERITORIOUS  
ACTIONS:**

4. reverence (*apaciti*)
5. service (*veyyāvacca*)
6. merits sharing /  
transference of  
merits (*pattidāna*)
7. rejoicing in other's  
merits (*pattā-  
numodanā*)
8. expounding  
the Doctrine  
(*desanā*)
9. listening to the  
Doctrine (*savaṇa*)
10. straightening one's  
right views (*ditth-  
ujukamma*)

**THE BENEFIT OF DĀNA**

For one wishing to observe what should be observed, *appamāda* should be established in three areas of wholesome behaviour (*puñña-kiriya-vatthu*): *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā*. *Dāna* includes almsgiving, merits sharing (*pattidāna*) and rejoicing in others' merits (*pattānumodanā*) and this amounts to doing what should be done. The Buddha was once asked by Siha, "What are the immediate benefits of *dāna*?", and the Buddha gave five benefits.

First, if one gives with *karuṇā* (compassion) in mind and not out of desire for thanks, fame, reward, etc. one will be loved by many as the *dāna* serves as material to create friendship. Even a dog wags its tail when fed. A human responds with *mettā*, *karuṇā*, *muditā* (loving-kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy).

Second, the virtuous who do good for the welfare of others will approach you, and from them, you can receive valuable *dhamma* with regard to *dāna*, *sīla*, *bhāvanā*, good methods for advancement, inspiration to arouse a sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), all of which can be used as a base to raise your own status. What materials you give are not so great but what you receive is incomparably great and beneficial.

Third, one who performs *dāna* cannot be notorious since giving for the welfare or benefit of the many is blameless and dignified behaviour. Hence, one's fame and reputation are established.

Fourth, one will be surrounded by friends who will welcome one whenever one enters any assembly and one can do so without fear or self-consciousness

but with undisturbed confidence. These benefits institute a unique bliss (*sukhavisesa*) in this very life. Therefore *dāna* is a *kusala* (wholesome act) worth doing since it serves as the base of meritorious action (*puñña-kiriyā-vatthu*).

The fifth benefit is that one will be reborn in the happy heavenly world which may not be understood because it may be out of reach of one's intelligence, but it can be accepted by faith which has arisen from understanding the first four benefits. This acceptance based on faith in the Buddha-Dhamma does not depend on inference or imagination which indicates lack of confident faith. The Buddha said:

*"Monks, if beings knew, as I know, the ripening (resultant benefit) of sharing gifts, they would not enjoy their use without sharing them, nor would the taint of stinginess obsess the heart and stay there. Even if it were their last bit, their last morsel of food, they would not enjoy its use without sharing it, if there were anyone to receive it.*

*But in as much, monks, as beings do not know, as I know, the ripening of sharing gifts, therefore they enjoy their use without sharing them, and the taint of stinginess obsesses their heart and stays there."*

**FIVE BENEFITS  
OF DĀNA:**

1. be loved by many
2. been approach by virtuous who also want to do good
3. one will established fame and reputation
4. one will have undisturbed confidence
5. one will be reborn in the happy heavenly world

## THE BENEFITS OF SĪLA

*Sīla* amounts to abstaining from what should be abstained from, and includes practising moral precepts, respecting those worthy of respect (*apacāyana*) and serving or helping others in their meritorious acts (*veyyāvacca*). If actions worth doing are performed with *mettā-karuṇā* one will overcome the gross forms of behaviour (*vitikkama kilesa*) by controlling one's speech, physical actions and livelihood. As this becomes habitual one comes to value purity of conduct by avoiding uncultured, uncivilised, polluted, wicked actions and one develops a sense of moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*) thereby avoiding detestable things and establishing *sīla*.

Such concerned and caring behaviour does not cause pain or loss to oneself or others but benefits the welfare and happiness of all. If one acts without sympathy, fear or shame, upon reflection at a later time one will consider oneself as wicked, bad, rude, ugly or uncivilised and will feel unhappy and repentant. This danger of self-blame (*attānuvāda bhaya*) will frighten one throughout one's life and especially at the moment of death when one will experience frightful visions of the bad actions (*kamma*), materials or beings involved in those actions (*kamma nimitta*) or a sign of one's destiny (*gati nimitta*). The virtuous who, through *appamāda*, are established in *sīla*, will upon reflection experience immense pleasure, satisfaction and happiness in this life and correspondingly good and pleasant visions will be seen as one happily dies, smiling without disturbance or problems.



One who abstains from bad deeds will not be blamed by society but will be praised by the wise, thus avoiding the misery and unhappiness of the danger of being blamed by others (*paranuvāda bhaya*). With self-control one will not act unlawfully and hence will avoid mental and physical misery and unhappiness from the danger of punishment by authorities (*danda bhaya*). Even if one is cunning and able to avoid punishment, one cannot escape the frightful danger of a bad destiny or rebirth (*duggati bhaya*).

Diligence in abstaining from what should be abstained from whether through *mettā-karuṇā* where one's concern for others protects oneself, or through *hiri-ottappa* where concern for one's dignity protects others from being harmfully affected, will free one from these four dangers and one is bound to experience unique bliss and happiness in this very life. Hence, such purity of verbal and physical conduct (*sīla-visuddhi*) through diligent restraint is praised by the Buddha and good people, and it is the cause for *sukhavisesa* to arise (*sīla-puñña-kiriyā-vatthu*).

### THE BENEFIT OF TRANQUILITY

Neither *dāna* nor *sīla* can stabilize the mind and if one cannot control one's mind one will not find stability, clarity or calmness in one's life. Hence, it is necessary to practise *bhāvanā* or mental development which includes tranquility meditation (*samatha*) and insight meditation (*vipassanā*) as well as listening to, learning and reading the doctrine and scriptures (*dharmasāvanā*), delivering the doctrine or scriptures without expectation of material gain or fame (*dharmadesanā*)

### BENEFITS OF SĪLA:

1. one will overcome the gross forms of behaviour (*vitikkama kilesa*) by controlling one's speech, physical actions and livelihood.
2. one develops a sense of moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*)
3. free one from four dangers:
  - i. danger of self-blame (*attānuvāda bhaya*)
  - ii. danger of being blamed by others (*paranuvāda bhaya*)
  - iii. danger of punishment by authorities (*danda bhaya*)
  - iv. danger of a bad destiny or rebirth (*duggati bhaya*)

### MENTAL DEVELOPMENT (BHĀVANĀ):

1. tranquility meditation (*samatha*)
2. insight meditation (*vipassanā*)

**JHĀNA:**

- refers chiefly to the four meditative Absorptions of the Fine-material Sphere (*rūpa-jjhāna* or *rūpāvacarajjhāna*)
- achieved through the attainment of Full Concentration (*appanā samādhi*)

**FIVE JHĀNIC FACTORS AS THE ANTIDOTES TO THE HINDRANCES:**

1. initially application or aim (*vitakka*) — the antidote for Sloth and Torpor (*thīna-middha*)
2. sustaining application or continuous attention (*vicāra*) — the antidote for sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*)
3. zest or rapture (*pīti*) — the antidote for ill-will or aversion (*dosa*)
4. joy or happiness (*sukha* or *somanassam*) — the antidote for restlessness (*uddhacca-kukkucca*)
5. concentration or one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) — the antidote for sensuous desire (*lobha* or *kāma-rāga*)

and holding purified, clear and right views (*diṭṭhju-kamma*) beginning with *kamma* and *kammavipāka* (good acts begets good results and bad acts beget bad results) up to *magga-phala-nibbāna* (path-fruit-extinction).

If one's mind is not controlled by a suitable practice of fixing it on a meditation object, it will wander around flying to various and numerous objects every second in an unstable manner much like a wild monkey jumping from branch to branch never remaining still. One needs to arouse *appamāda* in practising a method of mental development which is done by initially applying or aiming one's mind to the meditation object (*vitakka*) and sustaining or holding the mind on the object (*vicāra*) until the mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇas*) of sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*) and sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) are respectively overcome by the two aforementioned *jhanic* factors (*jhānanga*). At this point one comes to experience great joy or rapture (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*) and stability or concentration of mind (*ekaggatā* or *samādhi*) thereby respectively abandoning the three remaining hindrances of ill-will (*dosa*), restlessness and brooding (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) and sensuous desire (*lobha* or *kāma-rāga*). With one's mind in such a pure and stable condition one can experience the unique flavour of *samatha* or *jhanic* bliss which is many fold superior to ordinary bliss. Hence it is called *sukhavisesa*.

With continued diligence one will progress from first *jhāna* (absorption) to second *jhāna* where the first two *jhanic* factors, *vitakka* and *vicāra* subside and the

happiness is ever more blissful. Upon the subsiding of *pīti* one enters third *jhāna* with yet more subtle bliss and with the subsiding of *sukha* one's mind dwells in fourth *jhāna* where one-pointedness and equanimity (*upekkhā*) constitute the epitome of *sukhavisesa* of the fine material sphere (*rūpāvacara*). In such a condition the mind is far removed from the heat of the *kilesa* which obstruct *kusala* deeds and pollute the mind. This is similar to cryogenics where objects are kept stable for long periods of time by the application of extremely low temperatures. The mind being temporarily free of *kilesas* is not agitated nor moving around but is very stable, cool and calm. As such, *samatha* practice can be considered mental cryogenics.

Attainment of the fourth fine material *jhāna* is the base or starting point for the attainment of higher spiritual powers (*abhiññā*) such as psychic powers (*iddhi-vidhā*: manifesting many forms, diving into the earth, walking on water, flying through the air), divine ear (*dibba-sota*), knowing the minds of others (*ceto-pariya-ñāṇa*), divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*), remembrance of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati*), and extinction of all cankers (*āsavakkhaya*).

With continued *appamāda* one can advance beyond the *rūpa jhānas* and enter the four absorptions of the immaterial sphere (*arūpā-acarajjhāna*) where one experiences a unique exquisite bliss with a very condensed, calm and extremely subtle mind. On the breakup of the body if one is absorbed in *jhāna*, one will be reborn in the Brahma world with a calm, cool, condensed mind where one will live for aeons. Such *jhāna* practice requires *appamāda* and is

worth doing since it conduces to unique bliss. Hence, it is called *samatha bhāvanā puññakiriyaṅvatthu* and as such it is praised by the Buddha and the wise.

### THREE GRADES OF APPAMĀDA

#### THREE GRADES OF APPAMĀDA:

1. coarse
2. medium
3. refined

#### TEN FORMS OF MISCONDUCT (DUCCARITA):

##### bodily misconduct (*kāya-duccarita*)

1. killing
2. stealing
3. sexual misconduct

##### verbal misconduct (*kāya-duccarita*)

4. lying
5. malicious talk
6. frivolous speech
7. harsh speech

##### mental misconduct (*mano-duccarita*)

8. covetousness
9. ill-will
10. perverted view

Here it should be mentioned that there are three grades of *appamāda*: coarse, medium and refined. Not failing to abstain from the ten forms of misconduct (*duccarita*) which cause harm to oneself and others is a coarse type of *appamāda*. This (*duccarita*) includes three forms of bodily misconduct (*kāya-duccarita*): killing, stealing and sexual misconduct; four forms of verbal misconduct (*vācī-duccarita*): lying, malicious talk, frivolous speech and harsh speech; and three forms of mental misconduct (*mano-duccarita*): covetousness, ill-will and perverted view (i.e. not having the view of good acts beget good results and bad acts beget bad results). One will experience contentment with oneself upon reflection that one is abstaining from performing these *duccaritas*.

Since it is not possible to totally avoid sense objects one should be alert to restrain the mind and not indulge in excess sensual pleasure. Not failing to control one's mind regarding sensual objects especially things one does not possess is the medium form of *appamāda*. Those who are neither satisfied nor contented with what they have or can legally acquire will find it very difficult to fulfill this medium-form of *appamāda*. If there is no limit or the mind is uncontrolled, it is like swimming up river rather than across it which is a waste of time, tiring and one will be sunk in the multitude of sensual objects (*kāmaguṇa*). Just

as flies or ants will get stuck in a plate of honey they are eating from, so too those without limit in pursuing sensual objects will get stuck and sunk in them. With restraint the flies and ants could eat from a safe distance just as one with restraint could enjoy sensual objects within limit. Pain, unpleasantness, trouble and suffering (*dukkha*) has its source in *taṇhā*, which in turn has its source in pleasurable *kāmaguna*. Restraint, not leaving the mind uncontrolled as the medium form of *appamāda* will keep one from *dukkha*.

Those who arouse the coarse and medium forms of *appamāda* to avoid the *duccarita* and restrain the mind will gain beneficial self-control and efficient self-management necessary for making good use of their human existence as a springboard or as scaffolding to raise their status. By performing *dāna* one overcomes belittlement thus dignifying one's life. *Sīla* prevents the loss of happiness and *samatha bhāvanā* stabilizes and calms the mind resulting in the happiness of *sukhavisesa*.

However the force of *jhāna* only temporarily keeps the *kilesas* from agitating oneself and when one stops and the *jhāna* dissipates the *kilesas* will start agitating, moving around and destabilizing the mind. The root cause lies in the latent tendencies of *kilesas* which have not yet been abandoned. Hence one recognize the need to cut off the latent defilements (*anusaya kilesas*) in order to develop a strong fully matured mind able to resist all worldly conditions.

For this one must arouse refined *appamāda* in the practice of *vipassanā bhāvanā* in order to develop knowledge (*ñāṇa*). If one, due to one's past

good deeds has the present opportunity to aspire to attain greater bliss, one should exert oneself without reluctance to forego insubstantial happiness for a far greater happiness.

*If by giving up small pleasures,  
great happiness is to be found,  
the wise should give up small pleasures  
seeing (the prospect of) great happiness.*

~DHAMMAPADA 290

### **VIPASSANĀ BHĀVANĀ**

First and foremost one must learn the correct practice and know to what extent this practice will ensure benefit. One must overcome delusion due to ignorance of the correct practice by approaching a teacher, listening to instructions and asking questions or reading books to clarify one's understanding of the practice and benefits to be gained. When this is accomplished one's faith (*saddhā*) will be awakened as one will realize that this is no small matter. But this is theoretical knowledge only and it is necessary to actually put it into practice to verify one's faith through one's own personal experience. This verified faith is knowable only through development of refined *appamāda* in the practice of *vipassanā bhāvanā*.

### REFINED APPAMĀDA

Refined *appamāda* is found in those who respectfully practice mindfulness meditation (*satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*). *Sati*: mindfulness, heedfulness, unforgetfulness; *Pa*: vigorously, forcefully or extensively; *Thāna*: constantly penetrating; or *Paṭṭhāna*: rushing suddenly with force, to close in and rest on the object; *Bhāvanā*: development, progress, building momentum without stagnation. Hence this practice consists of actively fixing one's attention on the objects presently arising at the six sense-doors in a concurrent, continuous and penetrating manner.

Mindfulness such as this rushes to the object at the moment of arising and plunges into it without hesitation or thinking. With this unique *sati* there can be no stream of *lobha* i.e. *kāma-rāga* (desire for lust), no stream of *bhava-rāga* (desire for existence) and no stream of *avijjā* (ignorance) since one's vision is clear and one sees things as they are. With actual practice one gains purity of mind which gives rise to faith which must be developed before effort (*virīya*) can be aroused.

By establishing one's faith in one's teacher and the rightness of this practice, one must earnestly and ardently focus the mind on whatever object is arising. With ambition and enthusiasm one must conscientiously, meticulously and obediently follow instructions to maintain profound Noble Silence, eat and sleep moderately and move about as if blind, deaf, dumb and in a weak physical condition which thereby enables one to observe every physical movement and all objects at the sense doors. This



must be done without rest or procrastination for 20 hours per day in all four postures of sitting, standing, walking and lying down. The more continuous one maintains one's noting mind the more one's energy get replenished and strengthened, unlike ordinary activity where one gets tired from exertion of energy. Such continuous effort will develop penetrating mindfulness (*sati*) from whence the mind becomes clear, pure and free of defiling, unwholesome thoughts (*kilesas*). The longer one can maintain a high degree of vigilant mindfulness the closer one's observation of the object becomes and the greater one's understanding of its true nature. Recognizing this benefit bolsters one's *sāddha* (confidence) in the practice and one experiences increased desire (*chanda*) to the point where one considers it essential or one's bound duty to continue so as to gain insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*).

### **THE DEVELOPMENT OF WISDOM**

To this end, one makes greater effort resulting in strengthened mindfulness. Sustaining the continuity of *sati* develops concentration (*samādhi*) so that the mind becomes collected, calm and tranquil enabling the natural unfolding of wisdom (*paññā*). When this occurs one gradually penetrates into the true nature of reality and observes that: "the noting mind or mentality (*nāma*) and the physical phenomena or materiality (*rūpa*) are all that exist and there is no 'I', 'person', 'man', 'woman', etc."

Without this knowledge of *nāma-rūpa* one will hold the view of Self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) resulting in

manifold impurities connected to 'I', 'you', etc., which are bound to give rise to *lobha-dosa* and especially heretical views.

With the gaining of this analytical Knowledge of Body and Mind (*Nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*) from personal experience, not from the texts, teacher or thinking, one's opinions and attitudes will have to change because one experiences the benefit of actually doing the work of being a meticulous, respectful meditator and one's *saddhā* progresses in a unique manner. This strengthening of *saddhā* encourages the yogi to increase his *virīya* again resulting in strengthened *sati* which develops *samā-dhi* permitting the unfolding of higher *paññā*: the Knowledge by Discerning Conditionally or the Cause-Effect relationship between *nāma* and *rūpa* (*Paccayapariggaha-ñāṇa*).

If one is unable to discern the causal relationship of *nāma-rūpa* one will have sceptical doubts and false views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) such as: "all events are causeless" (*ahetuka-diṭṭhi*); "there is a Creator" which is a false-cause view (*visamahetuka-diṭṭhi*), etc. With this knowledge the yogi sees that all mental and physical phenomena have their respective causes and produce respective results. One knows this is how it has always been in the past and how it will be in the future for all beings thereby temporarily dispelling skeptical doubt and wrong views such as belief in a Supreme Being or Creator, Causelessness, etc.

This *ñāṇa* too strengthens *saddhā* and by continuing to develop this refined form of *appamāda* of respectful practice of *satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*, the yogi

**INSIGHT**

**KNOWLEDGES:**

1. insight into body & mind
  2. insight into cause & effect or by discerning conditionally
  3. insight into impermanence, suffering & absence of self or by comprehension
  4. insight into arising & passing away
  5. insight into path and not path
  6. insight into dissolution
  7. insight into fear
  8. insight into disgust
  9. insight into the wish for liberation
  10. insight into equanimity about formation
  11. insight into nibbāna, the happiness of peace
- (adapted from *In This Very Life* by Sayādaw U Paṇḍita)

will acquire greater *paññā* including the Knowledge of Comprehension (*Sammasana-ñāṇa*) where one's perception of the impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and selfless (*anattā*) characteristics of every object arising at the six sense doors becomes stronger and deeper enabling one to withstand any hardship or success in one's life.

If one cannot discern the impermanent characteristics of all objects one will believe that they are permanent thus giving rise to pride. Or if one is unable to discern the suffering nature of all phenomena one will hold the view of pleasure which is sure to give rise to lust. If one is unable to discern the true nature of things i.e. selflessness, one will hold the view of self (*attā*) which is bound to give rise to wrong views. If one discerns the selflessness of thing occurring on then own (*anattā*) one's view is purified and one's mind is clarified resulting in a unique satisfaction with one's bright, fresh, clear mind.

This is followed by the Knowledge of Arising and Passing Away (*Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) at which point one's effort is balanced by concentration enabling accurate noting of whatever arises and though one has very strong faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, meditation teachers and fellow yogis, it is balanced by wisdom leading to the development of a neutral point of view. This strengthened *saddhā* based on one's personal experience leads one to exclaim "This is it, this is the real *dhamma!*" and steadfast resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) to gain further knowledge arises as the yogi becomes heroic and is willing to make any sacrifice without regard for life or limb

in overcoming unbearable painful sensations. With the gaining of this knowledge one comprehends the arising of *nāma-rūpa* thereby overcoming annihilation belief (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) and one comprehends the passing away of *nāma-rūpa* thereby overcoming eternity belief (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) on a temporary basis.

With continuous penetrating *sati* one will progress through a series of insights up to the Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations (*Sankhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) where one's mind becomes cool, calm, clear, well-developed, very balanced and free of *kilesas* which enables accurate seeing without *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*.

#### THE BENEFIT OF EQUIPOISE

*Just as rain penetrates a badly-roofed house,  
So also, passion (rāga) penetrates a mind  
not cultivated in Tranquility and Insight  
Development (Samatha and Vipassanā).*

~DHAMMAPADA 13

The mind by nature is tender and small, unable to handle rough, coarse things and will react quickly to *rāga-dosa* because it cannot withstand nor overcome them. This consciousness or mind undeveloped and without cultivation of tranquility and insight is known as *abhāvita citta*. But the correct practice of *satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā* develops one's strength, energy, maturity and fully guarantees that one can withstand all worldly conditions like a well-roofed house:

Just as rain cannot penetrate a well-roofed house,  
So also, passion (*rāga*) cannot penetrate a mind  
well-cultivated in Tranquility and Insight  
Development (*Samatha and Vipassanā*).

~DHAMMAPADA 14

Purity and stability of mind and the development of knowledge of the truth through tranquility and insight constitute the cultivated mind (*bhāvita citta*). With training of *samatha* one can withstand attacks of *rāga-dosa* and one can fully overcome them through knowledge gained by *vipassanā* training. Such knowledge develops one's resistance power where one is unswayed, unmoved, and unaffected by views contrary to one's empirically verified faith and wisdom and one's mind matures until it comes to equipoise (*tādi-bhāva*). Here one can view with neutrality all desirable and undesirable things from the middle i.e. a balanced point of view. This quality of *tādi-bhāva* is very evident at *Sankharupekkha-ñāṇa* where one remains unshaken by any object at the six sense-doors. Such a mind is similar to an *arahatta*'s which remains unmoved by any situation resulting in unique happiness — *sukhavisesa*. At this point one might well ask, "What else does one need?".

## THE FIVE CONTROLLING FACULTIES

This progression of practice is dependent on fulfilling refined *appamāda* i.e. accurate noting of objects at the six sense-doors which tames and purifies the mind. Application of continuous diligent mindfulness allows for the conception and step-by-step increase of *saddhā*, *virīya*, *sati*, *samādhi* and *paññā* with each accurate note without specifically trying to develop them. Similar to climbing a ladder this is a gradual raising of one's mental status towards maturity away from *kilesas* which enables the yogi to verify by his own personal experience the rewards and benefits of this path of practice culminating in an unshakeable verified faith which permits no doubts to arise. Such strengthened and fulfilled faith becomes a controlling faculty of the mind (*saddhindriya*). Effort develops to a controlling faculty (*viriyindriya*) when the mind is never retractive and one takes delight in facing any situation without indolence nor wasting of time. Just as one cannot have too much fresh air so too one can never have too much mindfulness, which when developed to a controlling faculty (*satindriya*) enables one to know many things with a single note. With concurrent, undistracted focusing on the object the mind is collected in one place without wandering and remains perfectly still and steady as a candle in a windless place. This is the quality of concentration developed to a controlling faculty (*samādhindriya*). When wisdom becomes a controlling faculty (*paññindriya*) knowledge arises in a distinct manner with clear-cut, non-hazy vision free of delusion.

## FIVE CONTROLLING FACULTIES:

1. faith  
(*saddhindriya*)
2. effort or energy  
(*viriyindriya*)
3. mindfulness  
(*satindriya*)
4. concentration  
(*samādhindriya*)
5. wisdom  
(*paññindriya*)

## A DHAMMA REVOLUTION — THE BENEFIT OF WISDOM

This maturing of one's practice is unique and is reflected in the mature mind which is controlled in every situation experiencing peace which spreads to one's family, community and society thereby contributing to world peace.

Cool, calm, with no extremes of happiness due to success nor disheartenment due to failure one remains unshaken in any situation in life without reacting rashly or roughly and with steadfast confidence one considers the advantages before doing or saying anything. Such reasoning power or wisdom permits one to speak and act only beneficially for oneself and others. Furthermore, even if beneficial, one would say or do something only when appropriate. The knowledge to abstain from what is neither beneficial nor appropriate and to do and say only what is beneficial and appropriate (*parihāriyapaññā*) is invaluable in one's everyday life as it protects one from problems and troubles. Cultivation and development of one's mind to such a state of purity through *sīla* which cleans the impurities already arisen in one's speech and physical behaviour (transgressive: *vitikkama kilesas*), through *samādhi* which prevents impurities from arising (obsessive: *pariyutthāna kilesas*) and through *paññā* which eradicates all impurities (latent: *anusava kilesas*) requires a tremendous commitment of energy giving rise to permanent benefit.

### THREEFOLD CULTIVATION OR TRAINING:

1. purity through morality (*sīla*)  
— cleans the impurities already arisen (transgressive: *vitikkama kilesas*)
2. purity through concentration (*samādhi*)  
— prevents impurities from arising (obsessive: *pariyutthāna kilesas*)
3. purity through wisdom (*paññā*)  
— eradicates all impurities (latent: *anusava kilesas*)



The mind is difficult to control;  
Swiftly and lightly it moves and  
lands wherever it pleases.  
It is good to tame the mind,  
for a well-tamed mind brings happiness.

~DHAMMAPADA 35

The happiness, confidence in one's self, maturity of mind, growth of wisdom and the dispelling of grief (*soka*), sorrow, anger, sadness, physical and mental pain and sufferings of all kinds while living with a clear, pure, bright mind are some of the innumerable rewards of fulfilling refined *appamāda* heralding a significant change in one's life — a true *dhmma* revolution!

**THE BLISS OF LIBERATION —  
ATTAINING THE END OF  
THE BUDDHA'S DISPENSATION**

Not to do evil,  
To cultivate merit,  
To purify one's mind  
— this is the Teaching of the Buddhas.

~DHAMMAPADA 183

One can see that *sīla* and *samādhi* alone will not free one from defilements. Hence one must practice *paññā bhāvanā* to reach the climax or epitome of the *Buddha Sāsana*.

Its (the Buddha's dispensation) goodness in the end is shown by Understanding... and because understanding is its culmination, understanding is

FOUR STAGES OF  
NIBBĀNIC  
ATTAINMENT :

1. stream-entry  
(*sotāpanna*)
2. once-returner  
(*sakadāgāmi*)
3. non-returner  
(*anāgāmi*)
4. holy one  
(*arahat* or *arahant*  
or *arahatta*)

the end of the dispensation. And that is good because it brings about equipoise with respect to the desired and the undesired. For this is said:

*Just as a solid massive rock  
remains unshaken by the wind,  
So too, in face of blame and praise  
the wise remain immovable.*

~DHAMMAPADA 81,  
VISUDDHI MAGGA, *Ñāṇamoli*, p. 5

1) STREAM-ENTRY:

- i. freed personality  
belief
- ii. freed sceptical  
doubt
- iii. freed  
attachment to  
rites & rituals  
(forever free from  
wrong views & free  
from rebirth in four  
lower worlds]

Only with this understanding or wisdom can one arrive at the end of the *Buddha Sāsana* as *paññā* causes complete purification of one's mind and therefore it excels the other trainings of *sīla* and *samādhi*. The mind is made durable by the unfolding of *paññā* and it is further purified and tempered by continued practice of refined *appamāda* which results in the attainment of Nibbāna, that is the complete cessation of all *nāma-rūpa*, when one arrives at *Sotapātti magga-phala-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of the First Path and Fruition of Sanctification). At this time one's life truly becomes noble and one is forever freed of certain *kilesas* including personality belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), sceptical doubt (*vicikiccha*), and attachment to rites and rituals (*silabbataparāmāsa*). With the elimination of these *kilesas* one is forever free from wrong views, forever free from rebirth in *apāya* (four lower worlds) and one has unshakeable, unrelinquishable faith which can withstand any test.

A *Sotāpanna* is one with a good foundation in equipoise but for *tādi-bhāva* to reach fulfilment one must continue with refined *appamāda*, diligently

noting each arising object at the six sense-doors with penetrating mindfulness in order to further purify and temper the mind by attaining the Second Path and Fruition of Sanctification (*Sakadāgāmi magga-phala-ñāṇa*) when one significantly reduces the fourth and fifth fetters (*samyojana*): sensuous craving (*kāma-rāga* or *lobha*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda* or *dosa*). Upon attainment of the Third Path and Fruition (*Anāgāmi magga-phala-ñāṇa*), one is forever and completely freed from the fourth and fifth fetters.

It is only when one attains the Fourth and Final Path and Fruition (*Arahatta magga-phala-ñāṇa*) where one is forever free from the remaining five fetters: craving for fine-material existence (*rūpa-rāga*), craving for immaterial existence (*arūpa-rāga*), conceit (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), and ignorance (*avijjā*) that one's mind is totally and permanently purified and tempered and can be controlled without fragility when encountering any object which arouses *lobha-dosa*. It is here that *tādi-bhāva* becomes fulfilled and the *Arahatta* becomes as solid as a rock unshaken by the winds of worldly conditions. Such a one has attained the end of the Buddha's dispensation and hence lives in the complete, peaceful bliss of *santi sukha* or *Nibbāna*.

2) ONCE-RETURNER :

- i. reduces sensuous craving
- ii. reduces ill-will

3) NON-RETURNER:

- i. completely free from sensuous craving
- ii. fully free from ill-will

4) HOLY ONE —

- forever free:*
- viii. craving for fine-material existence
  - ix. craving for immaterial existence
  - x. conceit
  - xi. restlessness
  - xii. ignorance

## PROSPERITY

*Appamāda* overcomes and abandons debasing verbal, physical and mental behaviour in one who practises it and this conduces to one's prosperity. This is an auspicious blessing in worldly matters such as education, economics, health as well as in the field of dhamma for those who are not indolent but are alert, unforgetful, awake, full of life and hence prosperous.

*Mindfulness is the way to the Deathless (Nibbāna),  
Unmindfulness is the way to Death.  
Those who are mindful do not die,  
Those who are not mindful are as if already dead.*

~DHAMMAPADA 21

*Mindful amongst the negligent,  
Highly vigilant amongst the drowsy,  
The man of wisdom advances like a race-horse,  
Leaving the weak jade behind.*

~DHAMMAPADA 29

## THE KEY TO THE DHAMMA

The Buddha Sāsana is a storehouse of valuable things: *kāmāvacara kusala*, *rūpāvacara kusala*, *arūpāvacara kusala* and *lokuttara kusala*, all of which are rooted in *appamāda*. *Appamāda* is the cause without which *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā kusala* will not materialize and one who brings *appamāda* to fulfillment will live a balanced life by abstaining from what should be abstained from and observing what should be observed for the benefit and welfare of oneself and one's society in this life and future lives.

Just as, monks, of all creatures, whether footless or having two, four, or many feet; whether having forms or formless; whether conscious or unconscious, or neither conscious nor unconscious, of these the Tathāgata, the Arahant, the fully Enlightened One, is reckoned chief; — even so, monks, of all profitable conditions which are rooted in earnestness, which join together in earnestness, — of those conditions earnestness is reckoned chief.

~SAMÝUTTA NIKÁYA

When the Buddha replied to King Kosala's question regarding which quality would give rise to happiness in this life and future lives he was referring to causative *appamāda* (*kārāpaka appamāda*), the awakening, planning, organizing and making arrangements, etc., necessary for actual performing or implementing (*kārāpaka appamāda*) of *dāna*, *sīla*, *bhāvanā*. Why is this *kārāpaka appamāda* i.e. making arrangements for performing *dāna* considered most important?

If *appamāda* is not awakened, one cannot practise the eightfold path to develop *lokiya kusala*, therefore one could never attain *lokuttara kusala*. (*Loku*: five aggregates + *tara*: above; *lokuttara* = supramundane). Because *lokuttara* gives security to one's existence it is the best *dhamma* to attain but it is based on development of mundane (*lokiya*) states — the awakening diligence of *kārāpaka appamāda* which is the highest of all qualities.

Just as a key is needed to get possession of locked-up valuables, earnestness is the golden key to the valuable *Buddha Sāsana* (*paṭilābhakatthena*: the cause for getting possession). Earnestness, heedfulness, diligence, in short, *sati* or mindfulness is never in excess, and without it nothing is accomplished. The Buddha said:

“*Satiṃ Ca Khvāham Bhikkhave  
Sabbatthikaṃ Vādāmi —  
Bhikkhus, sati, I say, is required everywhere.*”

The texts say that just as the elephant's foot print is the largest and all others can fit within it, so too *appamāda* is the essence of the Buddha's teaching and contains all other *kusala dhammas* within it. The entire wealth of the *Buddha Sāsana* is gained by the joining of these two forces, namely *kārāpaka appamāda* and *kāraka appamāda*. Happiness, contentment, dignity and distinctive bliss—*sukhavisesa*—are immediately available to one who develops *dāna* and *sīla*. One who practises *samatha* and *sati-paṭṭhāna bhāvanā* will gain a strengthened and pure mind which develops one's thinking and outlook making for ease of comprehension in the winning of insight knowledge. With insight knowledge and wisdom one can resist the worldly conditions thus experiencing unique, distinctive mental and physical bliss—*sukhavisesa*—including the epitome of the Buddha's dispensation—total and permanent liberation from all defilements—*santisukha* or *Nibbāna*.

## THE BUDDHA'S WAY

*Kārāpaka appamāda* was the driving force which enabled the Bodhisatta to fulfill *pārāmis* and to attain omniscient knowledge (*sabbannuta-nāṇa*). Fulfilling the *pārāmis* during his samsaric wanderings (round of rebirths), gaining *Arahatta agga-phala* and omniscient knowledge thereby attaining Buddhahood is *kāraka appamāda*. By sacrificing himself to become a Buddha, he could offer personal testimony to the pricelessness of *appamāda* which conduces to the liberation of all beings. *Appamāda* is the cause for the realization of this unique *dhamma*, hence it is praised by the wise as the best *dhamma*.

It is said, "the *dhamma* will protect one who is devoted to it," or one who is diligent in meticulous practice of the *dhamma* will be protected by it. Which *dhamma*? Not book *dhamma* but self *dhamma*, i.e. not just having mere book knowledge but actually practising the *dhamma*. The Buddha was always emphasising on *appamāda*. Even his last and memorable words before his *Mahāparinibbāna* were to exhort us to exercise *appamāda* by being diligent in discharging our duties of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*.

"Vayadhamma sankhāra.

*Appamādena sampadetha —*

*All conditioned things are subject to change.*

*Work out your salvation with diligence."*

That was the Master's first and last instruction to us.

## 10 PERFECTIONS (PĀRĀMIS):

1. giving (*dāna*)
2. morality (*sīla*)
3. renunciation (*nekkhamma*)
4. wisdom (*paññā*)
5. effort (*virīya*)
6. patience (*khanti*)
6. truthfulness (*sacca*)
7. resolution (*adhitthana*)
8. loving-kindness (*metta*)
10. equanimity (*upekkha*)



*Awareness, Accuracy, Perseverance*



*What Occured...,  
How You Noted it...,  
What Happened to It...*





*“Be honest with your teacher  
If you are unable to find  
the object, or note it,  
or experience anything at  
all after making a mental label,  
it may not always mean that  
you are practicing poorly!  
A clear and precise report  
enables the teacher to  
assess your practice;  
then point out mistakes or  
make corrections to put  
you back on the right path.  
May a teacher someday  
help you help yourself”*

*~ adapted from  
In This Very Life*

*Guidance for Yogis at Interview*

Despite instructions given on how to meditate, there are yogis (meditators or retreatants) who are unable to practise properly and to report their experiences at interview to the teacher. Some can practise well but cannot describe properly how they have meditated and what they have experienced. This talk is intended to help such yogis report properly on how they have meditated, on what they have observed and experienced in the course of their meditative practice or exercise.

Basic Instructions beginning with awareness of a primary object, namely, the rising and falling of the abdomen as the yogi or meditator breathes.

As to the mode of the meditation, the late Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw's recorded induction talk (for new yogis) gives the essential instructions beginning with noticing or observing the primary object of attention in mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) meditation, namely, the rising and falling of the abdomen as the yogi breathes.

In terms of scriptural explanation, psychophysical phenomena are taking place all the time in the yogi's person at the six sense-doors. When a sight

is seen, the eye that sees and the sight that is seen are physical phenomena, while the resultant eye-consciousness that makes one aware of the sight is a mental phenomenon. Similarly, with the experiencing of sound, smell, taste, touch and thought, and of several movements of the body such as folding and stretching of the arms, turning or leaning (inclining) of the body and the taking of steps in walking. Mahāsī Sayādaw has instructed that all these happenings should be closely noticed as and when they take place, without missing even trifling incidents.

Although Mahāsī Sayādaw's instructions are given in very clear and simple language, yogis encounter some difficulties when they follow them in actual practice. To help yogis overcome such difficulties, meditation teachers at this Centre have had to explain and demonstrate to beginners how to notice or observe the primary object of attention, how to notice when other (secondary) objects of attention like thoughts and reflections appear, when feelings or sensation arise, when external stimuli like sights and sounds impinge on the mind or when other acts of behaviour take place.

These explanations have had to be made repeatedly and as simply as possible for these beginners. Even then, some beginners do not quite understand them and cannot put them into practice properly. To avoid such difficulties, the meditation teachers had to devise maxims or aphorisms which are easier to remember.

The first of these aphorisms is: **Say how you notice the primary object of attention with what**

**FIRST APHORISM:**  
Explain how you notice the primary object of attention and what you come to know from experiencing it.

result in your consciousness (i.e. what do you come to know?). The primary object of attention to which the mind should be tethered as it were, is the rising and falling of the abdomen as the yogi breathes. This is the primary object of meditative attention in the sense that in the absence of any other marked (pronounced) object of attention, the yogi should be watching or observing it. The mind should also revert to it when a secondary object of attention has been noticed and fallen away.

The yogi should be able to tell how he observes or notices the movement of the rising of the abdomen from the beginning to the end of it. As he inhales, the abdomen begins to rise somewhat rapidly and goes on rising as he continues to inhale. When the yogi ceases to inhale, the rising movement comes to an end.

When observing or noticing the rising movement of the abdomen, the entire movement should be experienced and known. The scriptural texts urge that this should be made a matter of practice (*sabba kāya patisamvedi*). What this exhortation means is that all the physical phenomena involved in the entire rising movement of the abdomen—its beginning, its middle and its end should be noticed as continuously as possible (i.e. without a break). The observing or noticing mind should fall on and proceed concurrently with the physical movement of the rising abdomen through its three stages—the **beginning**, the **middle** and the **end**.

The beginner would not be able to notice all the three stages of the movement, but he should strive to be able to do so. He is urged to strive thus lest he go

1. The entire movement of the rising and falling should be experienced and know.
2. Its beginning, middle and end should be noticed as continuously as possible.
3. The observing mind should fall on and proceed concurrently with the physical movement of the abdomen through its three stages.

about his meditative practice lightly and come to the end of his retreat without much benefit. He should strive to ensure serious and sufficient concentration of the mind on the object.

The yogi should be able to report if he is able to notice the object with enough concentrative attention, if there is enough concurrence between the object and the noticing mind, if he is able to notice the movement (of the abdomen) through its successive phases. If he is able to notice the object properly, what does he 'see' and what does he encounter (experience)? Not that he should concern himself with and be able to relate other (irrelevant) objects of attention, but that he should be able to report (accurately) on the object of his concentrated attention and what (exactly) is the rising movement as experienced by him.

There are two operations involved in this kind of meditative practice or exercise. The first is the activity of observing or noticing the object of attention. The second is the resulting consciousness concerning the object of attention noticed or observed. Only after these two operations will the yogi be able to say what it is that he has 'seen' or experienced.

Here, with regard to the primary object of attention, the yogi must be able to say if his resulting consciousness or awareness is concurrent (arise together) with the object of meditative attention (the rising of the abdomen) and its progressive movement. If the two operations are concurrent (take place at the same time) what does he 'see' (become aware of)? Is it the abdomen itself, the manner or mode of its

**WHAT TO REPORT:**

Explain

1. the degree of concurrence between the object and the noticing mind
2. to what degree you are able to notice the movement of the abdomen through its actually 'seen' when observing the rising and falling.

**TWO OPERATIONS INVOLVED IN PRACTICE:**

1. the activity of observing or noticing the object of attention
2. the resulting consciousness concerning the object of attention noticed or observed

rising, or the tension and the movement involved in the rising of the abdomen.

**THREE ASPECTS  
OF MATERIAL  
COMPONENT:**

1. form or shape
2. manner or mode
3. essential character or quality

There are three aspects to the material (physical) component or element of the rising abdomen. They are classified into:

1. **Form or shape aspect**
2. **Manner or mode aspect**
3. **Essential character or quality aspect**

The **form or shape aspect** is the form or shape of the abdomen on which the yogi's mind is focused. The whole of the yogi's body is the form or shape of the body. As the abdomen is part of the body, it is also the form or shape aspect of the physical element of the rising abdomen.

The **manner or mode aspect**. This aspect is constituted by the condition or state of the abdomen at any particular moment. Thus, is the abdomen in a flat, inflated or deflated state? In Pāṇi scriptural terminology, this condition or state is called *ākāra*. As another example of *ākāra*, is the palm closed into a fist or is it just an open palm? As still another example, is the body in a sitting, standing, walking or lying posture?

If the yogi intently observes the abdomen in meditation, he will 'see' (become aware of) either the form or the shape or the mode and manner aspect before he 'sees' the **essential character or quality aspect**. But 'seeing' the form and manner aspects are *not* vipassanic insight. The yogi must 'see' beyond the form and manner aspects, that is, 'see' the essential character or quality aspect, namely, the tension and



the motion or movement manifested during the rising of the abdomen. If the yogi observes intently, he will 'see' this character or quality aspect. He must be able to relate (report) this during interview. But he must say so on the basis of actually 'seeing' it, not because he thinks he 'sees' it thus. The report must be based on his actual own *vipassanā* insight.

The yogi must similarly be able to observe, 'see' and report when he exhales and the abdomen falls progressively.

So also when he is doing the walking (*caṅkama*) meditation. As he lifts his foot, is he able to observe concurrently the lifting movement progressively from the beginning to the end of it? If he is so able, what does he 'see'? Does he 'see' the foot or the manner or mode of its lifting, or does he feel the foot becoming light and rising upward, or the foot becoming tense and being pushed.

He must be able to report on any of these three aspects and his attention must be concentrated for him to be able to report thus. When he thrusts his foot forward (in the course of his step-taking), is his mind observing or noticing concurrently with the thrusting movement of the foot? Here also, what does he see? Does he 'see' the foot or the manner or mode of its thrusting, or some essential character or quality of this movement such as the foot being pushed from behind and pulled from before? Similarly, when he drops the foot, is he able to observe or notice the dropping movement progressively from the beginning to the end till it touches the floor or the ground? If he is, what does he come to know? Does he know

the foot, or the manner of its dropping, or some essential character or quality of this movement such as the foot becoming light and soft?

Similarly with observing or noticing of other objects of attention, such as folding and stretching of the limbs, turning or inclining (leaning) of the body, assuming the sitting posture or the standing posture. With regard to these phenomena also, is the yogi able to observe or notice the phenomena concurrently with its appearance from the beginning to the end of its manifestation? It is important for the yogi to confine his reporting to the particular object of attention he is observing in its three aspects as mentioned above and not to wander off into reporting on stray and random occurrences.

**THREE MARKS OR CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHO-PHYSICAL PHENOMENA:**

1. particular or specific character or property (true nature) — four elements (extension, cohesion, temperature and motion)
2. mark or sign of conditionedness — arising, continuance and dissolution.
3. common or general marks — impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and impersonality.

**THREE MARKS OR CHARACTERISTICS OF PSYCHO-PHYSICAL PHENOMENA**

Meditating yogis should understand what is meant by the following three marks or characteristics of psycho-physical phenomena:

1. *Sabhāva lakkhaṇa*
2. *Sañkhata lakkhaṇa* and
3. *Samañña lakkhaṇa*

1. *Sabhāva lakkhaṇa* means the specific or particular mark or characteristic of mental and physical phenomena. For instance, hardness or softness (*paṭhavi dhātu* or the element of extension) is the particular or specific mark or characteristic of the bone and of the flesh respectively. This mark or characteristic belongs only to *paṭhavi*

*dhātu* and not to any of the three remaining elements (cohesion, temperature and motion).

Another *sabhāva lakkhaṇa* is *tejo dhātu* (the element of heat and cold). *Āpo dhātu* (element of cohesion and fluidity) and *vāyo dhātu* (the element of motion) are also *sabhāva lakkhaṇas*.

The particular mark or characteristic of mind is consciousness or the faculty of awareness. That of *phassa* is colouring the mind and bringing it into contact with another phenomenon. That of *vedanā* is the capacity of feeling.

2. Each and every particular mark or characteristic of all psycho-physical phenomena has a beginning, a middle and an end. In Pāli scriptural language, these are termed *uppāda*, *ṭhiti* and *bhaṅga*. *Uppāda* means the beginning or arising of a phenomenon. *Ṭhiti* is duration or continuance or proceeding towards dissolution. *Bhaṅga* is breaking up or dissolution. These three *lakkhaṇas* (marks or characteristics) are called *Saṅkhata lakkhaṇa* (*saṅkhata* = compounded or conditioned).
3. The third mark or characteristic of all psycho-physical phenomena is called *Samañña* (general or common) *lakkhaṇa*. The impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and impersonality of all conditioned phenomena constitute their common or general mark or characteristic.

In Pāli scriptural language, these three marks or characteristics (*lakkhaṇa*) are termed: *annica lakkhaṇa* (characteristic of impermanence),

*dukkha lakkhaṇa* (characteristic of ill, suffering or unsatisfactoriness) and *anattā lakkhaṇa* (characteristic of egolessness or impersonality). These characteristics are common to all physical and mental phenomena which are pervaded by them. They are, therefore, designated as *samañña lakkhaṇa* (common or general marks or characteristics).

To recapitulate, we have to understand the three characteristics mentioned and explained above, namely:

1. *sabhāva lakkhaṇa* — particular or specific character or property of the phenomenon concerned;
2. *saṅkhara lakkhaṇa* — mark or sign of conditionedness, namely, arising, continuance and dissolution; and
3. *samañña lakkhaṇa* — common or general characteristic.

Of these three characteristics, our meditative practice is directed towards realisation of the *sabhāva* characteristic of material and mental phenomena we are observing or noticing. How do we go about our meditative effort to realize the character or property of the phenomenon in question? We should observe or notice these phenomena as and when they arise. Only when we do so, will we realize their specific or particular character or quality, not otherwise.

As the yogi inhales, the abdomen rises. Before inhalation, there was no rising of the abdomen. The

One should observe these phenomena as and when they arise. Only when one practises in this manner will one realize their specific or particular characteristic or quality, not otherwise.

yogi's mind should go on observing the rising movement of the abdomen from its beginning to its end. Only then would the yogi be able to 'see' the real nature of this movement.

What is its real nature (character or quality)? With the inbreath, the wind goes in (is indrawn). And what is wind? It is the element of tension, the element of movement. It is this real nature of the movement that the yogi comes to 'see'. He will 'see' it only when he observes or notices the movement as and when it arises and continues till it passes away. If he does not so observe or notice, he won't see even its form or shape aspect or its mode or manner aspect, not to speak of its true or essential character aspect; far less will he 'see' it. Continuing to pay concentrated and concurrent attention to the object of his meditation, that is, the rising and falling of his abdomen as he breathes in and breathes out, he will progressively strengthen his concentrative power. As his concentration strengthens, he will no longer 'see' the form or shape of his abdomen, or the mode or manner of its rising and falling. His insight will do beyond these 'sights' and will enable him to 'see' the tension, the pressure and the movement involved in the movement of the abdomen which he is observing or noticing. As he breathes out, he will feel the tension subsiding and the falling movement of the abdomen coming to an end as he comes to the end of his exhalation.

Similarly, with the movements involved in walking meditation the lifting of the leg, pushing it forward and dropping and placing it on the floor or the ground.

The meditation teacher will not tell the yogi what he is going to 'see' but will instruct him how to observe or notice. It is the same as in the doing of an arithmetical sum. The teacher will not give the answer but will teach the working out of the sum.

The nature will be revealed only when phenomena are noticed as and when they arise.

The same instructions apply in the case of different kinds of bodily movement, sensations experienced in the body and thoughts arising in the mind. All these should be noticed as and when they arise in order to ensure that their true nature may be 'seen'.

We have dealt with the first aphorism—true nature will be revealed only when phenomena are noticed as and when they arise.

**SECOND APHORISM:**  
Only when True Nature (*sabhāva*) is 'seen', will Characteristic of Conditionality (*saṅkhata*) become manifest meaning the phenomenon being noticed will be 'seen' to arise, to continue and to pass away.

The second aphorism says, "only when *sabhāva* (true nature) is 'seen', will *saṅkhata lakṣhaṇa* (characteristic of conditionality) become manifest", meaning the phenomenon being noticed will be 'seen' to arise, to continue and to pass away. When *saṅkhata lakṣhaṇa* is 'seen', *samañña lakṣhaṇa* will appear. These two characteristics—*saṅkhatalakṣhaṇa* and *samañña lakṣhaṇa* will manifest themselves as a matter of course once *sabhāva lakṣhaṇa* has been grasped by concentrated and concurrent noticing of the object of meditation. *Samañña lakṣhaṇa*, when it appears, will reveal the impermanent, unsatisfactory and impersonal, involuntary character of the phenomenon. So the third aphorism is "only when *saṅkhata* becomes apparent will *samañña* be 'seen'." This will be followed by the fourth aphorism which says, "When *samañña* is 'seen', *vipassanā-nāṇa* (insight knowledge) emerged."

After its emergence, *vipassanā-ñāṇa* will gradually mature and ripen and will be followed by *magga-ñāṇa* (path knowledge) which in turn will be succeeded by the *ariyamagga-ñāṇa* (noble, full-fledged path knowledge) which will enable the yogi to realize Nibbāna with the cessation of the psycho-physical *dhamma* and of suffering.

It should be repeated that in reporting, the yogi should relate what he has (actually) 'seen', *not what he thinks* he has 'seen'. Only what he has 'seen' is his own *ñāṇa* (that which he knows), not what he thinks he has, which at best is borrowed (second-hand) knowledge, which is not in conformity with the real nature or character of the phenomenon which he has observed or noticed.

While the yogi is sitting in meditation, observing or noticing the primary object of attention, namely, the rising and falling movement of the abdomen, various thoughts and objects of mind may occur to him, this being in the very nature of mind which is not subject to control. The mind has a tendency to wander, leaving the primary object and go on to all kinds of ideas, some wholesome, others not wholesome. What should the yogi do then? Just notice whatever comes into the mind. Are you able to do so or not? You should be. If you do, does the thinking go on or is it arrested or does it vanish all together? Or does your attention revert to the regular (primary) object of attention? You should be able to report all that takes place in these respects. The next aphorism is "All thoughts observed and known should be related."

**THIRD  
APHORISM:**  
Only when  
*Characteristic  
of Conditionality  
(saṅkhata)*  
becomes  
apparent will  
*Common  
Characteristics  
(samañña)*  
be 'seen'.

**FOURTH  
APHORISM:**  
When *Common  
Characteristics  
(samañña)*  
be 'seen', *Insight  
Knowledges  
(vipassanā-ñāṇa)*  
emerged.

It should be emphasised that in reporting, the yogi should relate what they have actually come to understand through the application of mindfulness and not information born from thought or what they think they have 'seen'.



**FIFTH APHORISM:**  
All thoughts  
observed and  
known should be  
related according  
to their behaviour.

For the novice in meditation, feelings or sensations do not arise yet while he is focussing his attention on the primary object. But thoughts are likely to occur. Even then, the novice is not able to notice all thoughts that arise. In order to minimise such (stray) thoughts, the beginning yogi should focus his attention as closely as possible on the primary object. But when he has sat in meditation for five, ten or fifteen minutes, certain unpleasant sensations in the body are apt to arise with corresponding effects on the mind. When feelings or sensations arise, they should be noticed. When reporting, it is better to describe them in plain everyday language as 'itching', 'aching', 'numbing' or 'tingling' and so on, rather than in scriptural language as just '*vedanā*' (feelings). These feelings, which arise spontaneously, should be noticed in the same manner as above—whether they are intensifying, weakening, stabilising or disappearing. So the next aphorism is "All feelings (sensations) should be observed, known and related at interviews."

**SIX APHORISM:**  
All feelings or  
sensations should  
be observed,  
known and related  
at interviews.

Next, what other phenomena are there to be noticed and known? They are sights seen, sounds heard, odours smelled, food tasted. And then mental phenomena such as liking, transgressing, sloth and torpor; distracting, anxiety, doubt, remembrance, clear comprehension, attention, satisfaction, delight, tranquility, serenity or calm, ease of meditation and so on.

The Buddha has collectively termed them as *dhammarammana* (mind-objects). Suppose a liking arises, when it is noticed, what happens? Liking is followed by craving. The yogis should be able to report

this. Take another example. The yogi is experiencing sloth and torpor and feebleness of mind. When he notices these states of mind, distracting arises. What happens when these are observed or noticed in turn? **Whenever these mind-objects arise they should be observed.**

**SEVENTH APHORISM:**  
Whenever Mind-objects (liking, sloth-torpor, feebleness of mind) arise they should be observed.

### SUMMARY

The following are the four objects of attention in *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā Bhāvanā* (insight meditation through mindfulness):

1. Acts of bodily behaviour (*kāyānupassanā*)
2. Feelings or sensations (*vedanānupassanā*)
3. Acts of consciousness (*cittānupassanā*)
4. Mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*)

When observing any of these objects if attention, three events occur in such meditation in successive order:

- a. Arising of the phenomenon
- b. Observing or noticing of the phenomenon that arises
- c. From this type of mindful observation the yogi comes to 'see' and 'know'.

The yogi or meditator's concern is to observe that which arises as continually and uninterruptedly as possible.

The next aphorism requires all that happens thus to be understood. (b) and (c) are the concern of the yogi. For every objects of attention (belonging to the four categories listed above), it is important to under-

**FINAL APHORISM:**

*What arises,  
what is observed  
and what comes  
to be seen and  
known, should  
be understood  
completely and  
related during  
interview session.*

stand the three successive events mentioned above. The yogi's concern is to observe or notice [event (b) above]. The aphorism for this is: "What arises, what is observed and what comes to be seen and known, should be understood completely and related during interview session."





## *Description during Vipassanā Interviews*

1. Describe what you notice  
of the rising movement (abdomen).
2. Describe what you notice  
of the falling movement (abdomen).
3. Describe what you notice of imaginations.
4. Describe what you notice of feelings.
5. Describe what you notice of ideas.
6. **ESSENTIAL TO NOTE:** *object appearing,  
noting and  
discrimination*

While object arises, contemplate diligently,  
describe if it is there or not.

7. Describe each of them (the objects),  
your ability to grasp —  
*clearly,  
briefly (to the point),  
precisely,  
correctly and  
completely (in detail)*  
what has been observed.
8. Describe only new experiences (if any),  
whatever you have been able to notice  
and to the point.
9. If not, describe whatever you note and experience.
10. Do not waste time.

*The answer may be just a book away!*

“Imagine someone searching for some understanding, some answer to the confusion of life. This person knows that things aren’t quite right. There must be better ways to live one’s life than this. She or he searches and picks up yet another book and lo and behold finds the answer to his or her quest. ~THAT’S IT!~ and life changes forever.”

~Venerable Nānadassi

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*Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti.*  
The Gift of Truth Excels All Gifts.

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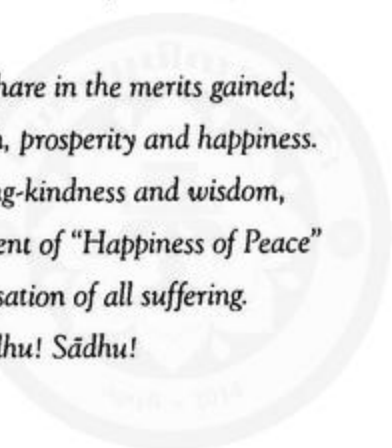
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*May all sentient beings share in the merits gained;  
may they enjoy good health, prosperity and happiness.*

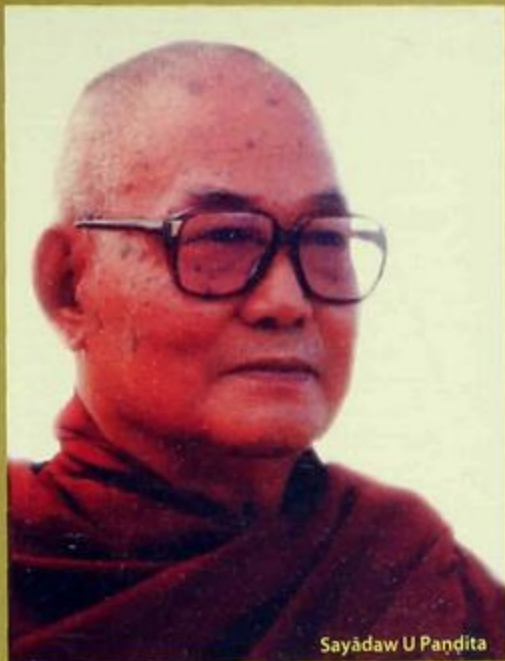
*May they cultivate loving-kindness and wisdom,  
culminating in the attainment of "Happiness of Peace"*

*i.e. Nibbāna, the cessation of all suffering.*

*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*







Sayādaw U Paṇḍita

Since 1951, he has taught thousands of students, and traveled to many Asian countries as well as to the United States, Europe and Australia to lead retreats. He is now the abbot of Paṇḍitarama Monastery and meditation center in Yangon (Rangoon), where he teaches ordained and lay students from Asia and the West.

VENERABLE SUJIVA, who compiled this book, is a well-known meditation teacher who has devoted his early years to the teaching of *vipassanā* meditation in Malaysia. Since 1996, he began conducting retreats abroad, particularly in Australia and later then he held numerous retreats in Hong Kong, New Zealand, Republic of Czech, Republic of Slovakia, Sweden, Italy and the United States. He has authored a number of books on Vipassana Meditation and Buddhist poetry.



# The Way to the Happiness of Peace



**ALL BEINGS** everywhere by their very nature seek happiness, but few realize that happiness can only be found by obtaining peace of mind. The Buddha taught that peace of mind does not descend upon us by chance, but can be achieved by diligent practice of the Noble Eightfold Path. This path — *the path to peace* — unfolds in three stages: morality, concentration, and wisdom. Its culmination is the practice of insight meditation, which leads directly to the bliss of liberation. In the present booklet, Sayādaw U Paṇḍita explains in simple and lucid language the basic steps to be taken in the development of insight meditation. His instructions, which centre around the “four foundations of mindfulness,” will be beneficial to both beginners and experienced meditators.

Sayādaw U Paṇḍita is one of Burma's outstanding contemporary meditation masters, highly respected in both the East and the West. A direct disciple of the renowned Ven. Mahāsi Sayādaw, he is the abbot of the Paṇḍitarama monastery and meditation centre in Yangon and also leads retreats in various countries around the world.

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